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The Effects of Teaching Vocabulary in Improving

Reading Comprehension

A Case Study of the First Year LMD Students of English at Mohamed

Kheider University of Biskra

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in science of language.

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Didication

Words can never express my deep love and gratitude to two dear persons: my mother "Louiza" and my father "Abd Allah".

To my sisters: "Nadjiba" and "Amina" who believe in me and surrounded me with their care and love and to whom I wish successful lives.

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the importance of teaching vocabulary to improve reading comprehension for 1st year LMD students of English devision. We hypothesize that if vocabulary teaching is handled with care through effective reading, the comprehension will be improved. The present work consists of an introductory chapter on the methodology adopted to conduct the research, and the rest of the dissertation is divided into two main parts. The first part represents the literature review that related to the study. In the first chapter, we provide general information about reading and reading comprehension. In the second chapter, we are going deal with the main aspects related to teaching vocabulary and the relation between the reading skill and teaching vocabulary. The second part includes the field work; we tend to explore students and teachers perspectives and opinions towards the issue under investigation. We administered a questionnaire of nineteen (19) items to participants at English division of Biskra University with reference to 1st year students and a questionnaire of seventeen (17) items to English teachers during the academic year 2014-2015. The results reveal that reading comprehension may be improved through effective vocabulary.

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

TEL: Teaching English Language.

BD: Bilingual Dictionary

MD : Monolingual Dictionary

SMD: Standard Monolingual Dictionary

SFA: Semantic Feature Analysis

WIC: Words in Context

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General Introduction

Introduction

To acquire a language ,four skills are needed : listening ,speaking, reading and writing , ordered in the way they are acquired and taught .Reading is one of the most important skills in the language and further a key to research as it widely recognized today.

Reading comprehension is critically important to development of student's reading ability and therefore their ability to obtain an education. Students need vocabulary to comprehend what they are reading. Expanding children's vocabulary allows them to understand more of what is spoken or read to them. A child's vocabulary includes the words they can effectively use to communicate and those they understand from verbal communication as well as written words. To know a word, a child must be able to provide a definition, examples and non-examples of the word, and understand its relationship to other words. Students need a strong depth of vocabulary and a breadth of words. Breadth of vocabulary increases comprehension and depth of vocabulary increases fluency, broadens vocabulary, and allows for deeper comprehension. Students need to know 90-95% of the words they read before they can read for comprehension

Vocabulary is one of five core components of reading instruction that is essential to successfully teach students how to read .Both vocabulary and reading comprehension have a reciprocal relationship. Word knowledge is crucial to reading comprehension and determines how students will be able to comprehend the texts.

A study called. Improving reading comprehension through vocabulary focuses on using vocabulary to improve reading comprehension .This study was conducted how to use vocabulary, therefore, improving reading comprehension and reading levels.

Research Statement and the Scope of Study

In this study, in this study, the majority of the students faced various problems to understand the meaning from the text. Therefore, we think that if we want to improve learners' reading skill, we should adopt a number of appropriate techniques in teaching vocabulary .We also have tried to initiate our learners on how to increase their vocabulary stock to become effective readers and thereby improve their reading comprehension.

Aim of the Study

This study aims to help students to provide background information, ideas and stimulus which will facilitate to understand the different effects and factors of teaching vocabulary in improving reading comprehension to first year master students at university of Biskra.

Hypothesis

We hypothesize that:

 *if vocabulary teaching is handled with care through effective reading, the comprehension will be improved.

Research Question

The following questions guided the study:

* What are the factors that influence reading comprehension?

*What are the main techniques that used for teaching vocabulary?

* How does teaching vocabulary help to improve reading comprehension?

*What is the relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension?

Methodology

Method Investigation and Research Tools

It is necessary to select an effective method and tools to present this study. We will include information about the descriptive of the subjects involved in the study. It will also include information about the instruments used to collect data. There will be a discussion of the procedure used to collect the data analysis procedures will be given (questionnaire) data collection.

The Population and Sampling

The Population

The aim of this work is to examine the subject of vocabulary teaching both English teachers and first year LMD English at university of Biskra.

The Samples

Teachers' sample: the investigation concerns with teachers who can provide an insight into language teaching ;more specifically, they are able to provide good description about reading comprehension and teaching vocabulary, further more; they are the best source of investigation because they are engaged in the field of teaching.

Pupils' sample: the study deals with first year LMD English at university of Biskra in the academic year 2014/2015.

Limitations

The limitations of this study include limited time to conduct research of literature review .Additional limitations include the limited numbers of studies involving first year LMD students. The data collection included texts and articles from available databases dealing with vocabulary development, methods and strategies for teaching vocabulary to students.

Chapter One

Reading and Reading Comprehension

Introduction

   Reading is one of the most important skills to acquire knowledge in each discipline. It is very important to get successed in our life and that reading ability is highly valued and important for our personality, our social status, and being well economically. Comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text. Readers typically make to use of background knowledge, experience with text and other strategies to help them understand written text. We start this chapter by showing some different views of some researchers and psychologists about reading and reading comprehension. Then, we will describe the models and types of reading that have been advocated by prominent researchers in this field. We will discuss different components of reading comprehension, good and poor readers that related to reading comprehension and factors affecting reading comprehension. Finally, we will end up this chapter by speaking about strategies to improve reading comprehension followed by conclusion.

1. Definition of Reading

Many writers and researchers in the field of psychology, linguistics and language teaching have attempted to define reading. Beck and Margaret (2005) described Reading as a complex process composed of a number of interacting sub-processes and abilities. Moreover, Pang et al (2003) have defined reading as a "complex activity that involves both perception and thought". Furthermore, Baudoin et al (1994) define reading as follow:

> "Reading is a complex activity that involves both word recognition and the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language; and comprehension, the process of making sense words, sentences and connected paragraphs".

Williams (1984) defines reading as the process whereby one looks at and understands writing. Alyousef (2006) has defined reading as an interactive process between a reader and the text as he/ she tries to elicit the meaning and where various kinds of knowledge are being used: linguistic or systemic knowledge as well as schematic knowledge.

2. Definition of Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ability to read text, process it and understand its meaning. This understanding comes from the interaction between the words are written and how they trigger knowledge outside the text or message. Pang et al (2003) described reading comprehension as an active process a reader made to construct meaning from a text. This process consists of using an interaction between prior knowledge and drawing inferences from the different words and expressions, in order to comprehend information, ideas and viewpoints. Smith (1985) also believes that reading comprehension involves bringing a prior knowledge interacted with reading. Moreover, Grellet (1981) explains that

reading comprehension means, **"understanding a written text and being able to extract the required information from it as efficiently as possible"**.

Snow (2002) describes reading comprehension as "The process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language". Likewise, Goodman (1994) suggests three components for comprehension that can be identified, "the reader, the text and the activity". There is an active interrelationship between these three elements to achieve successful understanding.

The first element in the process of reading comprehension is the reader who uses his/her cognitive capacities, motivation, and different kinds of knowledge. The reader "constructs different representations of the text that are important for comprehension".

The second component is the text. It has a surface encoding, which refers to the words in the text; representations of meaning; and models of mental representations implanted in the passage. A passage may be easy or difficult. These two notions depend on the content of the text, the vocabulary used, linguistic and discourse structure, and genre.

The final component is the activity. The reading activity has performed to achieve a particular purpose, which has influenced by a number of motivational factors such as interest. While performing this activity, the reader uses some linguistic and semantic processes, besides decoding.

According to Snow (2002), the result of reading is also a feature of the activity, and it depends on the reader's purpose, and the changes that may happen to it during the activity.

3. The Purpose of Reading

Readers read a text to understand what is read, to construct meaning of what is understand and to put this understanding to use. Pang et al (2003) and MC Shane (2005)

have the same purposes of reading. They said that the reader reads a text to understand its meaning, as well as to put that understanding to use, a person reads a text to learn about how to do something, to research a subject or study for a text, to find out information, to be entertained, to reflect or as religious. Harmer (2001) classified reasons of reading into two broad categories: instrumental reason and pleasurable reason, the first category will help us to achieve some clear aim. He gave an example: We read a road sign so that we know where to go; we read the instructions on ticket machine because we need to know to operate it. Therefore, in other words, reading takes place because we have some kinds of utilitarian or instrumental purpose in mind. The second category, on the other hand, reading takes place largely for pleasure. Thus, people read magazines or spend hours buried in the Sunday paper, other go to poetry reading. Purpose of reading by Alderson (2000) reading a short story for entertainment at bedtime differs in all the three aspects (process, product and recall) from reading a history lecture for an examination the next day. He contends that:

> **"**The process of reading differs from the same reader on the same text at a different time or with different purpose in reading. It is even likely, then, that the process will be different for different readers on different texts at different times and with different purposes**".**

4. Models of Reading

Some researchers have tried to explain reading mechanisms and, therefore, established certain processes through which reading happens; they called them models. Reading models were mainly set to describe the way a reader uses to construct meaning from printed; these modals aim to find out how readers translate into meanings. This issue has led to the raise of three main models of reading process: Bottom up model, top down model and interactive model.

4.1. Bottom up Model

Stimulus driven model is the model where readers recognize and analyze perceived linguistic information like words, sentences and understand what a text means piece with little interference of background knowledge (Ueta, 2005).

Dechanet (1991) in his words see that the bottom up models are those models which:

> "Operate on the principle that the written text is hierarchically organized (I,e,on the grapho-phonic, phonemic, syllabic, morphemic , word and sentence level) and that the reader is the first process that smallest linguistic unit , gradually compiling the smaller units to decipher and comprehend their higher unit"(sentence syntax).

4.2. Top down Model

Context -drive model is model in which readers who have expectation about text information and infer it by means of making use of their previous knowledge or experience in understanding a text. It describes reading as a linear process that moves from the top the higher mental stages, down models described to be the concept driver (Ueta, 2005).

Hedge (2000) in his view sees that the top down models are those models that have used to describe the application of prior knowledge to working on the meaning of a text.

4.3. The Interactive Model

It is model of reading where bottom-up and top-down processes work together to ensure the accurate and rapid processing of information. The Interactive Model proposed to present a model that would explain how readers use information from various sources at the same time during the reading process. Stanovitch (1980) affirms:

> "An interaction model of reading appears to provide a more accurate conceptualization of reading performance than do strictly top down and bottom up model. They provide a better account of the existing data or the use of orthographic structure and sentence context by poor and good readers".

5. Types of Reading

Reading is the most important activity in any language class. It is widely agreed that reading is a skill that must be learnt because of its importance as a communication and as a learning tool. For this purpose, learners generally go through two main types in their reading: intensive reading and extensive reading.

5.1. Intensive Reading

This type of reading seeks to grasp the whole message. It includes both arguments and supporting details, and encourages literal processing of text. Teachers should provide students with some opportunities to engage in intensive reading by the careful selection of text. According to Harmer (2007), the term intensive reading refers to the detailed focus on the construction of reading texts, which takes place usually, but not always in classrooms. It is usually accompany by student activities. Moreover, Hedge (2000) added intensive reading involves looking carefully at a text, as a solicitor that would study the precise wording of legal document.

5.2. Extensive Reading

Extensive reading, on the other hand, is different from intensive reading, as explained by Grellet (1981) and Harmer (2007), the term of extensive reading refers to reading which students do often away from classroom. It is concerned with "reading longer text, usually for one's own pleasures. This is an activity mainly involving global understanding". Hedge (2000) also described extensive reading as a skimming and scanning activities. Moreover, Allyousef (2006) explained that extensive reading helps in developing reading abilities. It has based on the assumption that exposing learners to large

quantities of meaningful and interesting second language material will produce a beneficial effect on the learners' command of the second language.

6. Components of Reading Comprehension

6.1. Background knowledge

It is all the world knowledge that the reader brings to the act of reading. It includes school-based knowledge and personal knowledge, episodic (events), declarative (facts) and procedural (how-to) knowledge. Researchers have used one of two general approaches for investigating the relationship between background knowledge and reading comprehension. Alexander and Judy (1988) explain it as a world knowledge related to general reading comprehension. Furthermore, it is background knowledge about a specific topic related to comprehension of a specific passage about that topic. Stevens (1980)

6.2. Inference

It is the logical process of combining information within sentences in text, between sentences in text, or between prior knowledge and text. For example, in order to understand what the word "he" is referring to in text, the reader must combine information in that sentence with information in a previous sentence that referred to a male. Readers also use inference processes to figure out the meaning of difficult vocabulary words Baumann et al (2003). Likewise, readers constantly add information from background knowledge to what they read in order to understand it. However, readers are often not aware of these processes. One important distinction made in the psychological literature is between on-line and off-line inferences (ones that are making only during later retrieval. On-line inference like those made during concurrent think-aloud protocols) may include those made automatically as well as those made deliberately, strategically, and effort fully. Long et al (1999) define on-line inferences as "the ones of highest theoretical interest to psychologists, presumably because they represent the situation in most reading contexts.

Off-line inferences like those made when answering post-reading questions or during retrospective protocols are always as deliberate, strategic, and effortful. Hare et al (1989) define off-line inferences as a great interest to educational psychologists, since school-related reading often includes reading passages followed by questions that require inferences.

6.3. Strategies

Proficient readers use cognitive and meta- cognitive reading strategies such as setting goals before they begin to read, asking themselves questions and answering them while reading, summarizing, and reflecting on what they read. Alexander and Judy (1988) define strategies as "goal-directed procedures that are playfully or intentionally evoked . . . [That] aid in the regulation, execution, or evaluation of a task". Strategies help proficient readers understand better, what they read. Readers are not necessarily aware of using these strategies, although they are able to verbalize many of them when asked to think aloud during, and are able to identify some of them on questionnaires. Baker & Cerro (2000) point out that good readers can accurately self-report strategies but, poor readers have weaknesses in meta- cognitive processes that lead them to inaccurately self-report strategy use Strategies can be taught to children, who struggle with comprehension, which improves their understanding of texts.

6.4. Vocabulary

It is often defined as knowledge of a word's meaning. However, there are many aspects of word knowledge, most of which have received little attention from researchers. Nagy and Scott (2000) point out that knowledge about any single word is multidimensional (e.g., giving a definition, knowing the part of speech, being able to use the word correctly), incremental (not all-or-nothing), interrelated (e.g., understanding a definition requires understanding other words in the definition), and heterogeneous (e.g., the knowledge can

have function words, technical terms, and concrete nouns varies). In addition to word knowledge, vocabulary knowledge includes knowing the meanings of affixes, prefixes and suffixes, understanding relationships between words, and strategies for figuring out new words. The majority of research on vocabulary and reading comprehension focuses on single meanings of words.

6.5. Word Reading

It includes both a reader's sight words (stored in long-term memory) and word attack skills. The latter includes decoding, analogy, and morphological strategies (e.g., using prefixes and suffixes; Measures of word reading often include real words and nonsense words or pseudo words that follow regular spelling-sound patterns in English. Especially with older students, nonsense words are thoughts to reveal students' true word attack skills, since any real word could already be a sight word for the student. Word reading is distinct from vocabulary knowledge in that a reader may be able to read a word but not know its meaning, or may know the meaning of a word if it spoken aloud but may not be able to pronounce the word in its written form. Anderson et al *(1993)*.

7. Good and Poor Readers

Good and poor readers have a great related to reading comprehension. They use different strategies to grasp the meaning of the material that have been read. Unlike poor readers, good readers approach reading with a sense of purpose. Teachers need to identify good and poor readers in their class and try to encourage the form and assist the latter in a supportive way. According to Klinger (2000), the most successful way to characterize good readers is to say, they are more strategic than poor readers.

• Good readers are active readers.

• They have clear goals in mind for their reading. They constantly evaluate whether the text, and their reading of it, is meeting their goals.

• Good readers typically look over the text before they read, noting such things as the structure of the text and text sections that might be most relevant to their reading goals.

• As they read, good readers frequently make predictions about what is to come.

• They read selectively, continually making decisions about their reading, what to read carefully, what to read quickly, what not to read, what to reread, and so on.

• Good readers construct, revise, and question the meanings they make as they read.

• Good readers try to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words and concepts in the text, and they deal with inconsistencies or gaps as needed.

• They draw from, compare, and integrate their prior knowledge with material in the text.

• They think about the authors of the text, their style, beliefs, intentions, historical milieu, and so on.

• They monitor their understanding of the text, making adjustments in their reading as necessary.

In addition, good readers are able to draw upon their translation skills, knowledge of cognates, and ability to transfer information across languages largely than struggling readers.

In the opposite, poor readers use few effective strategies for understanding and remembering what they read. They are slower readers and less accurate. Their motivation is often low. They rarely monitor their learning from text, and they have inadequate vocabulary and background knowledge with which to connect and link new ideas to previous learning.

8. Factors Affecting Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension has influenced by the presence or absence of some factors. Some of these factors have attributed to the text while others are specific to the reader.

8.1. Text Variables

It is one of the main factors that influence reading comprehension. It received little research in comparison with other factors belonging to the reader. The text defined by Davies (1995) as "a coherent piece of writing exhibiting both structure and texture, assignable to a single author or collaborating authors, with clearly defined boundaries making the beginning and end of the writing". The text can be a paragraph, or a set of paragraphs as it can be in prose or verse. It may have different types according to the content it expresses. In addition, vocabulary, sentence structure and syntax are important elements to look at while analyzing text's influence on reading comprehension.

8.2. Vocabulary

Many researchers have claimed that vocabulary knowledge is the single most important factor in reading comprehension, and that once a reader has a good vocabulary background, the reading comprehension task will be facilitated since words considered as the building blocks of language, the units of meaning from which larger structures such as sentences, paragraphs and whole texts are formed. Coady and Huckin (1975) comment on vocabulary importance in ensuring text's comprehension. So, vocabulary knowledge has recommended for the understating of a given text either being in a native language or a target one.

8.3. Text Type

Text type is likely to influence the reader's comprehension. Each type has its own characteristics concerning the general theme and the way it is structured. Moreover, the text type dictates sentence structure and vocabulary choice. Davies (1995) argues that a

text has described according to its rhetorical function. He sees that a text is persuasive, descriptive, expository, etc... Therefore, each type of writing shows a particular way of development, and a special sequence of the writer's thought. The reader needs to be aware of these types of development to make sure that he will be successful in following the author's flow of ideas. In general, the text type falls under two big categories namely the narrative and expository text. The reader should be aware of the different features of the narrative text. He needs to keep in mind that a narrative passage usually tells a tale, a short story, folktale, myth, fable, legend, fantasy and science fiction as it reports biographies. The narrative text centers on some elements which are the characters, settings, themes, the conflict, sequence of events which settle the plot and a resolution of the conflict. The reader also should be aware of the different features of the expository text. The author's goal is most of the time to inform or expose the information. It is usually associated with science and history texts. It has claimed that the informational text contains difficult vocabulary, in some cases domain specific or technical items. Readers need to be prepared for the expository text features, information statistics, numbers, graphs, technical vocabulary with the different types of development namely description, classification, contrast, cause and effect…

8.4. Coherence and Cohesion

Coherence and cohesion prove to have influence on reading comprehension. A coherent and cohesive text is likely to be easier to read than a text lacks these two aspects. The reader must feel coherence, that is to say the sense of continuity and connection between the text's sentences and paragraphs. Trimmer (1995) sees the coherent paragraph as a set of connected sentences that help the reader to move from one idea to another easily with no separations. If the text at the reader's hand lacks coherence, the reader will not be able to follow the writer's train of thought. He may read the text several times in an attempt

to establish connections. This is likely to turn reading into a difficult boring task. Cohesion also affects the reader's achievement. He must be conscious of the relations existing between words. It has best defined by Davies (1995) who sees it as the different existing possibilities of relating sentences' words to produce comprehensible structures well linked and well connected. Lack of cohesion will eliminate possible connections between words and this one reason of the text's difficulty. The reader cannot see what refers to what. Moreover, coherence has been affected by the lack of cohesion. Davies (1995) explains that cohesion is crucial for establishing coherence. That is to say, a text lacks cohesion will not be coherent .Furthermore, cohesion facilitates reading. Yun (1993) explains how this may happen: "It provides the basis for making predictions and building expectations. The continuity expressed by cohesion constitutes the context that provides the basis for making predictions and building expectations in reading." Thus, cohesion helps the reader to put alternatives for the meaning intended by the writer.

8.5. Automaticity

Automaticity is another aspect of reading which affects reading comprehension. It is the rapid recognition of words by the reader while reading. It is one requirement of fluent reading. The learner would also improve in terms of comprehension, since there would be more "freed-up" processing capacity for comprehension as decoding skills become automatic. In other words, if the reader is skillful in word identification, his attention will be focused on processing meaning instead of spending time on the process of decoding. Rapid recognition of words' letters and sentences' words will save the reader's time to focus more on building interpretations for the text at hand. Hawkins (1991)

9. Strategies to Improve Reading Comprehension

Comprehension strategies are conscious plans or sets of that good readers use to make sense of text. Salkind (2008) defined strategies that have conceptualized as complex and effortful. He explained strategies as "steps or actions that readers can take to enhance comprehension". Comprehension strategy instruction helps students become purposeful, active readers who control of their own reading comprehension. The seven strategies used for improving text comprehension:

9.1. Comprehension Monitoring

Salkind (2008) has defined comprehension monitoring as a strategy in which readers learn how to be aware or conscious of under -standing during reading. It teaches students to be aware of what they do understand, to identify problems when comprehension breaks down and takes steps to solve their comprehension problem.

9.2. Cooperative Learning

Salkind (2008) in his words explained cooperative learning as a strategy in which readers work together to learn from reading. Students may work together on an endive problem or individually on components, sharing the results to complete the understanding.

9.3. Graphic and Semantic Organizes

This strategy that explained by MC Shane (2005) in his words. Graphic organizers are diagrams or charts that visually represent the relationship of ideas and information. Most often have used to illustrate the organization and structure of a text. Texts have structured in different ways. Stories often introduce a setting, main and supporting characters, a problem, a series of events and a resolution of the problem, typically in

approximately this order (though not always). Learners may find "story maps" helpful in the following and remembering events and characters.

9.4. Story Structure

Story structure has based on the fact of all stories that have similar features and all plots that have organized into episodes. It is a strategy in which the reader learns to ask specific questions about the elements of stories, including plot, time line, characters and events in stories (M C shane.2005).

9.5. Question Answering

This strategy is the most conventional strategy in which the reader answers. T he goal of questions answering instruction is to aid students in learning to answer questions while reading and thus learn more a text.(Salkind, 2008)

9.6. Question Generation

According to Salkind (2008), this strategy requires learners to ask and answer questions about reading. It is involving production of questions in while the reader asks himself or herself and seeking the answers (what, when, where, why, what will happen, how and who questions).

9.7. Summarizing

This strategy involves the ability of readers to put together, or synthesize information in a text to explain in their own words what the text is about. Readers should be able to summarize the contents in one or two sentences, without looking at the text (Lee, 2005).Furthermore, Salkind (2008) explains this strategy by writing the most important ideas that integrate or unite the other ideas or meanings of the text into a coherent whole.

Conclusion

From this chapter, we can say that reading is one of the most important skills in the language to acquire knowledge in each discipline. We have tried to present an overall impression of the reading skill in general and reading comprehension in particular. Most of researchers agree on three models which are bottom up, the top down and the interactive model. Reading also, has two main types readers use when reading, intensive and extensive reading. Furthermore, this chapter provided some views about good and poor readers, components of reading comprehension and other ideas related with reading comprehension. At the end, we showed and explained factors that effect on reading comprehension and some strategies to improve our reading.

Chapter Two

Teaching Vocabulary

Introduction

Vocabulary acquisition has considered as an integral and fundamental area of language teaching and learning. It is very important in learning to read and in future reading development. Vocabulary refers to a list or set of words that individual speakers of a language might use accordingly, vocabulary in the most amounts of words that characterize a given language. Without vocabulary, the learner would be unable to use and comprehend the target language. We start this chapter by showing some different views of some researchers and psychologists about vocabulary, the importance of teaching vocabulary, assessment of vocabulary knowledge, approaches and principles of vocabulary instruction and the relation between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension. We conclude our chapter by speaking about techniques for teaching vocabulary and strategies to improve vocabulary instruction followed by conclusion.

1. Definition of Vocabulary

Psychologist , linguists and language teachers have tried to define the vocabulary .The definition of vocabulary relates to various views about the nature and use made of vocabulary in the long man dictionary (1995) defines vocabulary as all the words that some one knows, learns and uses. The oxford dictionary (2002) defines vocabulary as the body of words used in a particular language or in a particular speaker. Todd (1987) argues that there is an orthographic, morphological, lexical and semantic aspect of the word. The orthographic word has a space on both sides of it. A morphological word considers the form only. A lexical word considers all the forms a word can take and which clearly related by meaning. A semantic word considers the distinction between items that may be morphological but differ in meaning. Moreover, Hatch and Brown (1995) consider vocabulary as a list or set of words of a particular language that individuals speak of a language. Furthermore, M C Shane (2005)   defined vocabulary as knowledge of word meaning. The national institute for literacy web sites defines oral vocabulary the words we can use and understand in different skills (listening vocabulary and reading vocabulary) as the store of words we recognize and understand in print. Therefore, teaching vocabulary has an importance in EFL classrooms, and should be part of a syllabus and taught on regular basis. It refers to the knowledge of words and their meaning in oral and print language in receptive and productive forms.

2. The Importance of Teaching Vocabulary

Foreign language learners always need to learn and enlarge their vocabulary. This is supported by Wilkins (1972) who states, "without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed". According to M C shane (2005), vocabulary is vital to reading comprehension in at least two ways: oral vocabulary is the important key

connection, a child or adult learns to connect printed words with words in his / her oral vocabulary. He / she makes this connection through decoding, using letter sounds. The new is effect "translate" the printed symbols into meaningful words but decoding is useful only the words are already in the reader's oral vocabulary. Because, it is the basic of meaningful reading. The second way is reading vocabulary that is obvious one for learners at all levels. Readers cannot understand a written message unless   they understand the meaning of the most of the words in the text. It is a crucial component of reading comprehension at all levels that need to build vocabulary to allow readers to comprehend a variety of materials. In addition to the vital importance of vocabulary for success in life, a large vocabulary is more specifically predictive and reflective of high levels of reading achievement. Researchers noted that growth in reading power relies continuous growth in words knowledge.

3. Assessment of Vocabulary

Vocabulary may be measured in different ways and varied approaches to assessment measure different aspect of vocabulary. According to Lee (2005), there are two ways of assessing vocabulary knowledge. One is informal and the other is formal. It should be understand that children know more words than they use in their day –to- day conversation. Therefore, more sampling of speech will not provide a reliable measure of child vocabulary knowledge.

3.1. The Formal Type

Formal assessment of vocabulary relies on standardized tests. The most frequently used test is the Peabody picture vocabulary test. The child has given one word and has asked to point to the one picture at matches the target word.

3.2. The Informal Type

This informal way of assessing vocabulary is to construct a vocabulary inventory by selecting words from the "text book" the child uses in the classroom.

4. Approaches to Vocabulary Instruction

Vocabulary instruction is a necessary part of comprehension instruction because understanding text is significantly by vocabulary level. Different approaches to vocabulary instruction which should be used in teaching vocabulary in the classrooms by teachers to improve reading skill of their students. According to Huckman (2008), there are five approaches to vocabulary instruction, which are:

Explicit instruction: it is particularly of difficult words and words that are not part of pupil's every day experience.

Indirect instruction: it exposures to a wide range of reading materials that are used in the classrooms.

Multimedia methods: they are going beyond the text to include other media such as visual stimulus, the use of the computer or sign language.

Capacity methods: they are focusing on making reading as an automatic activity.

 Association methods: they are encouraging learners to draw connection between what they know and unfamiliar words.

5. Principles for Teaching Vocabulary

Vocabulary teaching is an incremental process, and teachers must concentrate not only on introducing new words, but also on enhancing learner's knowledge of previously

words. Using different principles by teachers is very important to understand level of students. Schmitt (2000) suggests some principles for teaching vocabulary, which are:

*Build a large sight vocabulary.

*Integrate new words with old.

* Provide a number of encounters with a word.

*Promote a deep level of processing.

* Facilitate imaging new words "real" by connecting them

*Uses a variety of techniques

*Encourage independent learning strategies.

Most of these principles should be familiar and are indeed based on our Understanding of how words are acquired and remembered. Another principle is teaching the underlying meaning concept of a word. Many words are polysemous in English, and often some of their different meaning senses have a common underlying trait.

6. The Relation between Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension

Educators and researchers have long known that there is strong relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension. Students who know more words understand text better. Vocabulary knowledge is normally the major vehicle for successful reading. At list, it is nice to be able to report that reading improves vocabulary know ledge and vocabulary knowledge supports reading development .The connection between vocabulary knowledge and success in reading comprehension tests has been shown in many studies, such as Grabe and Stoller (1997). When the vocabulary of the text is more familiar, students are more likely to continue with the reading task. klingner (2007) in his words, vocabulary is very important to facilitate reading comprehension. We teach (math, science, history, biology and government) one of your major responsibilities to

teach key vocabulary and concepts so that students can comprehend what they read and understand the academic language of the discipline. They gave us example in mathematics, the words minus, divided and areas have specific meanings that allow students to comprehend, math problems.

Vocabulary instruction is a necessary part of comprehension instruction because understanding text is significantly by vocabulary level. Moreover, Schmitt (2000) in his words, reading is the most elementary part of vocabulary programs. For intermediate and advanced learners with vocabularies above 3,000 or so words, reading offers a portal of exposure to all remaining words, even beginning students with a limited vocabulary can benefit from reading.

To sum up, vocabulary and reading are seen as two main language components that develop each other interchangeable, learners can enrich their vocabulary through exposure to reading, as well as, they can strengthen their skills through vocabulary acquisition. They have a strong relationship that ends with satisfied achievements in foreign language acquisition.

7. Techniques for Teaching Vocabulary

Vocabulary teaching has often planned in the sense that the teachers choose specific vocabulary items to be taught. Using different techniques of presentation brings variety and helps the retention of new vocabulary items. Gairns and Redman (1986) divided techniques of vocabulary presentation in the classroom into two groups: visual technique and verbal techniques.

7.1. Visual Techniques:

Visual: visual techniques include flash cards, photographs, black board drawing, wall charts and regalia. They are extensively used for conveying meaning and are particularly useful for teaching concrete items of vocabulary such as food or furniture, and certain areas of vocabulary such as places professions, description of people, actions and activities.

Mime and Gesture: these used to supplement other ways of conveying meaning. When teaching an item such as "to swerve", a teacher might build a situation to illustrate it, making use of the black board and gesture to reinforce the concept.

7.2. Verbal Techniques:

Verbal techniques include using language relation. Verbal means of clarifying meaning include:

Use of Synonym, Antonym: sometimes, to explain a new item, teachers can use the synonym or the opposite of this item. For example, to explain the meaning of "cheerful", teachers can use the synonym "happy". However, this technique could not be successful only if the teachers

Hyponymy : It has often said that a person has easily detected through the family from which he descends. This is also the case for the meaning of a word which can be determinate via its family. For instance, from the following lists "baby, child, teen, doves, old, corpse", it is easy for the learner to recognize that the odd word is "doves". The other words belong to the same family "stages of life" while the word "doves" belongs to another family "birds". The relation of hyponymy refers to members of the same class (family). It includes the upper term which is called the super ordinate, and the lower term

is called hyponym. The relation between hyponyms is called co-hyponyms, as figure below show. Palmer (1976) determines the appropriate context under which they fit together.

Dictionaries: The dictionary gives, in an alphabetical order, the meaning of words of language. It includes a word's spelling, syllables, pronunciation, origin, meaning, etc. Using a dictionary strengthen the learner's use of words. It helps them to build their vocabulary. In addition, it is a comprehensive source of general information.

There are three categories of dictionaries which are used by learners to enhance a foreign language. First, there is the bilingual dictionary (BD) which is known also as translation dictionary. This kind of dictionary translates a word from a target language into the learner's mother tongue or vice versa. Second, the monolingual dictionary (MD) is another sort that helps the learner to enrich his vocabulary. This type of dictionary has usually directed for native language learners. The last one is the standard monolingual dictionary (SMD) which has been written with the native language learners in mind. These dictionaries are useful for learners" vocabulary acquisition. M C Carthy (1990) contends that "the dictionary permits readers to obtain the meaning of a word as cannot be divided from the context or word form, as such it is an aid to vocabulary development"

The dictionary helps the learner to acquire new words, to enlarge his culture about his language and to develop his skills. However, relying only on actual uses of words in all kinds of speech and writing, dictionaries can have a negative impact on the learner. It can interrupt his concentration; it can break down the author's sequence of thoughts when he is reading.

Translation: translation is a clear-cut technique to give the precise word's meaning. However, it is the most unsupported technique. Translation may be legitimate for items possessing a clear mother tongue equivalent, but it should be avoided. Using this technique frequently, may not help with caution. Bilingual dictionaries are useful with in

this technique. They may provide a clear translation, with some examples to illustrate the word's different usage.

Definition: definitions are not useful in vocabulary instruction. First, definitions alone tell little about how a word is actually used; this leads to difficulty in writing a meaningful sentence. Second, definitions do not effectively convey new concepts. This brings us to perhaps the most basic reason that knowledge of definitions is not adequate to guarantee comprehension of text containing the words defined; reading comprehension depends on a wealth of encyclopedic knowledge and merely on definitional knowledge of the words in the text. Therefore, clearly contextualized examples are generally required to clarify the limits of the item.

Use of Illustrative Situations (Context) :memorizing vocabulary items through word lists have seen as a non-proficient way, because such technique lacks the identification of the situation in which the word occurs. Instructors can present a new item in different context to help learners guess the meaning. This technique has numerous benefits. It makes learners attached with the word several times; also, they can generalize its item in other different contexts.

8. Strategies to Support Vocabulary Development

Strategies	Before reading	During reading	After reading
Word trees	√		√
Semantic Feature Analysis	√		√
context clues	√	√	√
cloze strategy	√	√	√
Words in Context	√	√	√
Vocabulary Journal		√	√
Word Sorts	√		√
Frayer Model	√		√

Table1: Strategies to Support Vocabulary Development (Kimbell, 2009)

Vocabulary is one of five components of reading instruction that is essential to teach students how to read. It is very important to facilitate reading comprehension. Kimberly (2009) suggests some strategies to improve vocabulary's level of students before reading, during reading, and after reading.

8.1. Word Trees

Word Trees can help students recognize how words can grow from base words and root words. To create this activity, write on individual cards the base word or root word, the meaning of the base word or root word, then six or more words that contain that part. Repeat this process for two other base words or root words.

8.2. Semantic Feature Analysis

The Semantic Feature Analysis activity uses a chart or grid to compare words or ideas, which also takes advantage of how the brain organizes information. The focus of SFA is to help students identify whether a relationship exists between words and other features that have been identified. Words are listed in the left column while the criteria or features are listed across the top. Students have to decide whether each word is associated with the criteria by showing a plus or minus sign.

Students use SFA to make decisions concerning what each type of word part means: prefix, base word, affix, suffix, and word root. To be able to do this activity, students should be familiar with the terminology of each word:

1. Prefix: an affix placed at the beginning of a word or word root in order to form a new word. Example: prepay.

2. Base Word: words that stand on their own after all prefixes and suffixes have been removed. Example: govern in government, or agree in agreement.

3. Affix: a morphemic element added to the beginning or ending of a word or root in order to add to the meaning of the word or to change its function. Example: prepayment.

4. Suffix: the end of a word or a root in order to form a new word. Example: helpless.

5. Word Root: the part of the word that remains after the prefixes and suffixes have been removed, but is not a word that can stand by itself. Example: Vis in visible, spec in spectator.

8.3. Context Clues

We can show children how to use context clues to identify word meanings by helping them learn to recognize specific categories of clues they might encounter in texts. One important point to remember is that using context clues is best when combined with definitional information instead of using contextual analysis in isolation. Examples of context clues can include these categories: Background- experience- Definitions- Examples- Comparison/Contrast- Function.

8.4. Cloze Strategy

An effective way to model using context clues is to use the cloze strategy. The technical definition of the cloze activity is to delete every word in a passage. Another way is to delete major vocabulary words in the passage. You have to be cautious about removing too many words, or there will not be enough text for students to construct meaning. Students read the passage, and then they try to determine the missing word.

8.5. Words in Context

Words in Context can be used to give students the opportunity to show what they know about the word before reading using a combination of word parts and context. They do this by taking the word apart by examining prefixes, root words, and suffixes. They also identify other words that have the same parts (ex. un). They then write their own definition based on the analysis of the word. After they have read the text, then the WIC chart can be revised to see if they would make any changes.

8.6. Vocabulary Journal

The Vocabulary Journal is where students record words, their meanings, and how they are used. It can be a two-stage process where children record interesting words on a chart as they are reading a text. They then go back later and research selected words in their Vocabulary Journal. The difference between this activity and the Vocabulary

Knowledge Rating Scale is that the words are given to students by the teacher in the KRS activity whereas students select the words they are interested in for the Vocabulary Journal.

8.7. Word Sorts

Word Sorts can be used as a way for students to categorize words using structural elements such as prefixes, suffixes, or root word. Word sorts can also be used by students to classify words into categories based on meanings, word origins, or even parts of speech. They do this by using their prior knowledge about words to determine the relationships that exist. There are two types of word sorts that can be used in the classroom:

• **Closed sorts** are teacher directed where the teacher defines the categories and models the process of sorting words.

• **Open sorts** are when students create their own categories as they search for commonalities between the words.

8.8. Frayer Model

Vocabulary knowledge is one of the five essential components of effective reading. The content areas are packed with concepts and technical vocabulary that students must understand if they are to be successful readers and learners. A strategy designed to help students learn content-specific terminology is the use of vocabulary cards, also called the Frayer Model. This strategy has been shown to increase depth and breadth of word knowledge, resulting in greater comprehension.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, we can say that vocabulary is one of five important components of reading instruction. Through the foregoing chapter, we have tried to discuss some ideas related to teaching vocabulary such as definition, its importance, approaches and principles of vocabulary instruction. Furthermore, this chapter provided and explained the strong relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension. At the end, we showed and explained many techniques and strategies for teaching vocabulary.

The Field Work

Introduction

We have suggested the use of the questionnaire in order to investigate and check students and teachers opinions concerning the effects of teaching vocabulary to improve reading comprehension.

One of the objectives of the questionnaire was to prove the student's perceptions of the various benefits of reading comprehension, and the study will center on promoting student's reading comprehension and fostering their vocabulary. A total number of 50 first year students of English, and 10 teachers of English at Biskra University.

This chapter is devoted to the presentation and the analysis of the data obtained through the implementation of the present research. As a first step, we start by introducing the sample of the study. Second, we describe, analyze and interpret the questionnaires results. Which, in turn, help us confirm or disconfirm our hypotheses about the effects of teaching vocabulary in improving reading comprehension. We provide two sections, the first one deals with the students' questionnaire analysis, and the second deals with the teacher's questionnaire analysis. In addition to that, we present our research findings.

The Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

Sample

The fifty (50) students who responded to the questionnaire were chosen among the total number of the first year LMD students' population (557) at the University of Biskra. First year EFL learners at the University of Biskra during the academic year 2014/2015 are divided into ten (10) groups and each group contains (57) to (59) students.

Administration of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administrated to the first year students at Biskra University in English department in 19 April 2015. Their exact number is 50 students. The questionnaire was directly distributed to students by the researcher and was filled during their classes. The students received oral instruction about how to complete the questionnaire and were provided with clarification of any items.

Description of the Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire is designed to obtain data concerning the students' opinion about the learning situations and their attitude towards teaching vocabulary in improving reading comprehension. The questionnaire made of 19 items. The types of questions are mainly closed-ended (either yes or no questions or multiple-choice questions) because students may fail to express themselves using the target language as well as to elicit more precise response. The items in the questionnaire are organized in three sections. Each section tends to elicit a set of information; student questionnaire includes some common items with the teacher. The aim is to compare the opinions given from both sides (teacher and student).

The questionnaire includes items that organized in three sections, each section intended to investigate and provide particular information:

Section one: general information which contains four items.

Section two: overview of reading which contains eight items.

Section three: teaching vocabulary which contains seven items.

Analysis of the Results

<u>Section One:</u> General Information

1. Sex:

	response	percentage
Male	06	12%
Female	44	88%
Total	50	100%

Table 2: students 'gender distribution
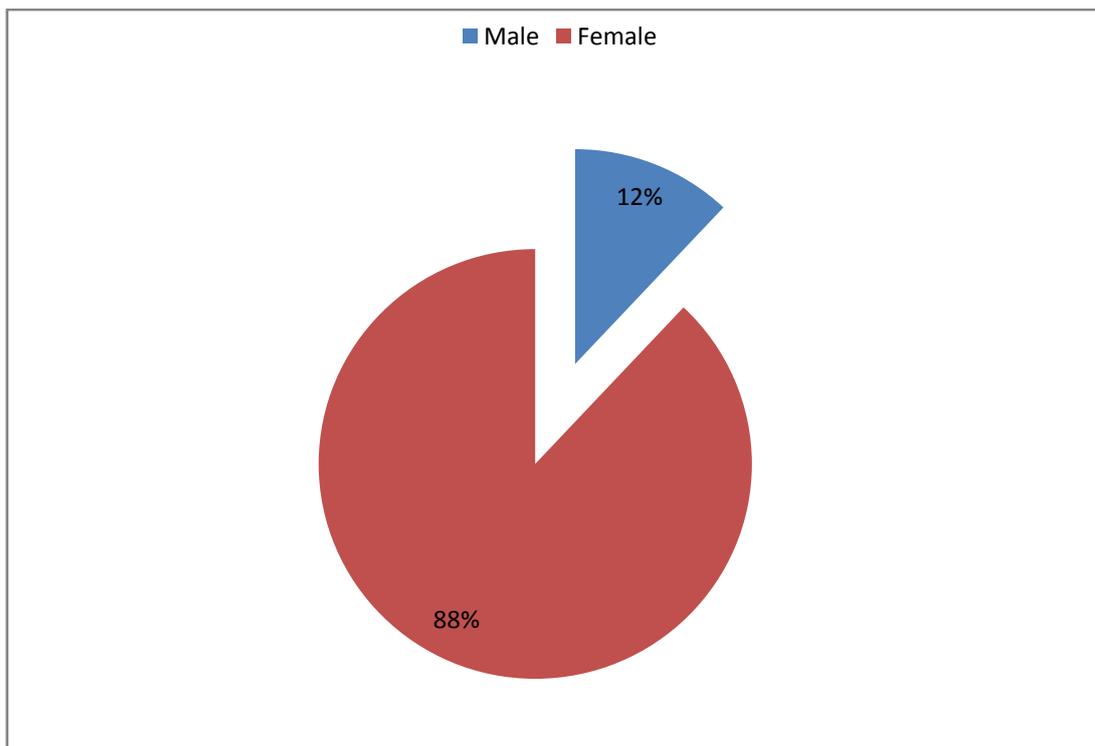

Figure 1: students 'gender distribution

This table confirms that over representation of females. Out of (50) participants, (88%) are females and (12%) are males. This high females' representation in the English department at Biskra University shows that the females are more interested in studying foreign languages especially English, boys perhaps show that they are interested in

scientific and technical streams. The two phenomena are interpreted according to the real future jobs' requirements and consideration.

2. Why have you chosen English to study?

	response	percentage
To get a job	14	28%
To travel	04	08%
Love it	32	64%
Total	50	100%

Table 3: reasons of choosing English
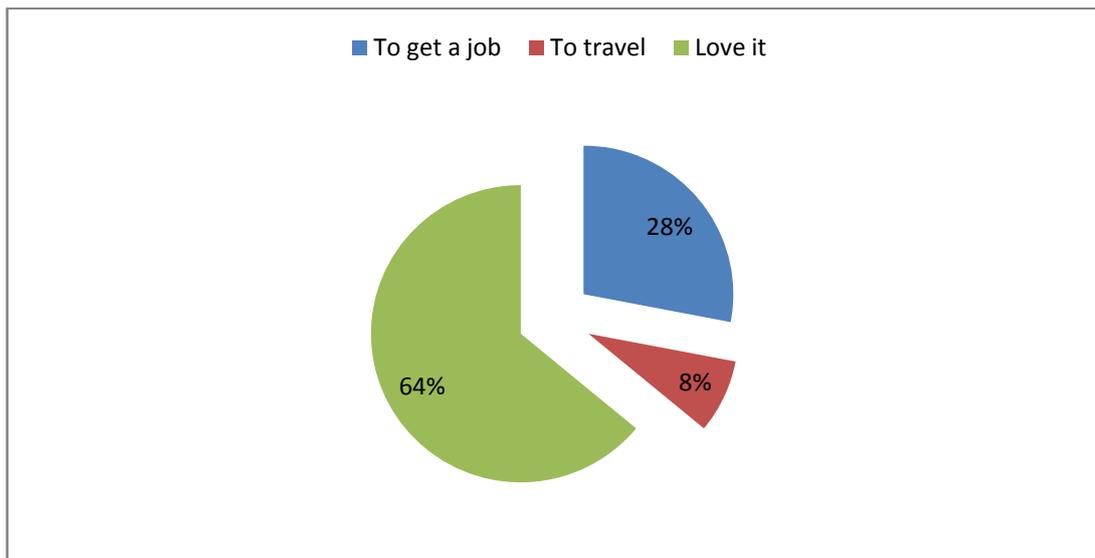
Figure 2: reasons of choosing English

From this table, we remark that the majority of students are chosen English language, because the majority of students (70%) love it, (23%) they need it for job, others (7%) of students to travel.

3. How long have you been studying English?

The majority of the students (33) making up (66%) stated that they have been studying English for seven years. This is believed to be the normal number to reach out

their academic year. Those who stated that they have been studying English for eight years (26%) and those who declared that they have been studying English for ten years or more (08%) are believed that they have repeated one or many years.

4. How do you consider your level in English?

	response	percentage
Good	12	24%
Average	30	60%
Poor	08	16%
Total	50	100%

**Table 4: Students' level in English**
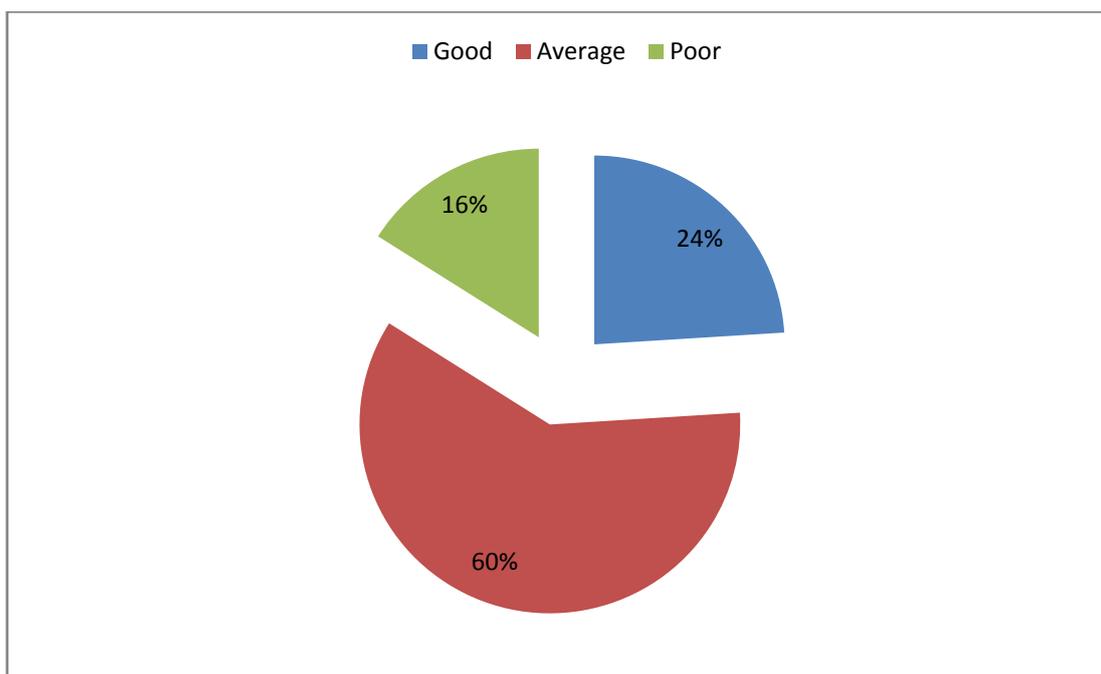
Figure 3: Students' level in English

We can notice that the highest percentage of students (60%) claims that their level in English is average. Others (24%) show that they are good in English. The least percentage (16%) of students shows that their level is less than average. Students usually

relate their level to how well or how bad they can understand and produce the language either orally or in writing.

Section Two: Overview of Reading:

5.How much do you like reading?

	response	percentage
A lot	33	66%
A little	13	26%
Not at all	04	08%
Total	50	100%

Table 5: Student's attitude toward reading
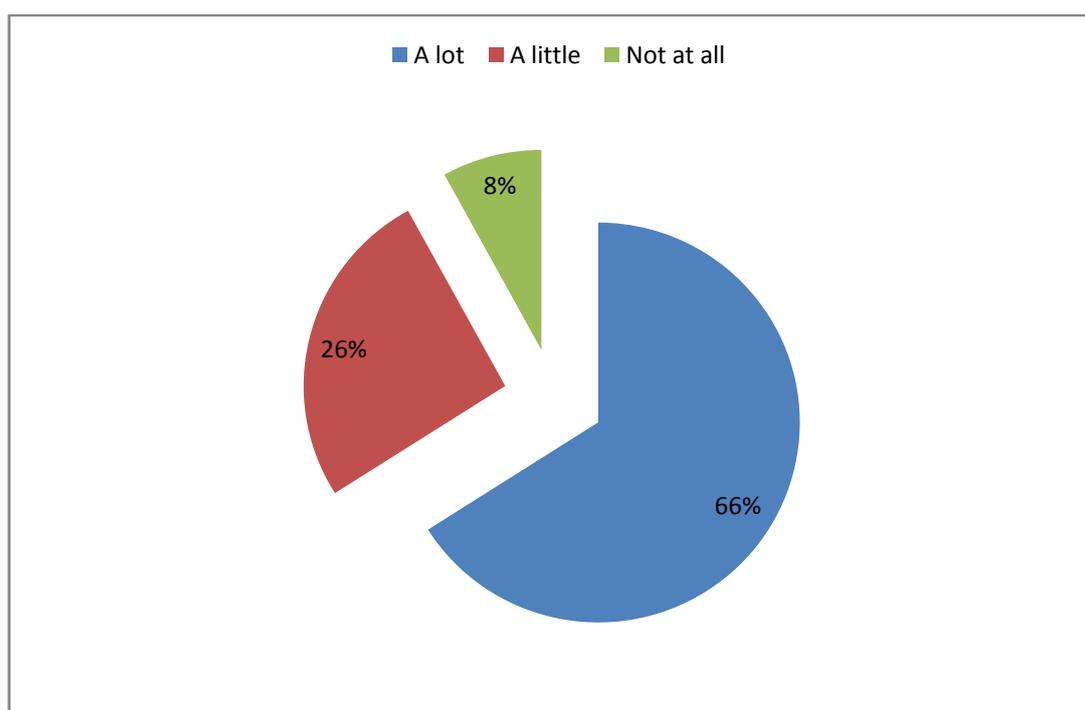

Figure 4: Student's attitude toward reading

The majority of students (50) choose answer "a lot of ". This means that reading viewed as an important task to be fulfilled. There are different views about the extent they like reading or not. A high rate of students (33) making up (66%) like reading and (26%)

of them have a neutral attitude toward reading. However, (04) students (08%) have a negative view; they do not like reading at all.

6. In which language do you prefer to read?

|	response	percentage
Arabic	22	40%
French	00	00%
English	28	50%
Total	50	100%

Table 6: Students' preferred reading
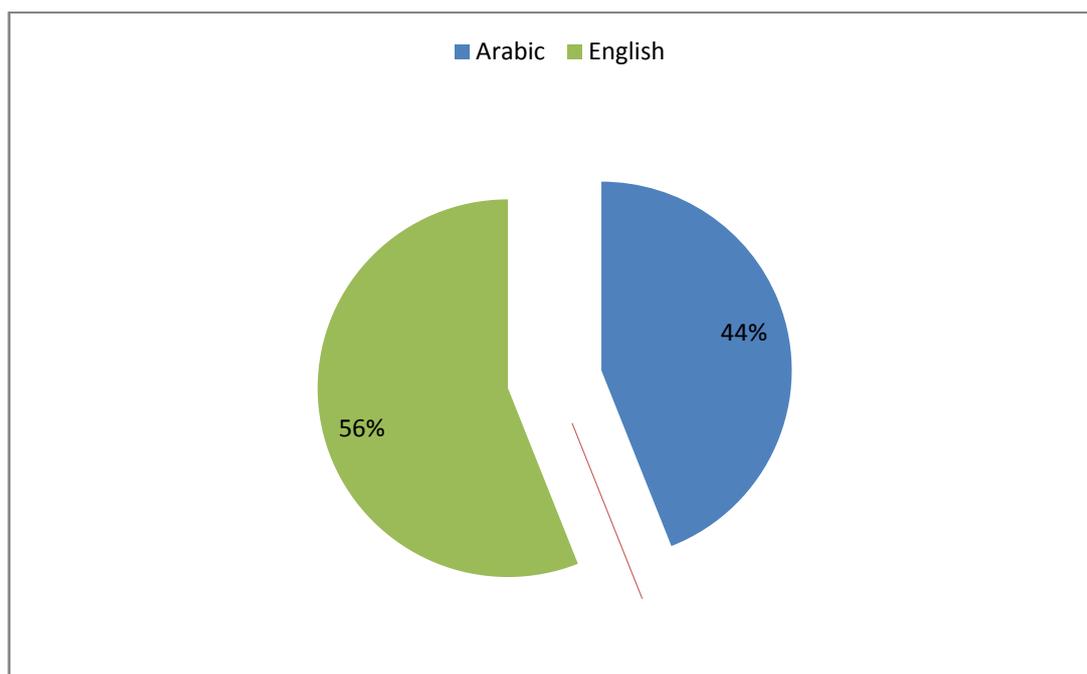
Figure 5: Students' preferred reading

Preferring to read in Arabic refers to the fact that this language is the mother tongue and it is easy to read, but there is a big number of students (28) making up (56%) prefer to read in English because they interested in the English culture and they regard this language as an international language.

However, in our analysis, no one of those students preferred to read in French because they deal with French just as module and it is so difficult to read and this reflects to their weak level at French.

7. How often do you read?

|	response	percentage
Frequently	09	08%
Sometimes	37	74%
Rarely	04	18%
Total	50	100%

Table 7: Students' reading habits
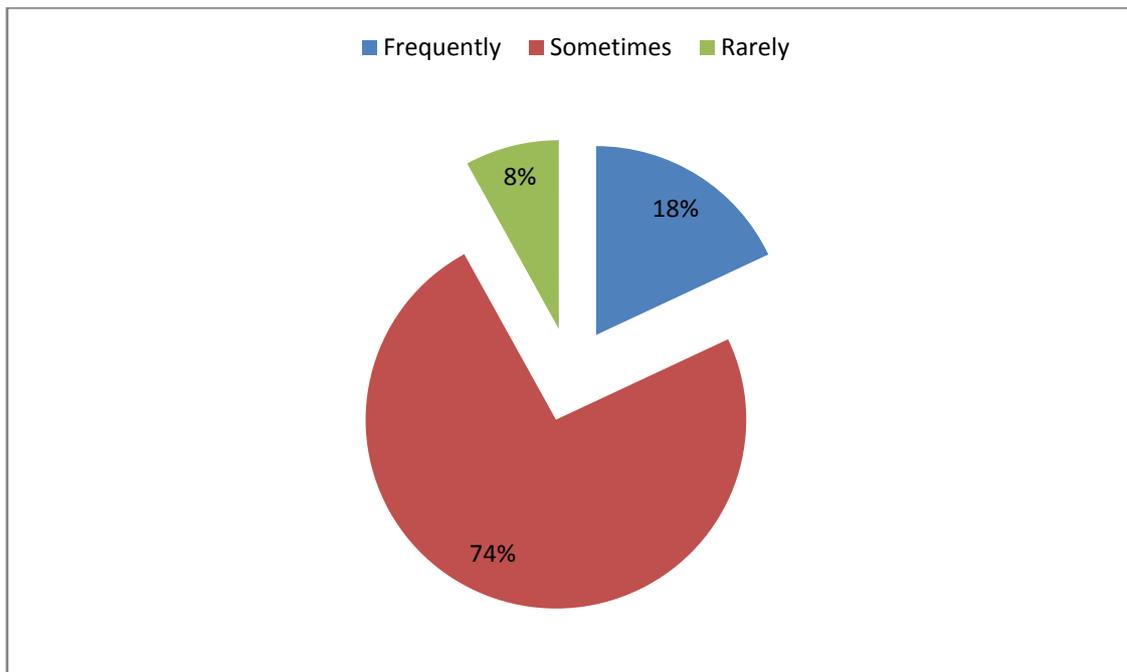
Figure 6: Students' reading habits

About 37 of students (74%) said that sometimes they like reading. A big number of them prefer reading when they want, but nine (18%) of students prefer to read frequently which is considered as a good way to improve their reading. Finally four making up (08%) of students rarely read.

8. What type of readings do you like?

	response	percentage
Short stories	20	40%
Poems	06	12%
Newspaper	10	20%
Magazine	10	20%
Others	04	08%
Total	30	100%

Table 8: Students' type of reading
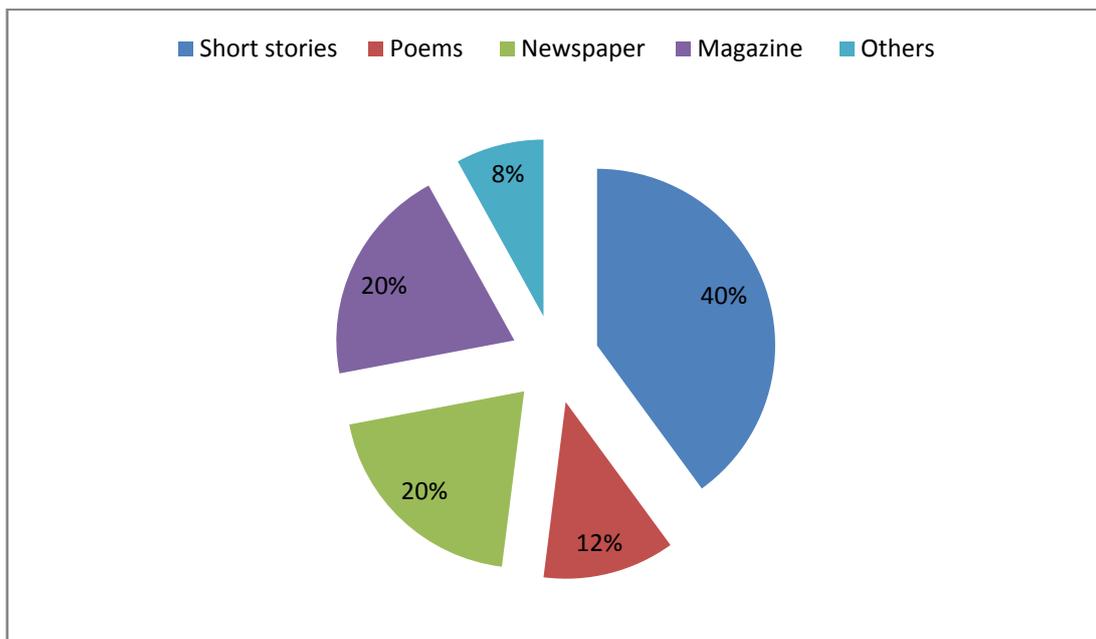
Figure 7: Students' type of reading

According to the result displayed on the table, 20(40%) of students like reading short stories. The respondents seem to involve themselves with stories, for enjoyment. This proves that students may read for the sake of enjoyment rather than looking for information. Students feel like being friends to the stories' characters. It is assumed that reading short stories saves time and energy on the one hand, and helps in the learning of

vocabulary. However, 20 (40%) of students like reading newspapers and magazines to know the daily lives of other people or just for the entertainment. A few number of students (12%) like reading poems and others (08%) like novels, articles, free writing and books.

9. Your reading comprehension of the written article is:

	response	percentage
Very good	10	17%
Good	26	43%
Average	24	40%
Poor	00	00%
Total	50	100%

Table 9: Students' comprehend the text
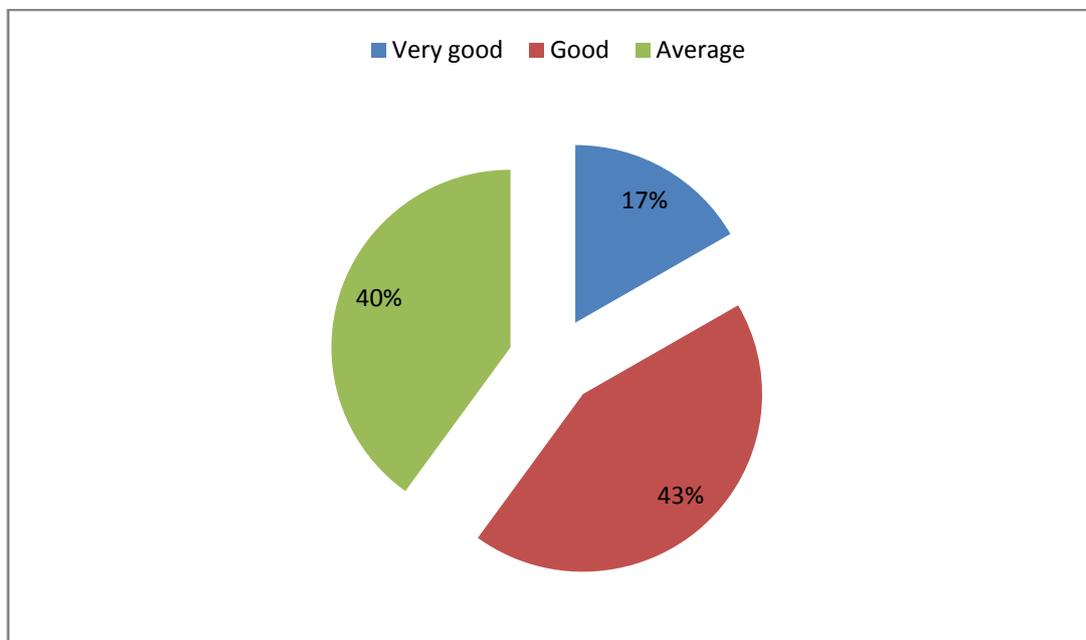
Figure 8: Students' comprehend the text

According to the above table, we notice that 26 (43%) of students said that they have good comprehension to the written articles and 24 (40%) of them, their

comprehension is average. A small number of students (17%) stated that their understanding of the texts is very good. This shows that students can understand the meaning of the written articles without any difficult. They know and have more about the language they are reading with vocabulary.

10. When you read a text or a book outside the classroom. What do you expect to get from it?

	response	percentage
Get more vocabulary items	20	40%
Acquire new ideas	21	42%
Know more about the language you are reading	05	10%
Get pleasure	04	08%
Total	50	100%

Table 10: Students' expectation from reading
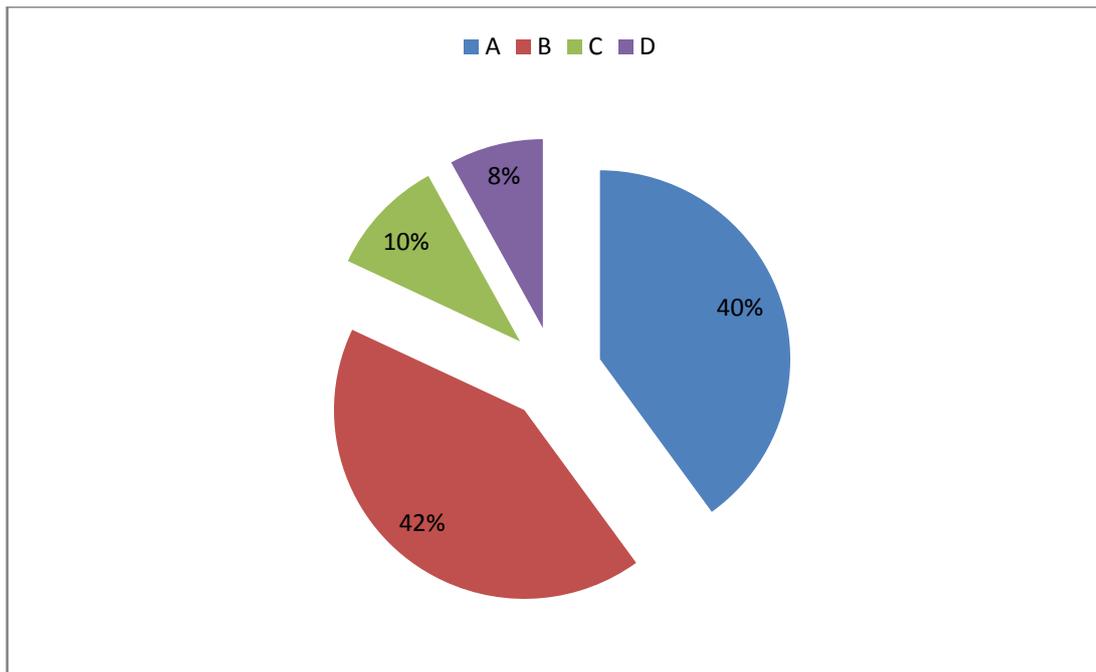
Figure 9: Students' expectation from reading

The table above shows that (42%) of student said that they read a text or a book outside the class to acquire new ideas. Other students (40%) said that they expect to get more vocabulary items from reading a text. However, others (10 %) expected to know more about the language you are reading and get pleasure (08%). Here, the results show that reading seen as an effective way to acquire vocabulary.

11. Would you like to have more hours in reading?

	response	percentage
Yes	32	64%
No	18	36%
Total	50	100

<p align="center">Table 11: Students' attitude toward reading</p>
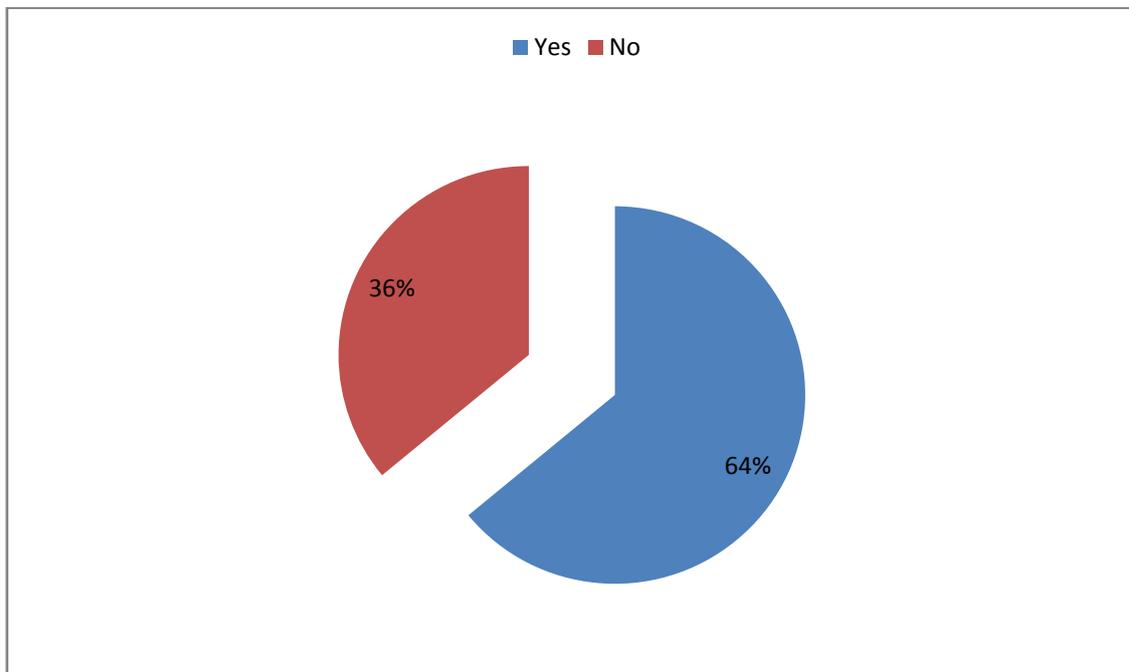
<p align="center">Figure 10: Students' attitude toward reading</p>

The table indicates that the majority of students (64%) have more hours in reading. The others (36%) said that they do not like to have more hours in reading technique.

12. While reading in class, do you prefer your teacher to:

	response	percentage
A. Choose the text or passage for you to read	10	20%
B. Let you free to choose different readings	30	60%
C. Leave you completely free to bring in what you want	10	20%
Total	50	100%

Table 12: Students' preferred reading
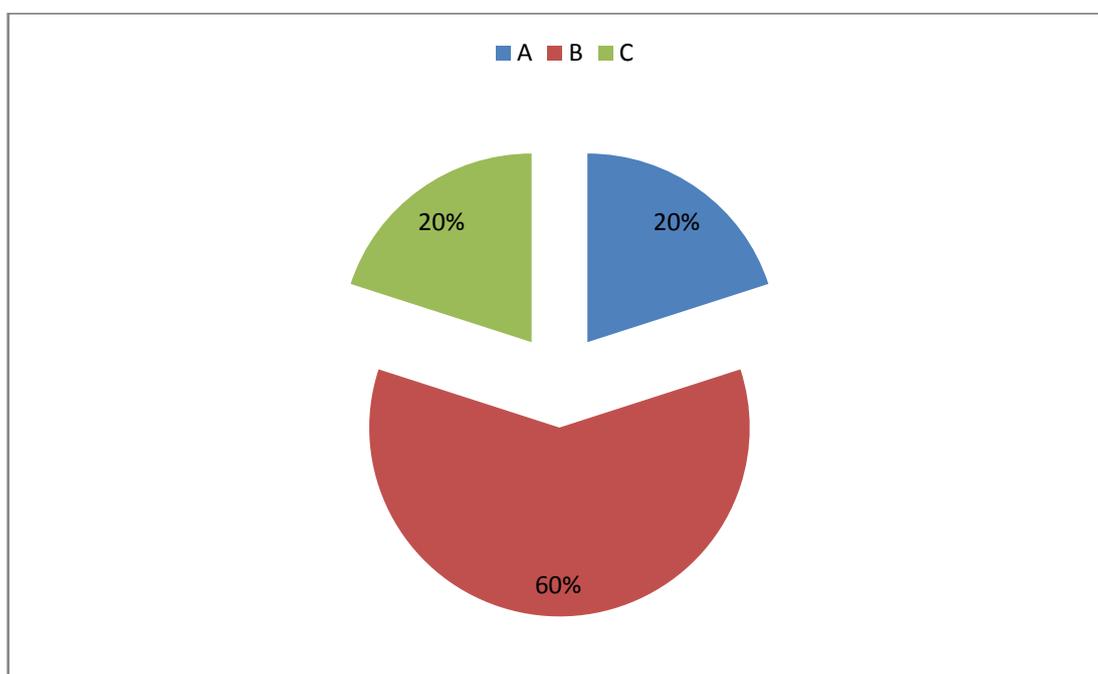
Figure 11: Students' preferred reading

The table above shows that the majority of the students (60%) prefer to have freedom to choose what they are reading. They feel relax and do not effect when they read. (40%) of the students prefer both choosing the text or passage to read or Leaving completely free to bring in what they want.

<u>Section Three:</u> Teaching Vocabulary

13. Do you use dictionary to understand difficult words when you read?

	response	percentage
Yes	46	87%
No	04	13%
Total	50	100%

Table 13: Students with dictionary
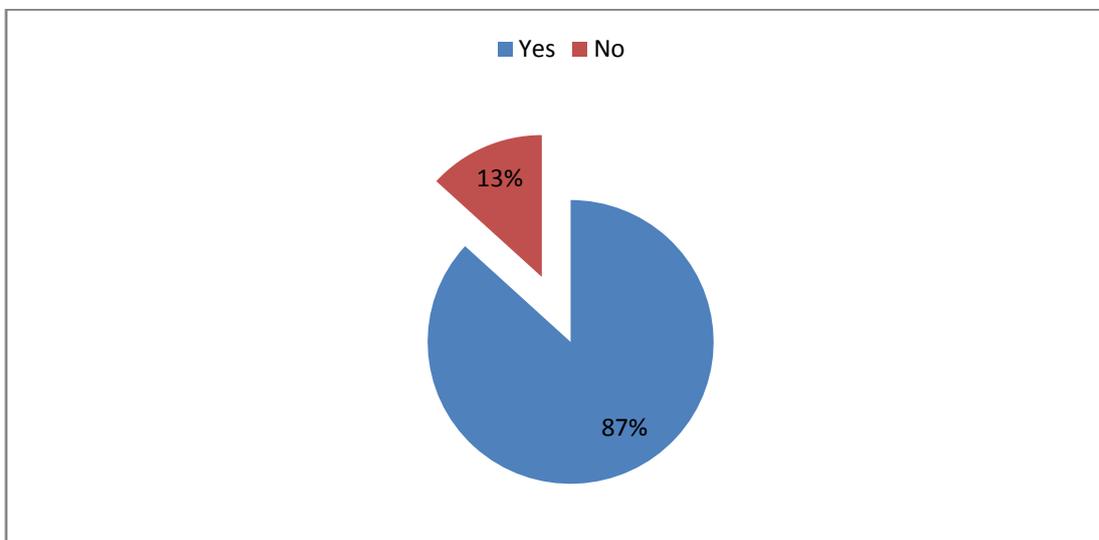
Figure 12: Students with dictionary

According to this table, the majority of students (87%) said that they use dictionary to understand difficult words when they read. Because, it is very important to give the meaning of difficult words, but others (07%) said that they do not use dictionary to explain difficult words in the text when they read. They do not give much importance to this technique that used.

14. If you use a dictionary is it:

	response	percentage
An English dictionary	18	64%
An Arabic-English dictionary	08	29%
An English-French dictionary	00	7%
Total	28	100%

Table 14: Types of dictionaries students use
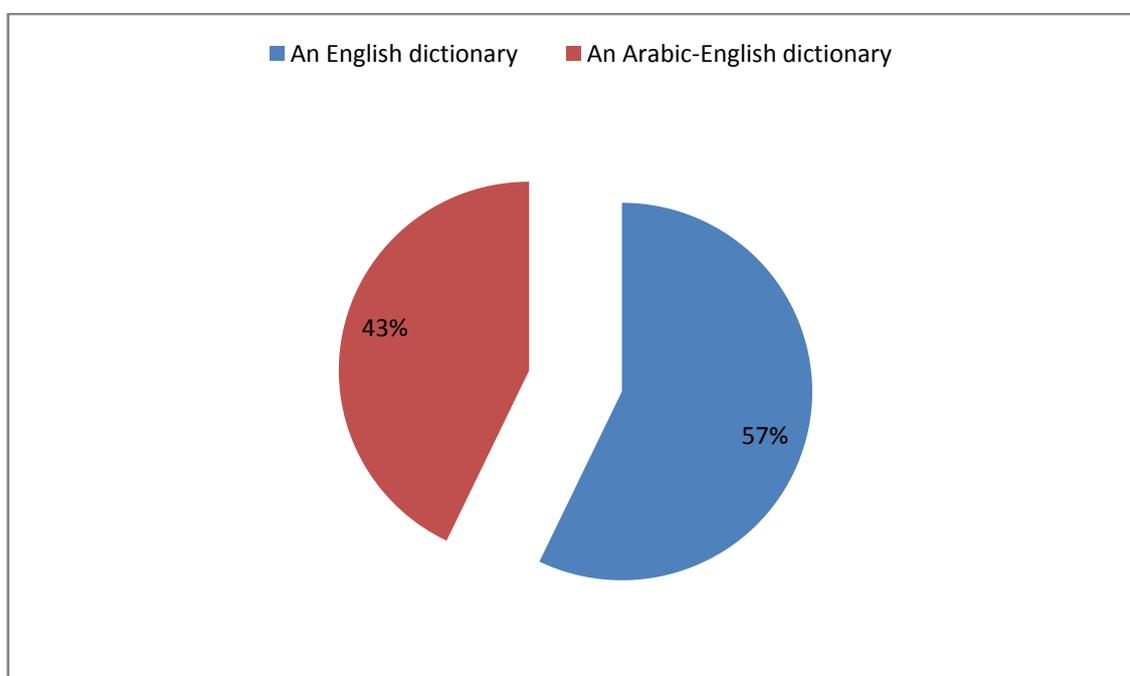
Figure 13: Types of dictionaries students use

This table shows that when the students use a dictionary, it is rather an English-English dictionary (57%). This is due to their ability to learn English and the dictionary is the most available source. Others rely on English-Arabic dictionary (43%). This is because of the influence of the mother tongue.

15. When you encounter difficult words while reading do you:

	response	percentage
Read again to guess the meaning from the context	20	40%
Ask the teacher about its meaning	08	16%
Ask a peer	00	00%
Look it up in the dictionary	22	44%
Total	30	100%

Table 15: What the students do when encountering new words while reading
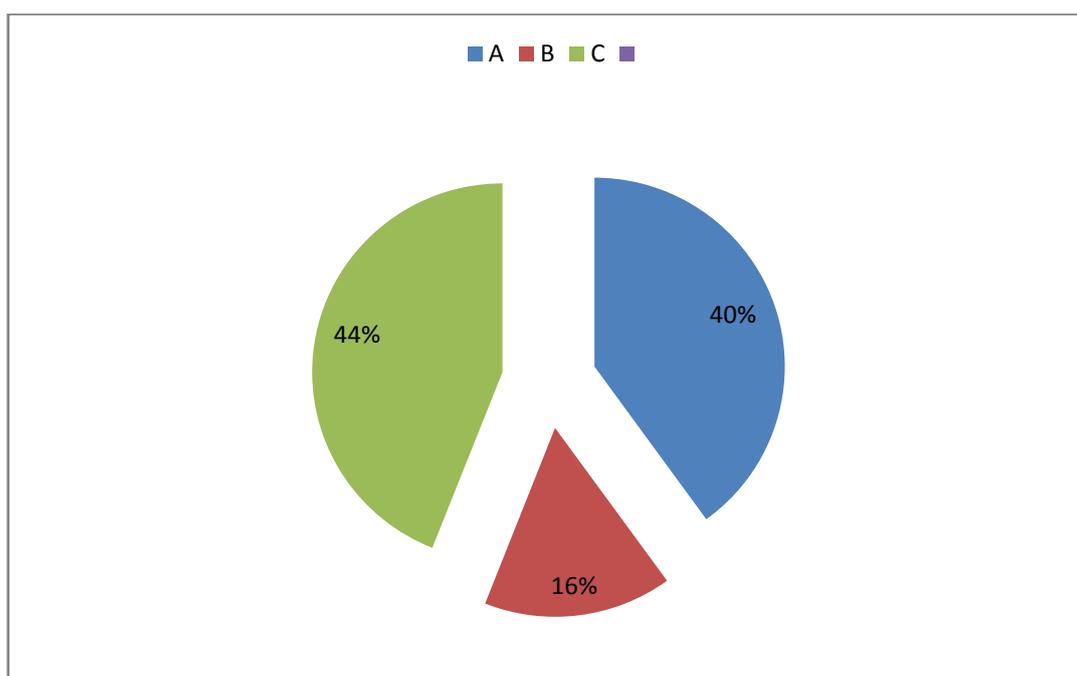
Figure1 4: What the students do when encountering new words while reading

The previous table showed that (44%) of the students depend on the use of the dictionary for grasping meaning from a text. While (40%) of them like to read again to guess the meaning from the text. Others (16%) ask their teachers about the meaning of new words. No student asks a peer to explain the difficult words while reading.

16. What do you prefer as an answer to explain a word?

	response	percentage
A translation	05	10%
A definition	30	60%
A word in context	07	14%
A synonym/ opposite	08	16%
Total	50	100%

Table 16: Answers preferred to explain a word
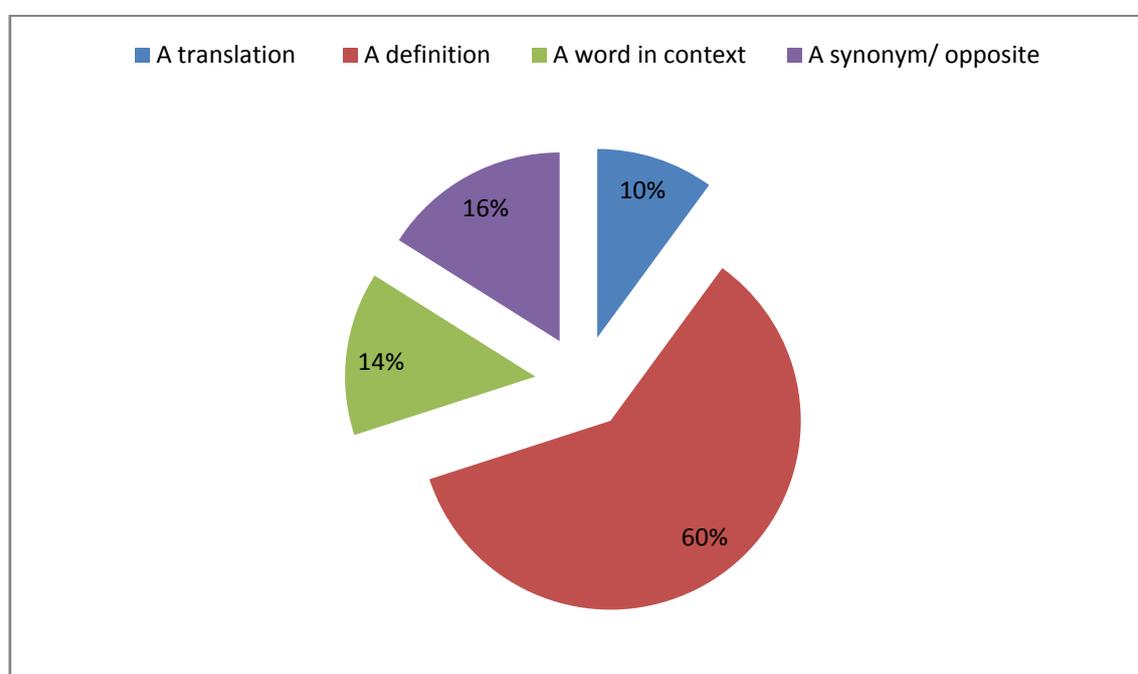
Figure 15: Answers preferred to explain a word

We notice that the students use different techniques to explain new words. (60%) of them prefer to define the difficult words by using dictionaries to check their meanings. Others (16%) prefer synonyms and opposites techniques. (14%) of them preferred word in context as an effective technique and (10%) of them translate to the mother tongue.

17. When you come to across a new vocabulary item, do you use a notebook?

	response	percentage
Yes	40	80%
No	10	20%
Total	50	100%

Table 17: Students who use a notebook
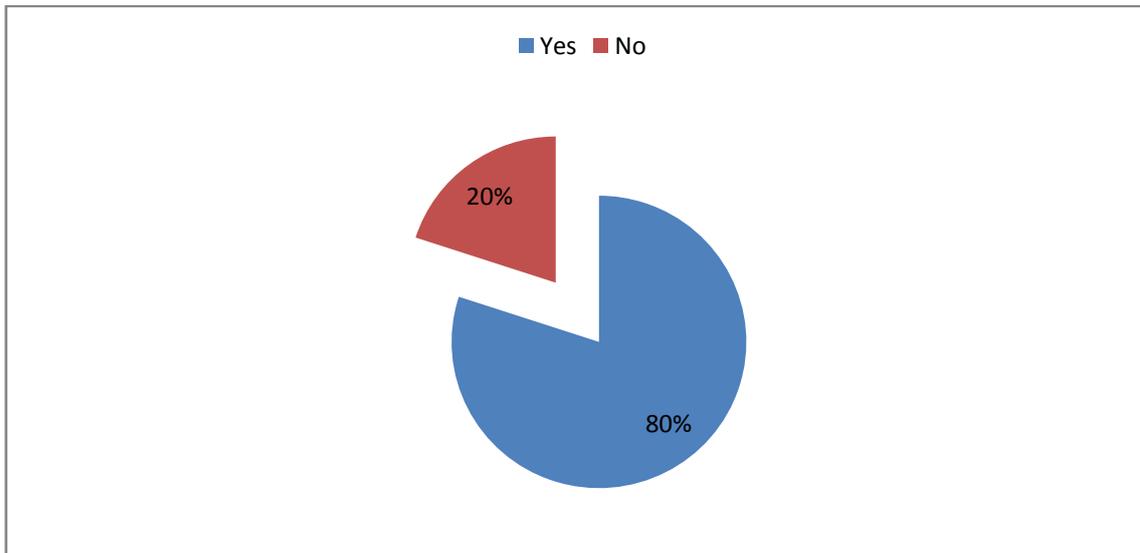
Figure1 6: Students who use a notebook

According to this table, we noticed the majority of students (80%) hove affirmed that they have recourse to the use of a notebook. A few number of students (20%) said that they do not use a notebook to across new words.

18. If "Yes" is it:

	response	percentage
Always	13	32%
Some times	22	55%
Rarely	05	13%
Total	40	100%

Table 18: Times students use a notebook
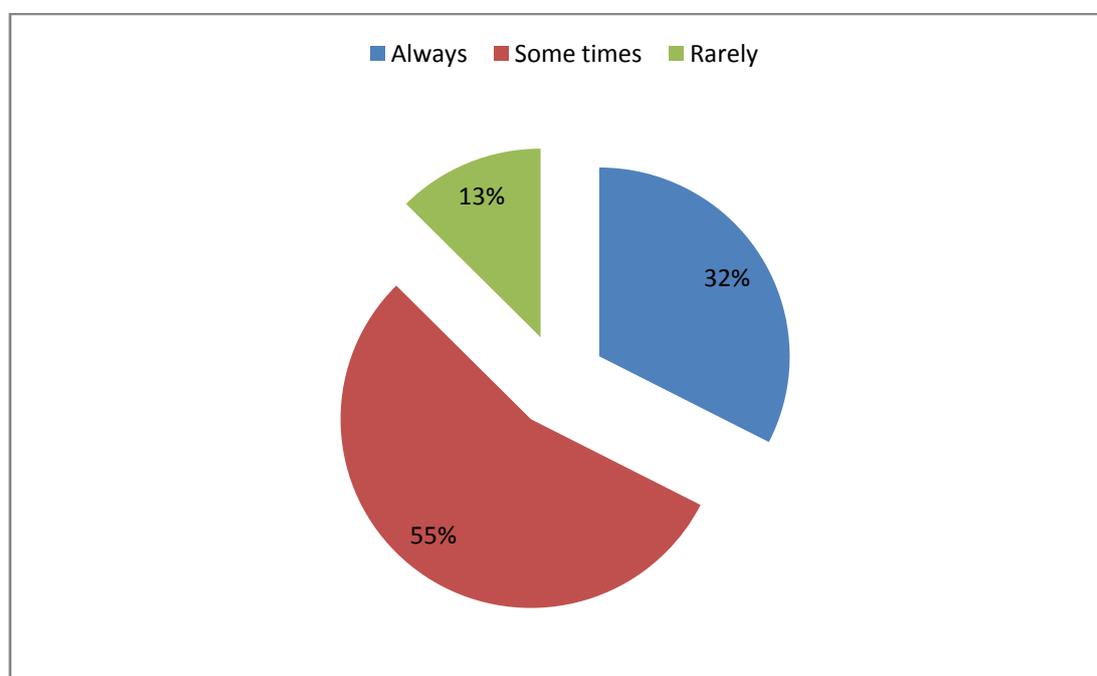
Figure 17: Times students use a notebook

This table shows that the use of the notebook is not an occasional one: (55%) of the students use it sometimes and (32%) use it always. They use a notebook to write the meaning in their mother tongue and write the meaning in English by using synonyms and opposites, and put it in new sentences.

19. Do you have any other suggestions concerning the effects of teaching vocabulary to improve reading comprehension?

At the end of the questions, we wished to give our students free space to suggest what they think about teaching vocabulary to improve reading comprehension.

Here are the obtained suggestions

–To improve reading skill, we need to read at least a short paragraph or even newspapers.

– We must put more hours in reading.

– We should practice more short stories and novels reading in literature.

 – We must read outside and inside the classroom.

 –We must use different techniques in the reading.

Findings

The student questionnaire is designed with the purpose to explore the students perceptions of the learning situation, their attitudes towards teaching vocabulary to improve reading comprehension .The analysis of questionnaire allowed the researcher to come out with the following findings.

The population estimated is characterized by a female over representation their overage age is 18 years old, the students show a positive and negative attitude towards these items. Most students find that reading skill is too important in their studies in any language and in every time with different types of readings. In addition, students should be aware of each word in English and acquire the whole meaning of a text or passage, following reading techniques and strategies step-by-step because these contribute to help students to improve their reading comprehension and vocabulary. When speaking about reading comprehension, we find that students use English- English dictionary and guessing

from context. On the other hand , students prefer their teachers to give them the freedom to choose what they want to read .they prefer their teachers to explain the meaning of new words by giving definitions , word in context , translation or synonyms and opposites . The use of the notebook to write down the meaning of unknown or difficult words has proved to be of great use by the students. These are the results of our analysis to the students' questionnaire.

Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire

Administration of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire is distributed to ten teachers – currently working at University of Biskra in April 2015.

Description of the Teachers' Questionnaire

The teacher questionnaire is designed to ten teachers in the department of English who taught different modules at Biskra University. The types of the questionnaire are open-ended questions in which teachers are asked to give full statement and others are close-ended questions in which require „yes/no‟ frequent options. The main objective is to survey the teachers' techniques and strategies that they follow in teaching vocabulary as well as their contribution in improving students' reading comprehension. Moreover, it seeks to recognize teachers' attitudes toward learners' difficulties in both reading and vocabulary.

The questionnaire includes items organized in three sections, each section intended to investigate and provide particular information:

Section one: general information which contains five items.

Section two: overview of reading which contains seven items.

Section three: teaching vocabulary which contains five items.

Analysis of the Questionnaire

<u>Section One:</u> General Information

1. How many years have you been teaching English as a foreign language?

From this question, we notice that the longest teaching experience is 12 years and the shortest is 4 years. This indicates that teachers have different levels of experience in teaching English as a foreign language.

2. How many years have you been teaching English at university level "English department"?

From this question, we notice that the longest teaching experience is 12 years and the shortest is 4 years, this indicates that teachers have different levels of experience in teaching English as a foreign language.

3. What are the modules that have you been teaching during this period?

This question seeks to cover the modules which had been taught by our teachers during their teaching experience. The different courses provided are cited in the following table.

	Response
Teacher 1	Phonetics, written expression, oral expression, culture, theme and version
Teacher 2	written expression, linguistics, British and American literature
Teacher 3	British civilization and American civilization
Teacher 4	written expression, oral expression, culture, ESP
Teacher 5	written expression, oral expression, grammar, theme and version

Teacher 6	written expression, oral expression, ESP, culture , American civilization
Teacher 7	written expression, oral expression, grammar, didactics, phonetics
Teacher 8	oral expression, methodology, civilization literature
Teacher 9	written expression, grammar
Teacher 10	oral expression, grammar, linguistics

Table 19: The modules taught by teachers during their teaching period

Oral expression course is among the modules that the majority of our teachers had experienced in it. In addition to different modules such as British and American literature that have a relation with intensive and extensive reading. The teachers in the modules of oral expression, British and American literature tasks the level of their students in the reading activity.

4. What degree do you have?

	response	Percentage
License	02	20%
Magister	05	50%
Doctorate	03	30%
Total	10	100%

Table 20: Teachers' qualification
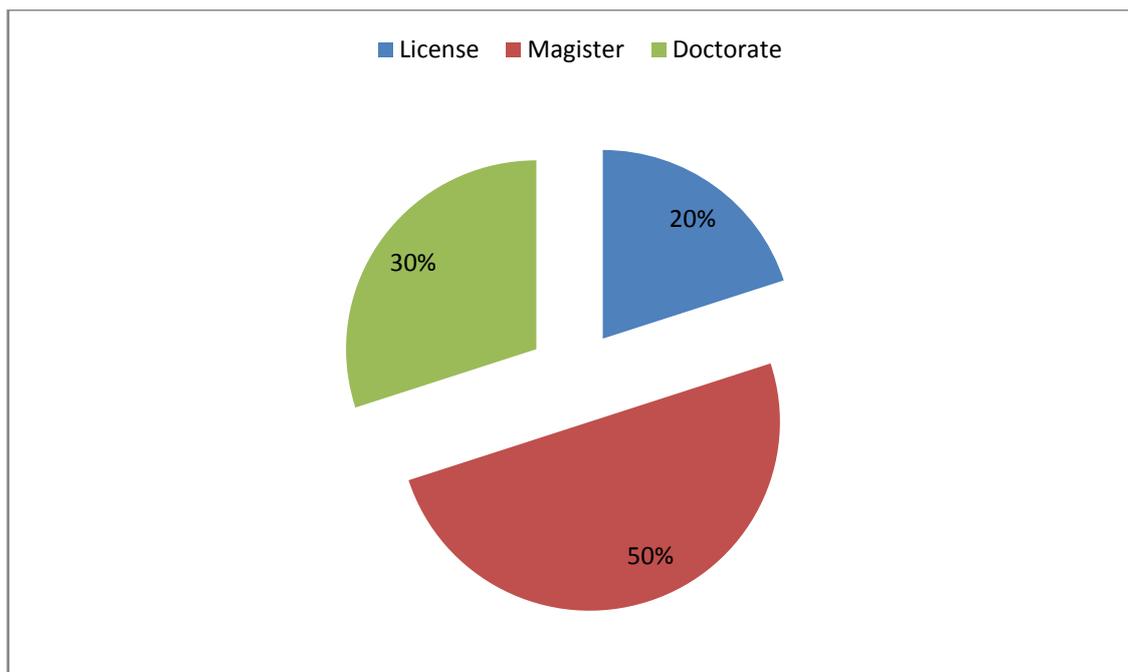
Figure 18: Teachers' qualification

Table shows that our teachers qualification differ to include two teachers (20%) who hold a license degree , where as remaining five teachers (50%) hold a magister degree (more qualified). Only three teachers have a doctorate diploma. These results indicated the diversity of the educational level among our teachers.

5. In which specialty?

	response	Percentage
Applied linguistics and TEFL	08	80%
Literature and civilization	01	10%
Linguistics and literature	01	10%
Total	10	100%

Table 21: Teacher' specialty
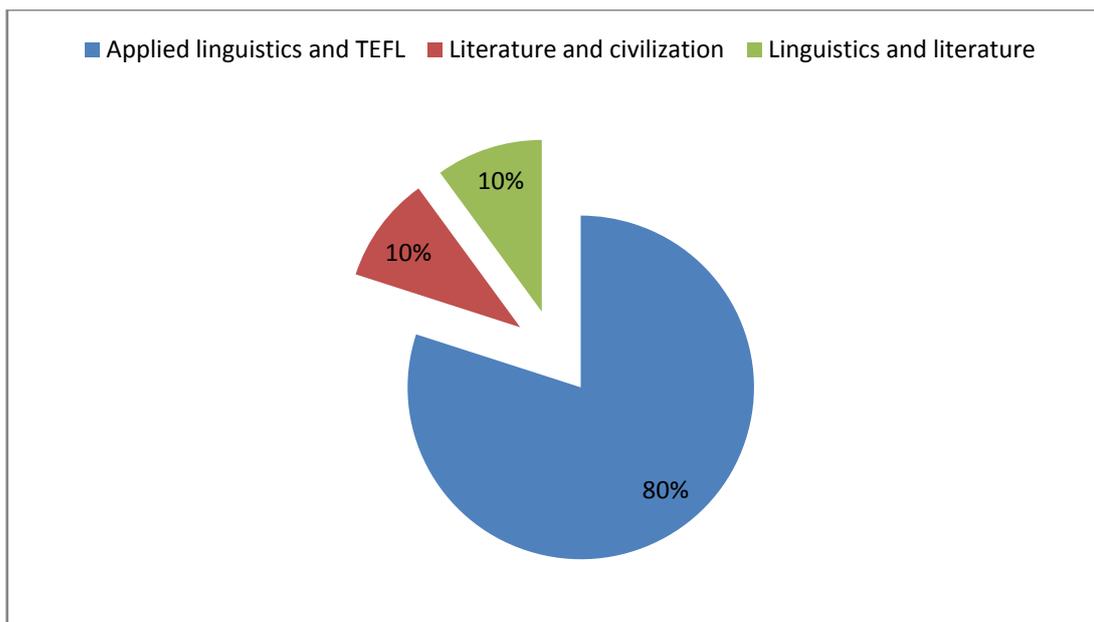
Figure 19: Teacher' specialty

The table reveals that there are three specialists in the applied linguistics and TEFL, literature and civilization, linguistics and literature.

-The majority of the teachers (8) have specialist in applied linguistics and TEFL.

-Only one teacher has a specialist in literature and civilization.

-Only one teacher has a specialist in linguistics and literature.

<u>Section Two:</u> Overview of Reading

6. How often do you encourage your students to read in the class?

	response	Percentage
Usually	07	70%
Sometimes	03	30%
Never	00	00%
Total	10	100%

Table 22: Teachers' encouragement to the read

63
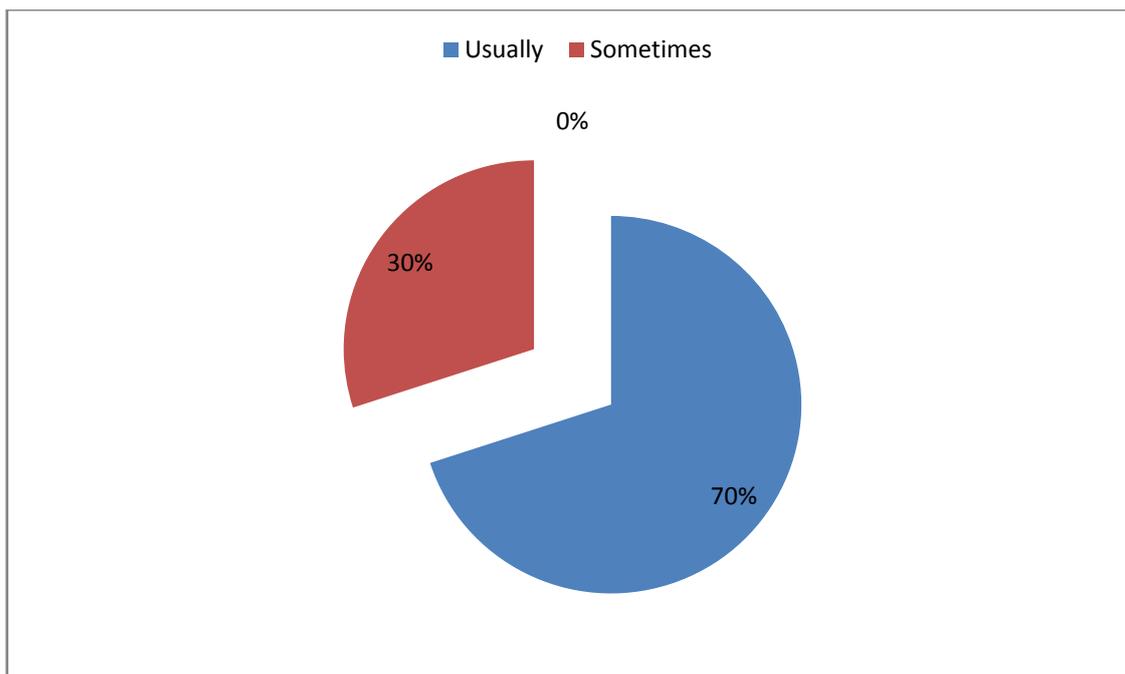
Figure 20: Teachers' encouragement to the read

The table shows that (70%) of teachers encourage their students usually to read inside or outside the class and (30%) of teachers encourage their students sometimes to read.

7. Does teaching vocabulary contribute in the improvement of the reading skill?

	response	Percentage
Yes	09	90%
No	01	10%
Total	10	100%

Table 23: The contribution of teaching vocabulary in improving reading skill
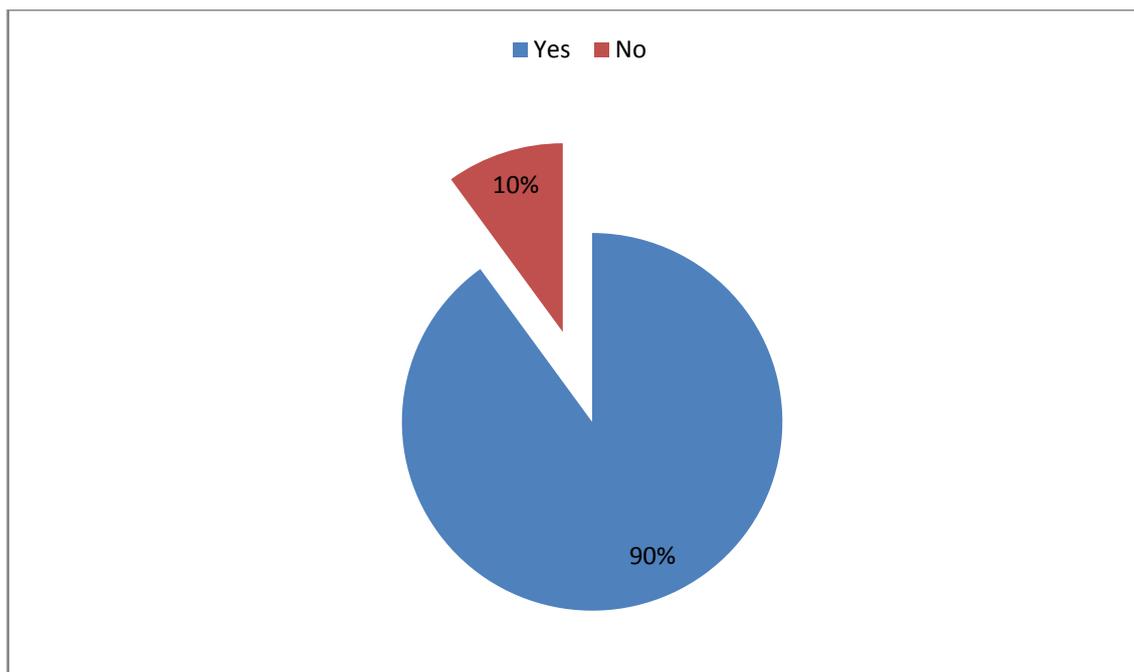
Figure 21: The contribution of teaching vocabulary in improving reading skill

The contribution of teaching vocabulary in improving reading skill showed from the table above that the majority of teachers said that teaching vocabulary contributes to the improvement of reading skill, but one teacher said that teaching vocabulary cannot contribute in the improvement of reading skill.

8. If "Yes", explain why?

According to their explanation, we find that they agreed that reading is the first source of vocabulary. It helps students to understand a reading passage by grasping its meaning (within context) more rapidly. Reading can introduce the EFL learners a wide range of vocabulary in context and students become familiar with a variety of vocabulary in different context.

Another teacher said that teaching vocabulary enriches the learner's lexical repertoire and provides him or her with systematic strategies to cope with any register. It means that vocabulary is crucial to the improvement of the reading skill in the sense that it forms part of the linguistic context and register.

9. While teaching your students, do you explain all the difficult words in a text?

	response	Percentage
Yes	08	80%
No	02	20%
Total	10	100%

Table 24: Teachers who explain the difficult words in a text
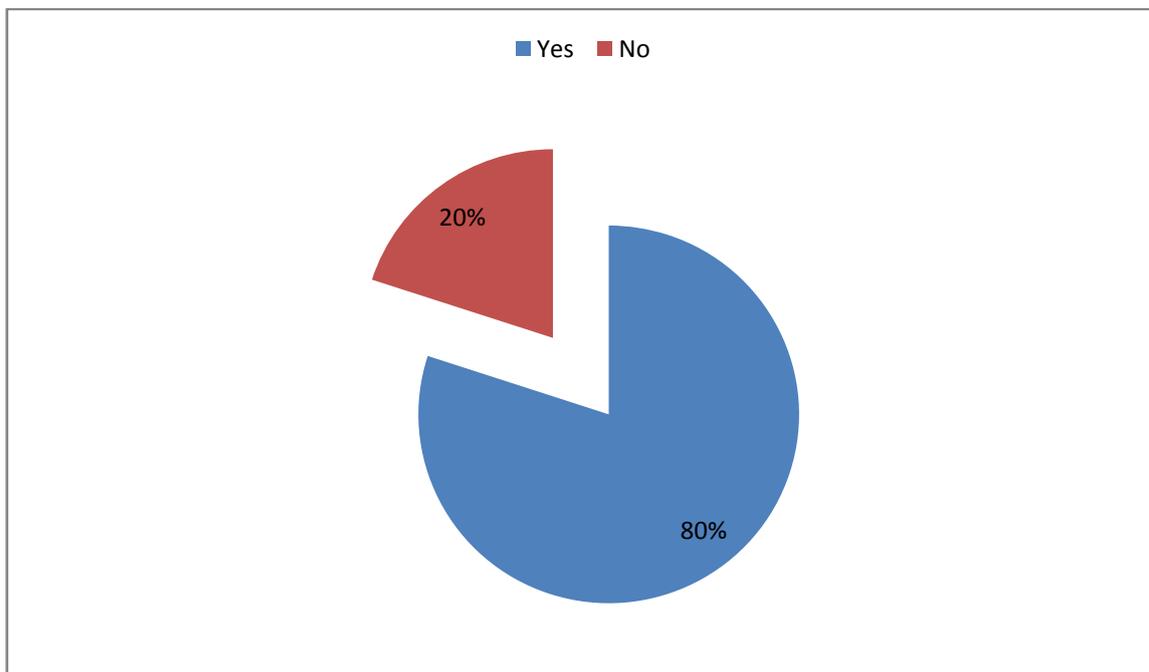
Figure 22: Teachers who explain the difficult words in a text

This table indicates that the majority of teachers (80%) explain the difficult words in a text by using different techniques such as translation the words into the mother longue, definition of words by using dictionaries, synonyms and opposites. These techniques that are used by teachers can help students to understand the meaning of words in the text.

Two teachers said that they do not explain the difficult words in a text. This is not their roles. It is the role of the students to understand the meaning of words.

10. If "Yes", do you do it

	response	Percentage
A. Before reading	01	12%
B. During reading	04	50%
C. After reading	01	12%
B+C	01	13%
A+B+C	01	13%
Total	08	100%

Table 25: Teachers who explain words before, during and after reading a text
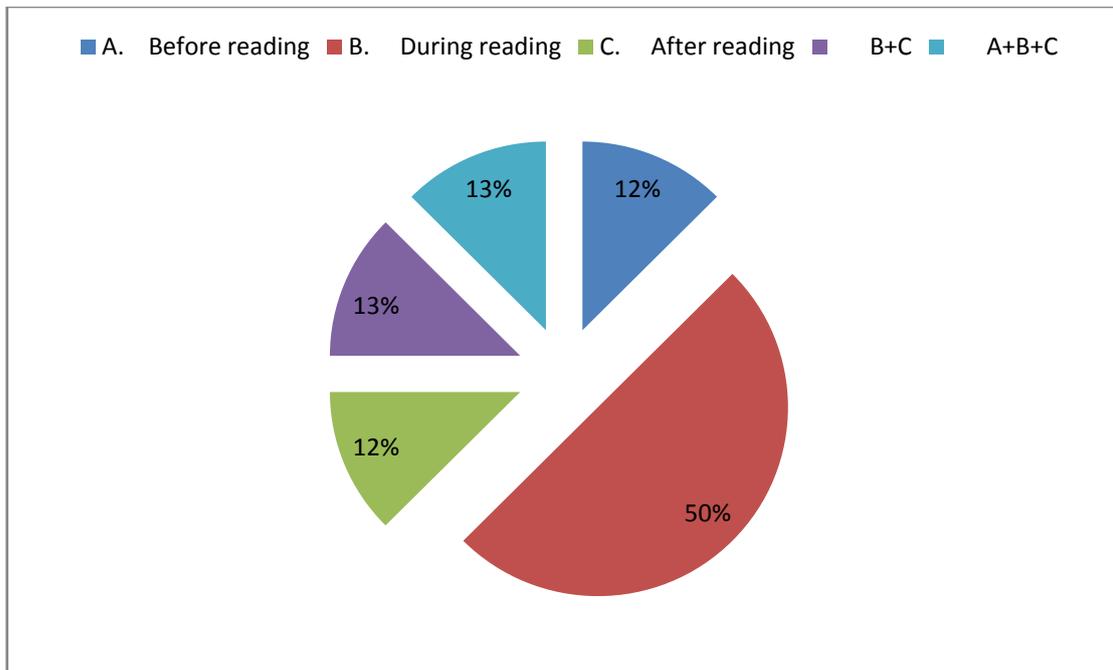
Figure 23: Teachers who explain words before, during and after reading a text

This table indicates that the common answer given by teachers is during reading followed by after reading.

11. What is the suitable technique you think it would encourage your students to read effectively in English?

	response	Percentage
A. Extensive reading	06	67%
B. Intensive reading	01	11%
A+B	02	22%
Total	09	100%

Table 26: The suitable technique that encourage students to read effectively
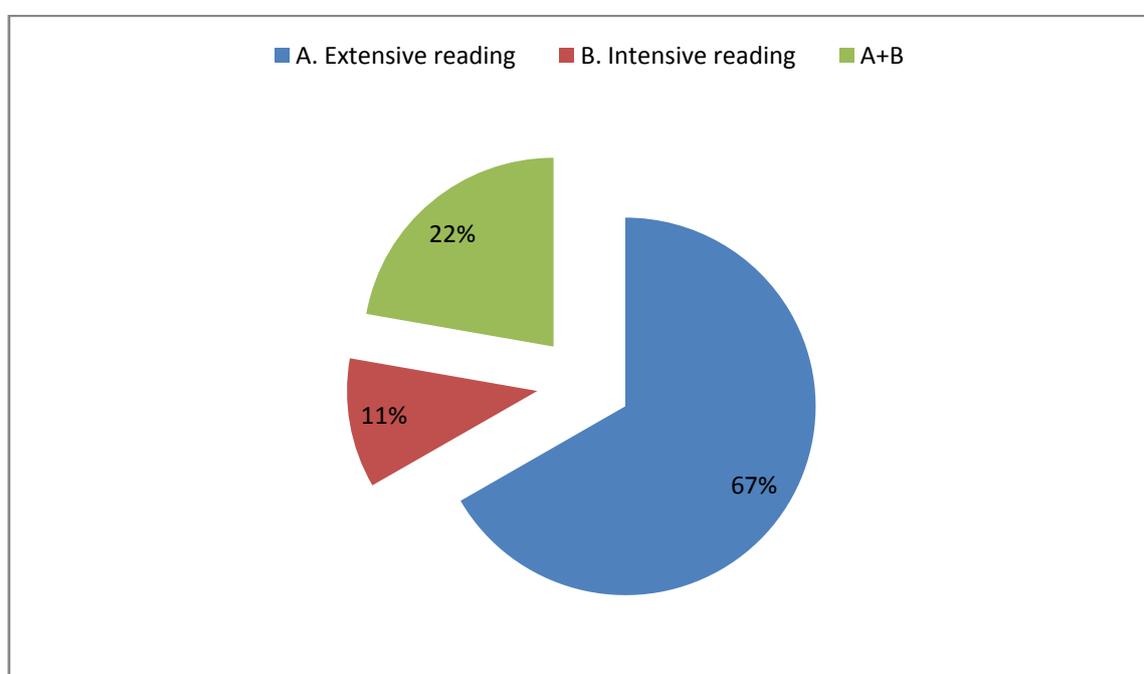
Figure 24: The suitable technique that encourage students to read effectively

Through the results displayed on the table above, we notice that six teachers considered extensive reading as a suitable technique to encourage the students to read effectively in English. They think that it is better for them to read. Only one teacher said that the intensive reading is the suitable technique that encourages the students to read.

Two teachers think that both intensive and extensive readings are very important to the students to enrich their minds.

12. In your view, what are the characteristics of good language readers?

Good readers have many characteristics. According to the views of teachers:

-Good readers are active, interested and motivated.

- Good readers are patients.

-Good readers are the ones who vary their reading strategies. In other cases, they have to skim.

-Good readers know how to read between lines and catch implicit meanings.

-They know how to gain time and choose relevant writing on their level.

<u>Section Three</u>: Teaching Vocabulary

13. Do you present new words in every lesson?

	response	Percentage
Yes	09	90%
No	01	10%
Total	10	100%

Table 27: Teachers who present new words in every lesson
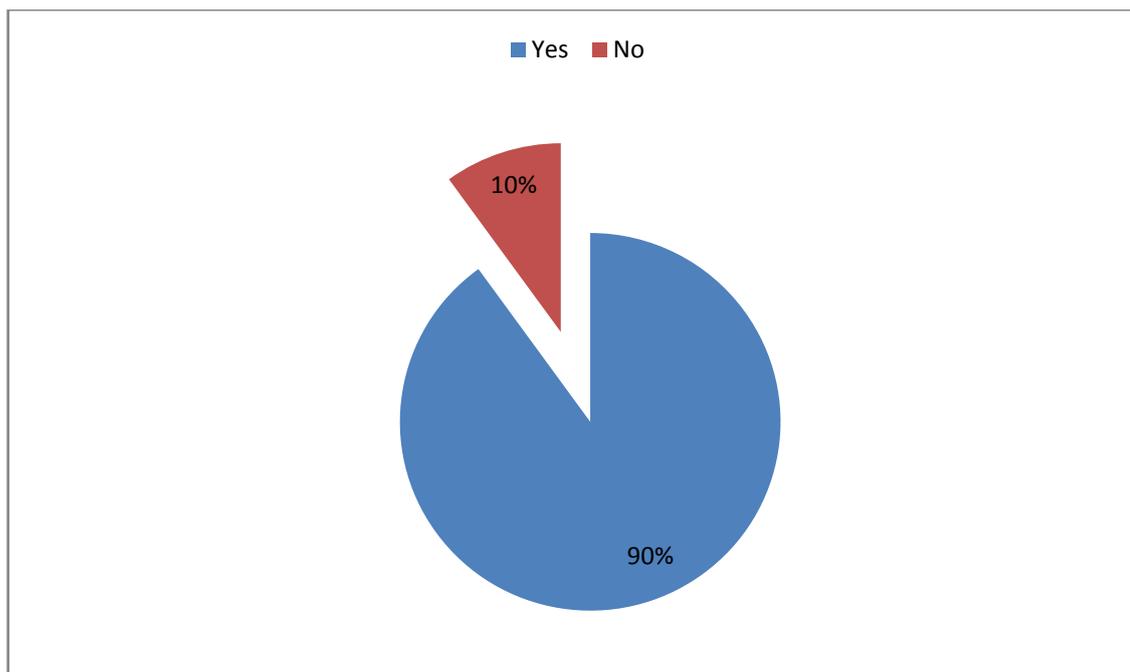
Figure 25: Teachers who present new words in every lesson

90% of teachers present new words in every lesson. This result shows the importance that teachers give to the teaching vocabulary considering it as an important component of their teaching of a foreign language.

14. When you teach new vocabulary do you use?

A. Translation   **B.** Definition

C. Word in context   **D.** Synonym and Opposite

It appears from this question that the most teachers used different techniques to explain and teach new or difficult words in the text.

The majority of teachers (90%) use three techniques to teach new vocabulary such as definition that can be explained by the fact that it is difficult for the students to memorize or write down a definition. Word in context, synonym and opposite are two techniques that make the learners memorize the new words easily and help recalling them at any moment.

Some teachers also use another technique to explain the difficult words in the text. It is the translation technique by using the mother tongue to explain the new words.

15. Do students have difficulties with vocabulary mastery?

	response	Percentage
Yes	10	100%
No	00	00%
Total	10	100%

Table 28: Students' difficulties with vocabulary mastery

This table indicates that all teachers of English language said that their students have difficulties with vocabulary mastery. They cannot understand the meaning of the text. They must use different techniques to explain them.

16. If "Yes", how do you help them?

The majority of teachers can help their students by:

-Ask them to use dictionaries then teachers use those items in context.

-Make them use new vocabulary in examples of their own (in context).

-Put them under brainstorming exercises, practice, games and memory games.

-Introduce every time the words' specific meanings.

- Put the words into many contexts, so show the richness of the vocabulary.

-encourage extensive and intensive reading that could help students overcome a great deal of difficulties with vocabulary mastery.

17. Do you have further suggestion for teaching vocabulary? Please indicate below

At the end of the questions, we wished to give our teachers free space to suggest. They think it is better for them to teach vocabulary to improve reading comprehension. Here are the obtained suggestions:

One of the teacher said that teaching vocabulary is certainly an effective component in FL mastery, consequently it should be given more time and space in TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) programs. The other teachers pay attention to the main techniques in teaching vocabularies. They should encourage students to read (especially novels, short stories). The other teachers say that they need to devote a great deal of time for teaching vocabulary, because it is serious issue in teaching languages.

Findings

Through the analysis and the interpretation of the questionnaire, there is an agreement among the teachers about the important role of teaching vocabulary in improving reading comprehension. The analysis of the questionnaire allowed the researcher to come out with the following findings: We have found that reading skill is a complex activity that requires much time and practice. The teachers who have participated in this study believe that the techniques used in teaching vocabulary have great impact on improving EFL learners reading skill .In addition to those teachers should encourage students to read inside and outside the classroom. Therefore, from the analysis of the teacher's responses about reading comprehension, teachers should explain the difficult words in the text before, during and after reading. These are our results from the teachers' responses.

Conclusion

The results obtained from the analysis of the students' and the teachers' questionnaires revealed the major points that have been conducted in this research. It provided us with the necessary overviews about the research.

The students' questionnaire affirmed that the majority of first year LMD students of English at university of Biskra like to study English. This of course will facilitate the process of learning, and it will increase the learner's research of knowledge. Concerning the reading tasks, we deduced that the students are conscious about the importance of reading skill, and its designed strategies, and most of them confirmed that reading comprehension helps them in gaining much vocabulary.

The teachers' questionnaire proved that the participants have a good experience in teaching, and this would be very helpful in encouraging the students to be active and proficient readers. In order to ensure good and proficient readers, teachers should improve effective strategies for reading texts and practice in vocabulary. Thus, students will be more competent readers, and their reading curiosity will be very high.

Pedagogical Implications and Some Recommendations

This study examines the role of teaching vocabulary in enhancing reading comprehension. The findings have confirmed that the students reading comprehension is related to vocabulary efficiency and activating their reading comprehension to gain much vocabulary words.

Suggestions for Teachers

- Allowing time in class for reading activities.

- Using exercises to review vocabulary items, such as the following tasks: fill in the gaps, cross words, true false. These would help learners to guess meaning from context.

- Motivating learners to read more in order to activate their comprehension.

- Encouraging learners to read more inside and outside class because reading skill and comprehension in particular help learners to be open-minded and get enough knowledge.

- Enabling learners to communicate in the second language in order to improve their proficiency in English vocabulary.   -

- Using from time to time different songs for listening and explaining the difficult words, also, ask questions related to the content.

Suggestions for Learners   -

   Learners ought to interact with texts in order to gain the correct meaning and comprehension:

- Learners should read extensively in order to activate reading comprehension and good vocabulary.

- Using the words that they have learned and mastered in context in order to ameliorate their level.   -

- Reading short stories, journals and explaining the difficult words by using dictionaries.

- Learners should be motivated to read any piece of writing.   -

Finally, these suggestions and recommendations may be helpful for both teachers and learners of English as a foreign language. Therefore, it can be the best method for activating reading comprehension and gaining much vocabulary words.

General conclusion

Our study has concerned with investigating the effects of teaching vocabulary in improving reading comprehension. It has allowed us to examine the relationship between vocabulary teaching and reading comprehension. It is undertaken to hypothesize if vocabulary teaching is handled with care through effective reading, the comprehension will be improved.

Our piece of this research is divided into two main parts; theoretical and practical part. The first part is divided into two chapters; the first chapter provides general information about reading and reading comprehension. In addition to that, we have included different aspects related with them. The second chapter deals with vocabulary teaching and the main aspects concerned with it.

The second part is the practical work of this investigation that consists of two questionnaires carried out at Biskra English department with first year LMD students and teachers of English as a foreign language. The results obtained from the analysis of the students' and teacher's questionnaire. It revealed many points that have conducted in this research confirm our hypothesis that good vocabulary makes good reading.

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Questionnaire for Student

Dear Student,

We would be very grateful if you accept to fill in the following questionnaire. The information you will provide us serve a study about the effects of teaching vocabulary in improving reading comprehension.

Please put a tick (√) in the box just in the front of each statement. Some questions will require the items, while you can choose more than one answer to other questions.

<u>**Section One:**</u> **General Information**

1. Sex:

a. Female ☐   b. Male ☐

2. Why have you chosen English to study?

a. To get a job ☐   b. To travel ☐   c. Love it ☐

3. How long have you been studying English?

……………………………………………………………………

4. How do you consider your level in English?

a. Very good ☐   b. Good ☐

c. Average ☐   d. Poor ☐

<u>**Section Two:**</u> **Overview of Reading**

5. Do you like reading?

a. A lot ☐ b. A little ☐   c. Not at all ☐

6. In which language do you prefer to read?

a. Arabic ☐   b. French ☐   c. English ☐

7. How often do you read?

a. Frequently ☐   b. Sometimes ☐   c. Rarely ☐

8. What type of readings do you like?

a. Short stories ☐

 b. Poems ☐

c. Newspaper ☐

d. Magazine ☐

 e.Others**………………………………………………………**

9. Your reading comprehension to the written article is:

a. Very good ☐   b. Good ☐

c. Average ☐   d. Poor ☐

10. When you read a text or a book outside the classroom. What do you expect to get from it?

a. Get more vocabulary items ☐

b. Acquire new ideas ☐

c. Know more about the language you are reading ☐

d. Get pleasure ☐

11. Would you like to have more hours in Reading Techniques?

a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐   c. I have no idea ☐

12. While reading in class, do you prefer your teacher to:

a- Choose the text or passage for you to read   ☐

b- Let you free to choose different readings   ☐

c- Leave you completely free to bring in what you want to read   ☐

Section Three: Teaching Vocabulary

13. Do you use dictionary to understand difficult words when you read?

a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

14. If you use a dictionary, is it

a. An English dictionary   ☐

b. An Arabic-English dictionary   ☐

c. An English-French dictionary   ☐

15. When you encounter difficult words while reading do you

a. Read again to guess the meaning from the context   ☐

b. Ask the teacher about its meaning   ☐

c. Ask a peer ☐

d. Look it up in the dictionary   ☐

16. What do you prefer as an answer to explain a word?

a. A translation ☐

b. A definition ☐

c. A word in context ☐

d. A synonym/opposite ☐

17. When you come to across a new vocabulary item do you use a notebook?

a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

18. If "Yes" is it

a. Always ☐   b. Sometimes ☐   c. Seldom ☐   d. Rarely ☐

19. Do you have any other suggestions concerning the materials you want to read in class?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

We thank you for participation in filling this questionnaire. We hope that the answers you provided will help us be more efficient in teaching vocabulary to improve reading comprehension.

Questionnaire for Teacher

Dear Teacher,

     This questionnaire is a part of a research that deals with the effects of teaching vocabulary in improving reading comprehension.

     Your answers will be great help for the research, please, tick the appropriate box and make statements whenever required.

<u>Section One:</u> General Information

1. How many years have you been teaching English as a foreign language?

………………………………………………………………………

2. How many years have you been teaching English at university level "English department"?

………………………………………………………………………

3. What are the modules that have you taught during this period?

………………………………………………………………………

4. What degree do you have?

a. License   ☐

b. Magister   ☐

c. Master   ☐

d. Doctorate   ☐

5. In which specialty?

a. Applied linguistics and TEFL ☐

b. Literature and civilization ☐

Section Two: Overview of Reading

6. How often do you encourage your students to read in the class?

a. Usually ☐   **b. Sometimes** ☐   **c. Never** ☐

7. Does teaching vocabulary contribute in the improvement of the reading skill?

a. Yes ☐   **b. No** ☐

8. If "Yes" explain why?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

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9. While teaching your students, do you explain all the difficult words in a text?

a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

10. If "Yes", do you do it

a. Before reading ☐ b. During reading ☐ c. After reading ☐

11. What is the suitable technique you think would encourage your students to read effectively in English?

a. Extensive reading ☐   b. Intensive reading ☐

12. In your view, what are the characteristics of good language readers?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

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Section Three: Teaching Vocabulary

13. Do you present new words in every lesson?

a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

14. When you teach new vocabulary do you use?

a. Translation ☐

b. Definition ☐

c. Word in context ☐

d. Synonym and opposite ☐

15. Do students have difficulties with vocabulary mastery?

a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

16. If "Yes" how do you help them?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

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17. Do you follow specific strategy or technique to teach vocabulary correctly?

a. Yes ☐   b. No   ☐

18. If "Yes", which one and why?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

19. Do you have further suggestion for teaching vocabulary? Please indicate below

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

Thanks