Improving EFL Learners' Cognitive Skills through Reading Comprehension:

A Case Study of Secondary Schools, EL Hassaheisa Locality, Gezira State, Sudan (2017)

Irshad Ibraheem Abdallah Ali Taha

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DEDICATION

To my family

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Abstract

Reading comprehension is an essential tool in learning EFL, it enhances students' basic skills for increasing the effectiveness of learning of EFL, evokes their cognitive skills due to its important role in linking learning language with the mental abilities of students by stimulating students to read and think about what they are reading. The study aims at highlighting the importance of reading comprehension and its effective role in EFL learning, proving the great role of reading comprehension in improving students' mental abilities and their critical thinking, drawing the attention of the teachers at secondary schools and encouraging them to employ comprehension classes in proper way so as to stimulate their cognitive skills. The study follows the descriptive analytical method, the data for the study were collected by means of questionnaire which was distributed to (50) in Hasahiesa secondary schools teachers. The data were analyzed by the (SPSS) program. The study found that: Reading comprehension in classes has many benefits in learning EFL, students in secondary level need to improve their cognitive skills as they are getting ready to face the world widely, reading comprehension makes link between reading and thinking so it is a good stimulator for students mental abilities, variation of topics in EFL classes encourages students to think and broaden their minds, using reading comprehension increases students' performance in EFL classes, learners can comprehensibly get the essence of the topic after being taught in reading comprehension class, reading comprehension lessons requires much attention and following up. The study recommended that teachers of EFL should be trained, Teachers should encourage their students to be involved in reading not only in classes but also outside the classroom, teachers should divide the pupils into group and pair works to develop their use of reading comprehension, Teachers need techniques and strategies of teaching reading comprehension in order to increase the understanding of the text and evoke students' cognitive abilities.

تحسين المهارات الإدراكية لمتعلمي اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية عبر القراءة الاستيعابية:
دراسة حالة مدارس المرحلة الثانوية، محلية الحصاحيصا، ولاية الجزيرة، السودان 2017
إرشاد إبراهيم عبد الله علي طه

ملخص الدراسة

القراءة الاستيعابية أداة مهمة في تعليم اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية، تعزز المهارات الاساسية للطالب لزيادة فاعلية تعلم اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية و المهارات الادراكية للطلاب نظرا لاهميتها في ربط تعليم اللغة بالقدرات العقلية للطلاب بتحفيزهم على القراءة و التفكير في ان واحد. هدفت الدراسة إلى إلغاء الضوء على أهمية القراءة الاستيعابية و دورها الفاعل في تعلم اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية، إثبات الدور المهم للقراءة الاستيعابية في تحسين قدرات الطلاب العقلية و التفكير النقدي، لفت انتباه المعلمين في المرحلة الثانوية و تشجيعهم على توظيف القراءة الاستيعابية بطريقة مناسبة لتحفيز المهارات الادراكية للطلاب. اتبعت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، تم جمع البيانات عن طريق الاستبانة و بلغت عينة الدراسة (50) معلما من معلمي المرحلة الثانوية بمحلية الحصاحيصا. تم جمع و تحليل البيانات باستخدام برنامج الحزم الإحصائية(SPSS). توصلت الدراسة إلى عدة نتائج أهمها:فصول تعلية القراءة الاستيعابية لها العديد من المنافع في تعليم اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية، الطلاب في المرحلة الثانوية بحاجة لتحسين مهاراتهم الادراكية لانهم يتأهبون لمجابهة العالم بصورة اوسع، القراءة الاستيعابية تربط القراءة و التفكير لهذا فهي محفز جيد للقدرات العقلية للطلاب، التنوع في المواضيع المستخدمة في تعليم اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية يشجع الطلاب على التفكير و يوسع مداركهم، استخدام القراءة الاستيعابية يحسن اداء متعلمي اللغة الانجليزية اذ يمكنهم من فهم لب الموضوع بعد تعلمه في فصل القراءة الاستيعابية. توصي الدراسة بضرورة تدريب معلمي اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية على استخدام الطرق المناسبة لتحصيل الفائدة القصوى من فصول القراءة الاستيعابية، اوصت ايضا معلمي اللغة الانجليزية بضرورة تشجيع المتعلمين على القراءة ليس فقط داخل الدرس ولكن ايضا خارج نطاق الفصل، ايضا يجب تقسيم الطلاب الى مجموعات و ثنائيات لتحسين اداءهم في فصول القراء الاستيعابية، يحتاج المعلم لطرق و وسائل معينة في تدريس القراءة الاستيعابية كاستخدام التفكير النقدي في تدريس موضوع النص لزيادة فاعلية القراءة الاستيعابية في صقل مهاراتهم .

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1-0 Background

Teaching EFL is a set of techniques and steps by which the student can master the language and can do better performance.   Teaching reading comprehension is crucial step because it has a major role in learning English specially for secondary level students, it helps them to learn effectively because it include an overall practice for the basic skills of EFL and provides them opportunity to use their mental abilities while learning EFL. The comprehension is a mysterious and complex process in the human thought. To comprehend is a mental process strongly related to many psychologist factors so in reading comprehension there is an intersect between the linguists and psychologists in breaking down the process of reading comprehension and its techniques. Teachers must focus on introducing the reading comprehension and teaching it with full awareness to achieve the required result at the end of the course. Also the activities and drills which included in the comprehension lesson must be vary in order to practice the use of different mental capacities of students and give high effectiveness for the educational process.

1-1 Statement of Problem:

Reading comprehension is an essential tool in learning English, which provide students with the essential skills for effective learning of EFL and evoke their cognitive skills, unfortunately; the lack of knowledge about the proper techniques for employing reading comprehension and the ignorance about its importance among teachers may decrease its value and give it a minor role in English classes .

1-2 Objectives of the Study:

This study aims at achieving the following objects:

1- Highlighting the importance of comprehension in EFL learning

2- proving the great role of reading comprehension in improving students mental abilities and their critical thinking

3-Encouraging EFL Teachers to use comprehension classes in proper way so as to stimulate student's cognitive skills.

1-3 Questions of the Study:

The study is carried out to answer the following questions:

1- What techniques enable teachers to get more achievements from reading comprehension in learning EFL?

2-To what extent reading comprehension encourage students to think and develop their cognitive skills?

3-How can reading comprehension is exploited as a stimulator for students thinking abilities?

1-4 Hypothesis of the Study:

The process of investigating the target topic was carried out to test certain hypotheses**:**

1- Reading comprehension is an important method in EFL teaching and learning, it also has significant role in mastering language skills.

2- Reading comprehension has a great role in developing students' cognitive skills as it encourages them to think critically about the selected topics..

3- Employing reading comprehension texts in improving mental abilities requires a well trained teacher to be aware of the mental benefits of the text.

1-5 Significance of the Study:

This study will be beneficial for secondary schools teachers, as it draws their attention to the importance of using comprehension for effective educational process.

It is beneficial for EFL learners in the secondary level because it takes their cognitive abilities into; also it's beneficial for the researchers who are concerned with student's cognition and mental abilities.

1-6 Limitation of the Study:

This study of reading comprehension and improving EFL learners cognitive skills is limited to the EFL teachers of secondary schools in Hasahiesa,2 018.

1-7 Methodology Of The Study:

The required data will be obtained by the mean of questionnaire, the study follows the analytical descriptive method, the results will be analyzed by using SPSS program.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter will shed the light on reading comprehension process as a basic skill that plays a very important role in the process of teaching and learning four skills of ELT and in developing students cognitive abilities as it link the process of reading with thinking and analysing. As its suggested by Ann (2011) Reading ability is a basic and significant criterion on which we evaluate English level. It is stated that in communication input and output, language comprehension is a very essential key link that students cannot feel directly but it does exist. Reading comprehension skills are in a high importance as they are enable students to become effective readers (*Grabe and Stoller, (2002)*). The process of reading begins with the decoding letters, words and the sounding out of words. Later, learners begin to read words, sentences, picture books, short stories and other texts. This process focuses on the development of fluency. The movement from passive to active reading includes the development of reading comprehension skills (*Machado, (2010)*).

2.1 Implications of Reading comprehension

Comprehension is the essence of reading and the active process of constructing meaning from text (Durkin, (1993). Reading comprehension is a complex interaction among automatic and strategic cognitive processes that enables the reader to create a mental representation of the text (Broek and Espin, (2012). Comprehension depends not only on characteristics of the reader, such as prior knowledge and working memory, but also on language processes, such as basic reading skills, decoding, vocabulary, sensitivity to text structure, internecine, and motivation. Comprehension also requires effective use of strategic processes, such as metacognition and comprehension monitoring. As readers mature in their comprehension skills, they are able to progress efficiently from the stage of learning to read to the ultimate goal of reading to learn.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NCES, 2012) revealed that 24% of eighth graders and 33% of fourth graders tested below basic in reading skills in 2011. Further, on the International Assessment of Adult Competencies Literacy Scale (USDE,

2012), adults in the United States achieved an average literacy proficiency score of 270 on a scale of 0 to 500—3 points below the international average score of 273! These results indicate a need to examine current practices in reading comprehension instruction. Because comprehension is so complex and requires multiple cognitive skills and stored memory, several barriers to improving comprehension must be overcome. First, we must be able to identify weaknesses in specific cognitive skills. Further, we must also have procedures for enhancing those specific skills rather than general interventions that target a limited number of skills without regard for identified strengths or weaknesses. Finally, we have to recognize that several components of comprehension—such as prior experience and vocabulary—are acquired over time, making them difficult targets for training and intervention. Therefore, the next section highlights research that identifies the cognitive skills and processes required for the development of reading comprehension ability, followed by research supporting effective interventions for reading comprehension development

Reading comprehension is the ability of students to understand what they read, where words have context and texts have meaning. Reading comprehension skills allow us to read proficiently, learn effectively and to conceptualize. These skills are, basically, based on earlier stages of reading development, including oral reading and reading fluency. Without developing these earlier reading skills, students must continually focus on decoding letters and words, rather than progressing to meaning and understanding (Grabe and Stoller, 2002). The key to develop proficient reading skills in the early levels of education is an even earlier foundation in underlying language learning skills (Brewster & Ellis, 2002).

(Rivers (1981:147) stated that "reading is the most important activity in any language class, not only as a source of information and a pleasurable activity, but also as a means of consolidating and extending one" s which are knowledge of the language". Reading is composed of two parts; the written form, and the meaning of the conveyed message. Penny defines reading as follows: Reading means reading and understanding. "A foreign language learner who says, „I read the words but I don't know what they mean is not, therefore, reading in this sense. He or she is merely decoding translating written symbols into corresponding sounds." (1996: 138). According to Eskey (1988), reading is an interactive process. This more balanced view of reading points to a constant interaction

between bottom-up and top-down processes, with ‗each source of information contributing a comprehensive reconstruction of [the] meaning of the text'. Heilman (1990) argued that the interactive view considers the significance of both the print and background knowledge in reading; it is the most applicable to reading instruction.

2.1.1 Types of Reading

The reading skill can be divided into two main types; intensive and extensive reading. Hafiz and Tudor (1989: 5) compared between the two types:

In intensive reading activities learners are in the main exposed to relatively short texts which are used either to exemplify specific aspects of the lexical, syntactic or discoursal system of the L2, or to provide the basis for targeted reading strategy practice; the goal of extensive reading, on the other hand, is to „flood‟ learners with large quantities of L2 input with few or possibly no specific tasks to perform on this material.

2.1.1.1 Intensive Reading

Intensive reading used to describe the detailed focus on the reading texts which usually take place in classrooms. It tends to develop the strategies of the learners. In this respect, Nuttal (1962: 23) claims that: "The intensive reading lesson is intended primarily to train students in reading strategies " However, sometimes the students may prefer to read the text in which they divide it into parts and then read each part solely in order to comprehend it very well. In palmer's view (1964) on intensive reading, the learner concentrate on using the dictionary in order to analyze, compare and translate during the process of reading texts. Therefore, the use of a dictionary helps the learner to progress in his language learning process. However, this may interrupt the learner's reading speed. In the same line of thought, the Reading comprehension task for Harmer means acknowledge not to stop for every word neither to analyze everything (Harmer 2001), that is to say, the reader should not stop at every single point or analyze each idea alone, but rather he should make a general comprehension of the text and to extract the meaning by taking the content into account.

2.1.1.2 Extensive Reading

There are many definitions of the term "extensive reading." (Hedge: 202). For some it's used to refer to describe "skimming and scanning activities," for others its associated to quantity of material. Hafiz and Tudor (1989 :5) state that: The educational

value attributed to extensive reading is based on the assumption that exposing learners to large quantities of meaningful and interesting L2 material Extensive reading refers to reading that learners often do away from the classroom for instance: reading novels, magazines, and newspaper articles ….etc. Hafiz and Tudor mentioned that: "The pedagogical   value attributed to extensive reading is   based on the assumption that exposing   learners to large quantities of meaningful and interesting L2 material will, in the long run, produce a beneficial effect on the learner" (1989 :5)

Often extensive readers read for the purpose of pleasure. This type is marked as ''joyful reading'' by Rechard Day in 1998. Through extensive reading, the reader increase his background knowledge, and enrich his vocabulary; he also will be aware of the spelling forms. so, the learner select their own, the teachers' role is to guide learners to select books depending on their levels of comprehension that lead to comprehensible input. According to *Day* and Bamford (1998), extensive reading is a part of second language curriculum ,i.e. as a separate course, as a part of an existing reading course, as a non –credit addition to existing course, and as an extra-curricular activity.

2.2 Comprehension in the Classroom

Basically, the student in this level is not far different from an adult. The way with which student must look for the text and try to understand the information is not different from the teacher's. Whether or not they will share the same perceptions and understandings, whether in fact a particular experience will constitute information or "noise" in their environment, will be determined by the cognitive questions that each is able to ask. When a teacher writes a sentence on the board, he knows what he is putting there. But the sentence that makes sense to a teacher does not necessarily make sense to the child. The teacher may see that a particular letter is obviously (A) because that is what he wrote. But if the child does not ask the cognitive questions that he must ask, then he will not comprehend what is written on the board in the same way as the teacher. If the child asks the wrong questions — the wrong implicit cognitive questions— then he will not comprehend; nothing will make sense. Furthermore, directing the child's attention will not lead him to see as the teacher does. Attention is not a matter of looking or listening in one way rather than another, but also asking specific cognitive questions. The student at secondary school is constantly

having his attention directed without necessarily having any clue to the cognitive questions he should ask. If his uncertainty is not reduced, then directing a child's attention will not only fail to give him information, but it may also confuse him. A specific example: The teacher writes K on the board and a child says it is "H". The teacher says "*wrong*" and writes a series of Ks on the board then asks the student to understand. But the child may not know what he is supposed to be looking at. Does "*K*" mean a chalk mark on the board? Or its a particular location on the board?. (Frank: 1975)

The basic need is for teachers, and others responsible for education, to understand how children think and learn their capacities and their limitations. Problems in education are rarely solved by the discovery of a magical technique that suddenly makes everything right. Frank (1975) also argues that:

> *" More often, everyone involved needs to attain the insights to understand what has been going wrong, in this case to understand what makes comprehension — and learning — difficult. To take a more positive view, teachers are very often effective in their work — after all, many children do in fact succeed in learning at school—without being able to specify what exactly they have been doing right "*

2.3 Comprehension Limits and Difficulties

Whether or not it makes sense to measure comprehension, the fact remains that most children do not comprehend what is going on in school some of the time and some children seem to comprehend very little most of the time. It might seem reasonable to ask, therefore, how comprehension might be improved. *(* Frank: 1975*)* There may be a multiple factors that contribute to reading difficulties for many students with special needs and the underlying causes of their reading problems may be largely unknown (*Lewis and Doorlag 1999*). It has been found that the prevalence of children with reading difficulties is often linked with the economic and social circumstances of the home. For example, many children identified as having reading difficulties experience significant language and cultural differences between home and school (Elkins: 2002). This finding is supported by studies conducted in the mid-1970s where variables, such as social class, educational background of the parents, family income and the number of books in the home were consistently related to school reading achievement (Romeo 2002). Also (Samuels 1978) claims that the respect for

education, community standards and the value placed on education also influenced whether or not students have mastered basic literacy skills.

Frank (1975) argues that you can direct a student to the book, but you cannot make him read. Its hard for the learner to see everything in front of his eyes, and much of the time they can see very little at all. The reason behind this phenomenon is that there are severe limits to how much anyone can see, or hear, or experience in any way. The brain, marvelous instrument but despite its great power it does not have an infinite capacity for coping with the world. A student can understand the world by relating the unfamiliar to the known, but if very little "known" can be brought to bear on a particular occasion, little will be comprehended or perceived. Seeing and hearing are not simple matters of "acuity"; there are limits to comprehension. The particular activity that must be examined is reading, or at least the identification of letters and words in written English. There is a good deal of experimental evidence about visual aspects of perception, partly because it is easier to monitor what the eye is doing compared with the ear or nose or tongue. The arguments are not exclusive to vision; the student may be temporarily deafened in the classroom as well as blinded, but firstly, we must look at how little, relatively, the eyes have to do with reading words themselves are highly predictable in the English language. An author cannot select words at random when he writes. If you are reading a passage, and making sense of what you read, then you must know in advance a good deal about the grammatical function and the meaning of words that are to come. In fact, we can omit one word in every 5 words in the English text without any affection in the comprehension of the text; you still can understand and predict the omitted word. Try it with a copy of yesterday's newspaper. If I asked you to predict the next word before you turned every right hand page of this book, you might not expect a large number of absolutely correct guesses, but most of the time you would have a pretty good idea of what the next word was likely to be. Certainly you should not have to make a wild guess among the fifty-thousand or more words in your vocabulary. Instead your average uncertainty would probably be down among two or three hundred alternatives, which is a very big difference, and completely attributable to prior knowledge about language and about the topic being discussed.

2.4 Prior Knowledge and Reading Comprehension:

Prior knowledge about the topic is very important for the process of comprehension as Frank (1975) states:

"Even a skilled reader looks at a book written in a language that he does not understand. There will be very little reading, but not because there is a shortage of visual information in any way. Knowledge of language is crucial non-visual information that the reader himself must supply"

Frank also added that, very little reading will take place if the subject matter of the text is completely removed from the experience of the reader, for example an article on subatomic physics for most teachers of English. A good deal of prior knowledge is required if any piece of text is to be read. Everything the author takes for granted must be supplied by the reader in the form of nonvisual information. And the only source of nonvisual information is what the reader knows already.

The table below shows the difference between the good reader who has a prior knowledge and the poor one in their reading and comprehending performance:

	Good or mature reader	Poor or immature reader
Before reading	Activate prior knowledge. Understand task and set purpose. Choose appropriate strategies	Start reading without preparation Reading without knowing why. Read without considering how to approach the material
During reading	Focus attention Anticipate and predict. Use fix-up strategies when lack or understand new terms . Use text structure to assist. Organize and integrate new information Self-monitor comprehension by : • Knowing comprehension is occurring.	Are easily distracted. Read to get done. Do not know what to do when lack of understanding occurs. Do not recognize important vocabulary. Do not see any organization. Add or rather than integrate new information.

	• Knowing what is being understood.	Do not realize they do not understand.
After reading	Reflect on what was read. Feel success is a result of effort. Summarize major ideas. Seek additional information outside sources	Stop reading and thinking Feel success is a result of luck

Table1.1. the Difference between Good and Poor Readers *(*Cook 1990: 116*)*

Rumelhart (1985:57) argued that students' background knowledge plays a more important role than new words and new structures in reading comprehension'. Hence, in teaching reading, the teacher should teach the background knowledge first so that students equipped with such knowledge will be able to guess meaning from the printed page (Rumelhart, 1985). In this popular top-down model, readers do not need to focus on every word. They predict the meanings of the unknown words that they face. Obviously, in this model, students' prior knowledge is of great importance since it produces the ability to guess meaning during the reading process. However, this model requires corrections as it is often the case that a reader is easily led to wild guessing and misunderstanding (Mushait, 2003).

2.5 Schema Theory

Bartlett (1932) defines schema as "an active organisation of past reactions of past experiences, which must always be supposed to be operational in any well-adapted organic response". Rumelhart (1980:34) defines schema as "a data structure for representing the genetic concepts stored in memory'. He argues that schema theory is an explanation of how the readers must use their prior knowledge to comprehend and learn from text. Anderson and Pearson (1984:42) define it as an abstract knowledge structure. It is structured in the sense that it summarizes what is known about a variety of cases that differ in many particulars and in that it represents the relationship among its components parts (Carrell, 1988). Medin and Russ (1992:246) define schema as "a general knowledge structure used for understanding". Schemata, on the whole, refer to the concepts that readers have about the world (Rumelhart, 1977).

2.5.1 Types of Schemata:

There are three major types of schemata, according to (Carrell, 1988).

Linguistics Schemata:

The concept of linguistic schema used to refer to the reader's prior linguistics knowledge about phonetics, grammar, vocabulary and idioms. Linguistic knowledge plays an dominant part in the process of comprehension. Without linguistics schemata, it is impossible for the reader to decode and comprehend a text. Therefore, the more linguistic schemata a reader has in his/her mind, the faster the reader acquires information and the better understanding the reader may have. In other words, a second language reader should master certain linguistics knowledge to decode the text. Therefore, accumulated linguistic information is necessary for readers to obtain when they want to decode.

Formal Schema:

A formal schema refers to the background knowledge of the formal rhetorical organizational structure of different types of texts (Carrell and Eisterhold, 1988:71). It is "abstract, encoded, internalized, coherent patterns of meta-linguistic, discoursed, and textual organization that guide expectations in our attempts to understand a meaningful piece of language' (Carrell, 1983). It is knowledge of the ways in which different genres are presented. Readers use their schematic representations of the text, such as fictions, poems, essays, newspaper articles, academic articles in magazines and journals, to help comprehend the information in the text. Studies show that the knowledge of what type and genre the text is can facilitate reading comprehension for readers because the type of text will offer detailed evidence of the content of the text. Nonetheless, compared with linguistic and content schemata, formal schemata have less impact on the reading process (Carrell: 1984).

Content Schema:

Content schema refers to a reader's knowledge about the topic being read (James, 1987). Content schemata include topic familiarity, cultural knowledge and previous experience with a field. They deal with the knowledge relative to the content domain of the text, which is the key to understanding texts. To some extent, content schemata can make up for a lack of language schemata, and thus help learners understand texts by predicting, choosing information and removing ambiguities. Many studies have shown that readers'

content schemata have a greater influence on reading comprehension than formal schemata. On the whole, the familiarity with the topic has a direct influence on readers' comprehension. The more the reader knows about the topic, the more easily and quickly he gets the information from the text.

2.6 Meaning and Comprehension:

Reading comprehension (understanding, absorbing meaning and interpreting the text) rely on a variety of reader-related, text-related, and situational factors *(De Corte. 2001*). Furthermore, the reader's comprehension of the text is considered to be linked to the reader's ability to construct hypotheses, rules, schemas, and mental models (*Vipond 1980).*

2.7 Comprehension and the Socio-Cultural Context:

According to (Hassett 2006) The concept socio-cultural context is used to mean the cultural and religion background of the students. In part, the context of the classroom and the purpose of the lessons provide a socio-cultural context within which meaning is constructed. In addition to the socio-cultural context of the classroom learners are also shaped by their broader experiences, background knowledge, and social-cultural identities that they bring to a learning activity. Learning involves an understanding of specific codes like alphabetic signs that have relatively little meaning outside of the context of the lesson or the social and cultural practices that the children bring to them. In recent times electronic text genres have changed quite considerably, they look different from traditional print-based texts but are still primary conveyors of meaning. New technologies, such as digital technologies that include combinations of sound, print, and images, provide a shift in the way we think about literacy at a school today. Alphabetic print must now be understood in the wider socio-cultural context as a partial conveyor of meaning along with other integrated modes. Thus, new literacies and new socio-cultural contexts promote new ways of reading, writing, interpreting, and interacting. Having a religious or political affiliation, will influence the way a reader views, thinks, and comprehends the text (Pearson and Raphael 1990). Smith (1978: 79) referred to this world view when he said, "*What we have in our heads is a theory, a theory of what the world is like, and this theory is the basis of all our perception and understanding of the world; it is the root of all learning….*"

Our theory of the world is highly affected by the socio-cultural aspects within which students are situated and also by the ongoing life experiences (including language) that impact and form those beliefs. Those beliefs are shaped and nurtured by social interaction and by the language used in the social contexts in which children are situated. When readers comprehend communicative material they apply their beliefs about the world and what they already know about the present topic through which to interpret and understand the message the writer is attempting to convey. By using this lens children are more able to integrate prior knowledge when required to make inferences about story information. Thus, the processing of information may be limited or enhanced by the knowledge base that one possesses. For example, even when skilled readers' have inadequate prior knowledge to apply to a reading task they tend to use the best available schema to organise the construction of meaning (Harris and Pressely 1991). The reader will often rely on background knowledge of similar situations to form an analogy when relating to relatively novel story information. This does not always work well in all situations. While navigating some texts readers may access background knowledge that may be in error, leading to difficulties with comprehension (Brown 1982). For example, Lipson (1993) reported that the influence of religious affiliation on children's memory for text information affected the quantity and accuracy of both explicit and inferential recall. It was also noted that young readers often rejected text information if they thought that it was in error, particularly if they believed that they had the correct interpretation. For example, Elijah is a 6 year old who is reported to one of the best readers in his grade level at school. His bedroom is always spotless and all his toys have a place where they are always kept. He loves to go shopping with his mother. Recently, while helping his mother with the shopping at the local supermarket he said to her, "The shopping trolley is untidy and you might get into trouble."

2.8 Reading Habits

In the introduction the question was asked whether today's generation reads less because of the several concurrent stimuli they are subjected to. Or could it be that they lack of good reading habits? Good reading habits must come from somewhere (Horn: 2011). parents reading, except perhaps newspapers and magazines. Adults have perhaps forgotten to be good reading models in this age of distractions?

Reading needs to be promoted from an early age and constantly nurtured to help children become lifelong readers. Free and leisure reading is the key to success when a child becomes older and is supposed to focus on academic and study-related reading, which, by necessity, is an overemphasised kind of reading among students. Reading for pleasure should perhaps be better encouraged in order to develop a language. Cunningham and Stanovich argue that reading volume has an essential impact on the development of vocabulary, reading speed, and fluency, verbal ability, general knowledge, and academic achievements (Cunningham and Stanovich, 2001, 142-143). Laurence Ogle and Erin Pahlke report that an international comparative study shows that the more often children read for fun, the higher the score on the literacy reading scale becomes (Ogle and Pahlke, 2003). Evidently, in order to promote lifelong reading habits leisure reading is important.

This is where school can play a significant part if essential actions are taken in order to promote reading among children. In Norway, there are schools that have really taken this problem seriously: Reading has become stardom. Both national and local reading projects have as goals to stimulate greater pleasure in reading among children and young adolescents, and the demands for a better reading competence have increased (Marianne Tellmann, 2011, 1). According to a PISA survey in 2009 students who do not read for pleasure score much lower than those who do, and for the first time "reading engagement" is included in the definition of reading competence (Tellmann 2011, 2). This tells us that it is necessary to possess the "right" reading habits. A positive attitude towards reading and a frequent, self-

motivating reading of various self-chosen texts are without much doubt what characterizes a good reader. As mentioned, there has to be a personal drive in order to become fond of reading and thus stay a reader forever. The pleasure of reading cannot be forced upon students.

2.9 Reading Comprehension with KWL Teaching Techniques :

the KWL strategy which stands for (what I know, what I want to learn, what I learned), this technique depends on providing students with the prior knowledge about what they are going to study in order to gain better performance., identify the purpose for reading, control their comprehension and expand their ideas. Shayee (2000) states that KWL strategy has a great role on improving reading comprehension for Secondary School students if it is compared to the traditional strategies. Furthermore, Sasson (2008) states that the KWL can serve as an instructional reading strategy which helps teachers to support student reading comprehension by using the prior knowledge and make students interested on what they want to know, and what they have learned.

According to Ogle (1986*),* using the KWL strategy must put these steps in consideration: choose a text, create a KWL chart, ask students to make brainstorming for the words, terms and phrases that related to the topic, ask students what they want to learn about the topic, and encourage students to research any questions that were not answered in the text.

2.9.1 The Role of the Teacher

Teachers‟ role rely on their students ‟ needs and level. Papaefthymiou – Lytra (1993: 94) maintains that:

"Foreign language teachers, therefore, must be flexible enough and sensitive enough to respond well to the individual learning preferences, interests and needs of their learners in terms of materials, techniques classroom methodology and teacher talk. After all, language learning

is not a monolithic process since not all personal and environmental factors can be kept under control in a foreign language situation".

From the quotation above we can absorb the role of the teacher as a dominant and basic role through the process of EFL teaching and learning, his knowledge about his students determines the effectiveness of the comprehension class.

2.10 Classroom Procedures for Teaching Reading Comprehension

It has been proved that the process of evaluating reading skills passes through three stages; pre-reading activities, while- reading activities and post - reading activities (Williams 1996) .

Pre–reading activities

the pre-reading activities are vital in the process of evaluation and important for both teachers and learners, as they prepare students for the text they are going to read. In this respect, Abraham *(2002)* maintains that an interactive approach requires that the teachers should activate the students' schemata during the pre-reading stage by helping them to recognize their prior knowledge about the topic of the text. Urquhart and Weir (1998: 184) have suggested some pre-reading activities:

1. Thinking about the title
2. Checking the edition and date of publication
3. Reading appendices quickly
4. Reading indices quickly
5. Reading the abstract carefully
6. Reading the preface, the forward and the blurb carefully

Carrell (1984: 334) claims that: "*Activating existing background knowledge as well as building new background knowledge should be done through pre-reading activities to help the reader to read better.*"According to Chartian (1988), these activities can be used for motivating learners to be prepared in order to have the ability of reading the text. Pre-reading strategies such as drawings, pictures

quotations…etc stimulate the students" prior knowledge about the theme and leads him to make predictions, connections and then to ask questions. Such strategy begins with the role of the teacher on introducing the topic.

Drucker *(2003: 22-29)* suggests the following procedures that the teacher can use before reading a text: "… relate the passage students are going to read to something that is familiar to them. Next, provide a brief discussion question that will engage the students and, after that provide an overview to the section they are going about to read. Name the selection, introduce the characters, and describe the plot".

Pre-Reading Strategies May Also Deal With*:*

As its Adapted from Feuerbach and Paxton (1997: 259):

1. Accessing prior knowledge.
2. Writing about the experience related to the topic.
3. Asking questions focusing on the topic.
4. Semantic mapping.
5. Making predictions.
6. Reading introduction and conclusion.
7. Summarizing

While-Reading Activities

In this stage, there are many activities that must be introduced according to the students level. Greenwood (1998*),* in this respect states that students must learn how to read and respond to books. This stage is the most important one because it is the most active one among the three stages. so, Shahidullah (1995; 1996) suggests the following while reading activities :

a. Guessing meaning from context,

b. Analyzing sentences,

c. Surveying text structure,

d. Extracting specific information,

e. Getting detailed information,

f. Answering pre-set questions,

g. Matching text with pictures diagrams etc.

While Reading Activities Has Many Purposes They Are Explained Below:

The following activities are adapted from (Saricoban 2002:04)

1. Students understanding the writers" purpose.

2. Helping reading comprehension of the text.

3. Helping students to use their inferring and judging abilities.

4. Remembering the students of the vocabulary importance.

5. Developing the student's linguistic and socio-linguistic knowledge.

6. Learning generalization.

7. Reading consciously.

8. Skimming.

9. Scanning.

After reading stage:

This is the evaluative stage by which the teacher can evaluate the student's comprehension for what has been taught.

2.11 Some Strategies For Reading:

While reading there are certain thinking strategies that we use. We may not even be aware of these strategies; they are just lying there at the back of our heads as great repertoires of schemes. Ellin Oliver Keene and Susan Zimmermann say that these strategies can be labelled in many ways: visualizing, connecting, questioning, analysing, recalling, and self-monitoring (Keene and Zimmermann, 1997). Let us take them one by one. First, when visualizing the readers create mental pictures and sense images from what they read and they connect the story to their own experiences or to other readings or other events that have taken place somewhere in

the world. Albert J. Harris and Edward R. Sipay uncover that visualization connects new vocabulary to previous knowledge (Harris and Sipay, 1990) , which is also linked to Rosenblatt and her beliefs that this strategy encourages students to make personal connection to a text (Rosenblatt, 1994). This is in close relationship with her theories about reader response.

> The special meanings, and, more particularly, the submerged associations that these words and images have for the individual reader will largely determine what the work communicates to him (Rosenblatt, 1983, 30-31).   Second, readers need to both make suggestions and contribute in a variety of *(Keene & Zimmermann, 1997).*
>
> *"imaginary worlds. They need to take part in the transaction with the text in order for it to make meaning. Third, readers also interrogate or question the text by actively wonder about what they read and interfere with the text by predicting, interpreting or drawing conclusions"*

Forth, in this regard the analysing strategy is perhaps the most related to reading in school and is often encouraged by the teacher. Here the students/readers are supposed to take into consideration the text's structure, the tone of the author, point of view, theme, vocabulary, and so on. Fifth, to be able to recall and summarize a text is perhaps also viewed as a classroom activity. When reading a book at home, voluntarily, we do not sit down trying to remember information from the story; we just read. Last, the self- monitor strategy is centred on the readers and their natural inner dialogue, and how they make use of their metacognitive tools to recognize and act on what they read. Skills of reflection and critical thinking are important for personal growth and learning. In the next chapter the importance of critical reading will be elaborated on.

What is not mentioned here is the importance of building background ahead of reading and for the students to possess prior knowledge about what they read. There is no doubt that reading a text with themes and issues that the students have

limited prior background knowledge about, is difficult for them. Rosenblatt argues that readers use information, prior knowledge, and experiences sored in the mind in order to make meaning from a text (Rosenblatt, 1995). In this sense, reading becomes a meeting of textual meanings and the reader's prior knowledge, which together create a better understanding.

2.12 Reading Environment:

One of the main goals in language education should be to encourage free reading (Krashen, (2004). Hence, the obvious step in achieving this is to have access to books. Practically, this can be made through school or/ and classroom libraries. These places should provide for a large selection of a variety of books, as Krashen points out, the better the print environment, the better the literacy development (Krashen,(2004), 62). Not only should these reading places offer a variety of books to choose from, these places should also be comfortable and quiet so that the students are able to appreciate reading. To be given ample time to read is important as well.

Reading aloud is another effective method when increasing both literary competence and reading pleasure. "Children who are read to at school or at home read more and show better literary development, even college students" (Krashen, (2004), 78). Reading aloud in class gives the whole group of students a shared reading experience and a starting point for a joint discussion about literature. Of course, a challenge here is to find literature that appeals to most of the listening crowd, so finding the right book is essential. The teacher plays a significant part in reading motivation. Gambrell argues "teachers become explicit reading models when they share their own reading experiences with students and emphasise how reading enhances and enriches their lives" (Gambrell, (1996), 20). Being read to has an indirect effect; hearing stories and discussing these will, according to Krashen, encourage reading and also, vocabulary knowledge will increase (Krashen, (2004). So basically, when listening to a book you actually build literary skills without being aware of it.

2.13 Cognitive Linguistics

Vyvyan and Melanie (2006) argue that cognitive linguistics is a modern school of linguistic thought that originally emerged in the early 1970s out of dissatisfaction with formal approaches to language. Cognitive linguistics is also firmly rooted in the emergence of modern cognitive science in the 1960s and 1970s, particularly in work relating to human categorisation, and in earlier traditions such as Gestalt psychology. Early research was dominated in the 1970s and 1980s by a relatively small number of scholars. By the early 1990s, there was a growing proliferation of research in this area, and of researchers who identified themselves as 'cognitive linguists'. In 1989/90, the International Cognitive Linguistics Society was established, together with the journal Cognitive Linguistics. In the words of the eminent cognitive linguist Ronald Langacker ([1991] 2002: xv), this 'marked the birth of cognitive linguistics as a broadly grounded, self conscious intellectual movement'. Cognitive linguistics is described as a 'movement' or an 'enterprise' because it is not a specific theory. Instead, it is an approach that has adopted a common set of guiding principles, assumptions and perspectives which have led to a diverse range of complementary, overlapping (and sometimes competing) theories.

3.13.1 Cognitive Strategy Instruction

The development of schema theory in educational psychology (Bartlett, 1932; Rumelhart, 1980) ignited a trend of cognitive strategy instruction in the 1970s and 1980s, in which strategies identified from the analysis of cognition of experts were explicitly taught to students in conjunction with metacognitive monitoring strategiesto govern their mental use (Greeno, Collins, and Resnick,). Initial research was based on educational psychology and reading education literature (Dole, Nokes, & Drits, 2008). Despite extensive research on cognitive strategy instruction to date, the use of the word "strategy" with regard to educational practice and instructional planning no longer has the shared meaning among educators and researchers that it once did. Numerous professional publications for educators that are grounded in cognitive strategy research are readily available in professional libraries across the

country (Blachowicz and Ogle, 2001; Harvey and Goudvis, 2007; Keene and Zimmerman, 1997; Oczkus, 2004; Outsen and Yulga, 2002; Stebick and Dain, 2007; Tovani, 2004; Zwiers, 2004); however, there is variance among the characteristics of strategy type, application, related context, and instruction, which is likely in need of synthesis and clarification in current literature.

Examples were provided in the Conceptual Framework in the preceding chapter, in which I articulated the interpretation of "cognitive comprehension strategy" that was used in this study. In the recently published Handbook of Research on Reading Comprehension (2008), Dole, Nokes, and Drits provided an overview of cognitive strategy instruction, which was heavily relied upon for this section of the review of literature in order to examine cognitive strategy instruction from both theoretical and applied perspectives. The earliest research involving strategy instruction was based on the processes used to solve problems. In line with Polya's (1945) research in mathematics, Newell and Simon (1972) identified processes that learners could use as steps to reach an intended outcome in a variety of settings and tasks. For example, they studied learners' use of strategies such as trial and error and working backwards. This was an example of some of the earliest work around domain-specific strategies, which will be further discussed in the section to follow.

In a review of strategy research, Pressley and Woloshyn (1985) identified cognitive strategies across content domains of reading, writing, study strategies, and mathematics, all of which included mental processes consciously accessed and used by an individual in order to deepen their understanding of a given task. Alexander, Graham, and Harris (1998) further described strategies as procedural, purposeful, effortful, willful, and essential, and they delineated cognitive strategies as only those that support understanding and performance on cognitive tasks; thus, by this definition, instructional strategies and task analysis-related strategies are not considered cognitive in nature. This further illustrates the existing confusion over a lack of common language regarding the term "strategy." As both theoretical and

practical cognitive strategy instruction research evolved, the research area became associated with metacognitive awareness, which described individuals' knowledge, selection, and governing ofstrategic processes. Strategies were viewed as conscious and deliberate mental processes, although research suggested that with continued use, cognitive and metacognitive strategies could ultimately be governed and employed with less effort (Pressley and Afflerbach, 1995; Schneider, Dumais, and Shiffrin, 1984).

Pressley (1976), perhaps the most notable contributor to literature on cognitive strategy instruction, measured the effectiveness of training third-grade students to visualize during the reading of text in one of the first studies based on single strategy use. Results from reading comprehension scales revealed that students who received instruction in visualizing text outperformed the control group, regardless of the students' reading achievement level. Brown and Day (1983) and Brown, Day, and Jones (1983) also contributed notable early work across K-20 grades of schooling, examining learners' use of the cognitive strategy of summarizing text. Their findings yielded implications for componential analysis of summarizing for future instruction based on the analysis of mental processes of effective summarizers. Additional single strategy research was conducted throughout the 1980s based on the use of cognitive strategies such as self-questioning and text-based strategies such as story mapping (Singer and Donlan, 1982; Idol, 1987); however, the differences between these two aforementioned strategies yet again illustrate discrepancies regarding the term "cognitive strategy."Some researchers have offered clarification such that cognitive strategies should only describe mental processes whereas other strategy descriptors reference the use of graphic organizers, procedures, and memorable tools that aid inthe completion of a given task.

With increased attention to single strategy studies came the focus on multiple strategy sequences and the reciprocal teaching intervention by Palinscar and Brown (1984), which is perhaps the most notable of research on cognitive strategy instruction as applied to reading education. The multi-strategy process of reciprocal

teaching involves summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting for chunked text excerpts in a gradual release model of apprenticeship-style instruction. Throughout their numerous studies comparing reciprocal teaching treatment groups to single strategy treatment and control groups across multiple grade levels, they found conclusive evidence that students who engaged in this instruction consistently outperformed the other experimental group

2.14 Cognitive Reading Strategies

The term cognitive strategies, according to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), are more directly related to individual learning tasks and entail direct manipulation or transformation of the learning material. Meanwhile, Oxford (1990) states that such strategies are varied a lot, ranging from repeating to analyzing expressions to summarizing. Oxford (1990) also states that with all their variety, cognitive strategies are divided into four sets. The four sets are practicing, receiving and sending messages, analyzing and reasoning, and creating structure for input and output. As they reviewed the research, Pressley and Woloshyn (1995) in Dole, Norkes, and Drits (2008(identified a number of cognitive strategies for various tasks in different domains of knowledge.For example, they identified strategies for analyzing and solving problems (general strategies،(memorizing a series of events or a timeline for a test (study strategies), planning, drafting،reviewing and revising a critical essay (writing strategies), and self-questioning, constructing mental representational images, activating prior knowledge, rereading difficult-to-understand sections of texts, predicting or summarizing a text.

Research has revealed that the use of cognitive learning strategies in classroom instruction and learning is fundamental to successful learning (see Chamot and O'Malley, 1987; Harris and Pressley ٤1991،Wood, Woloshyn, and Willoughby, 1995 in Pressley, 2000). This study is concerned with cognitive reading strategies identified by Oxford (1990), and those proposed by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) which were also used as the theoretical foundation in the previous study conducted by Ozek and Civelek (2006). The types of cognitive reading strategies used in this

study are such as resourcing, repetition, grouping, deduction, imagery, getting the idea quickly، elaboration, inferencing, note-taking, and summarizing.

A) Resourcing

Resourcing is using target language reference materials such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, or textbooks (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). This strategy is useful for both and production. As Oxford (1990) states that to better understand what is heard or read, printed resources such as dictionaries, word lists, grammar books, and phrase books may be valuable. In this study, this strategy is represented by the strategy of using dictionary for important words.

B) Repetition

Repetition is repeating a chunk of language (a word or phrase) in the course of performing a language task (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). As Oxford (1990) states that in reading, the strategy of repeating can be reading a passage more than once to understand it more completely. This is in line with what Pressley (2000) states that repetition strategy can be used by the students as they want to remember important points. In this study, repetition strategy is represented by two strategies: re-reading a sentence and re-reading the text to remedy failures.

C) Grouping

According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), grouping is classifying words, terminology, or concepts according to their attributes or meaning. Oxford (1990) adds that grouping strategy in reading involves classifying or reclassifying what is read into meaningful groups, thus reducing the number of unrelated elements. In this study, this grouping strategy is represented by the strategy of classifying the words according to their grammatical categories.

D) Deduction

According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), deduction strategy is applying rules to understand or produce the second language or making up rules based on language analysis. As Oxford (1990) states that this is a top-down strategy leading

from general to specific. In this study, this strategy is represented by the strategy of reading the first line of every paragraph to understand the whole text.

E) Imagery

O'Malley & Chamot (1990) refers imagery to using visual images (either mental or actual) to understand or remember new information. Meanwhile, Oxford (1990) states this strategy as a good strategy to remember what has been read in the new language to create a mental image of it. In addition, Frase (2008) states that the best part of reading is watching the movie in your head and good readers experience seeing strong visual images. In this study, imagery strategy is represented by two strategies: looking at illustration / picture of the events in mind.

F) Getting the Idea Quickly

In this study, the strategy of getting the idea quickly involves skimming strategy and scanning strategy. As stated by Oxford (1990), the strategy of getting the idea quickly constitutes with skimming strategy and scanning strategy. Skimming involves searching for the main ideas the speaker wants to get across, while scanning means searching for specific details of interest to the learner. Skimming as Richards (1997) states, is usually defined as a quick, superficial reading of a text in order to get the gist of it (see also Brown, 2001). Whereas scanning is looking for specific International Journal of Education (IJE), Vol. 2, No. 1, March 2014 information in the text and ignoring the rest (see Nuttal, 1982; Grellet, 1986; Aebersold and Field,1997; Hood (2005). Beare (2011) adds that scanning is used to discover required information to complete a given task such as making a decision about what to watch on TV, or which museum to visit while visiting a foreign city. This is supported by Malcolm (2010) who states that readers scan a piece of writing when they quickly search it for specific information.

F) Elaboration

Elaboration, according to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), is relating new information to prior knowledge, relating different parts of new information to each other or making meaningful personal associations with the new information.

Meanwhile, Gunning (1996) refers to elaborations an additional processing of the text, by the reader, which may increase comprehension. It involves forming connection between the text and the reader's background knowledge of thesubject. Keshavarz and Mobarra (2003) mentions that elaboration appears to serve twin functions of most foreign / second language reading lessons, i.e., improving reading comprehension, and providing learners with the rich linguistic form they need for further language learning as this strategy provides learners with the full form of the language and allows them to encounter, more or less, authentic and native-like material (see also Vandersen et al in McNamara, 2007).

Christie and Vukelich (2003) also state that simply identifying all the words in a text does not ensure that comprehension will occur. Readers must build meaning by linking text information to what they already know. In this study, this strategy is represented as thinking about previous knowledge on the topic of the text or associating to background's knowledge.

G) Inferencing

Inference strategy is using available information to guess the meaning of new items, predict outcomes, or fill in missing information (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990). This strategy can be used as students attempt to comprehend the text. In this study, inferencing strategy is represented by the strategy of using the title to predict the content of the text and paying attention to words or phrases that show how text is organized.

H) Note-Taking

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) defines note-taking strategy as writing down key words and concepts in abbreviated verbal, graphic, or numerical form while listening or reading. Note-taking strategy is a good reading strategy. As Cambrooke (2010) claims that it is a good idea to take notes from textbook. Note-taking makes students active participants in their learning, helps them organize important concepts, remember information, and becomes one of their study aids.

I) Summarizing

According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), summarizing is making a mental, oral, or written summary of new information gained through listening or reading. Summarizing can be a useful technique. As Gulcat (2007) states that "the process of summarizing enables you to grasp the original text better, and the result shows the reader that you understand it as well. In addition to this, the knowledge you gained by summarizing makes it possible for you to anlyze and critique the original text". Cited in (Anne 2014)

2.15 The Role of Cognitive Skills in Reading Comprehension

Fluency. Fluency is a prerequisite skill to comprehension. It is the automatic recognition of words that frees up the cognitive capacity required for comprehending the meaning of the words (Pressley, 2002). Considered a bridge between decoding and comprehension (Pikulski and Chard, 2005), reading fluency took center stage after the results from the National Reading Panel (2000) were published. Although early studies recognized decoding as the skill that predicted differences in comprehension skills between children (Stanovich,1986), a landmark study of struggling readers revealed that only those who practiced reading the words until they automatically recognized them were able to accurately answer comprehension questions about the text (Tan and Nicholson, 1997). A study of at-risk second graders also revealed that accuracy and rate of oral reading uniquely predicted comprehension ability (Berninger, Abbott, Vermeulen, and Fulton, 2006). However, fluency appears to be a larger influence in developing reading comprehension skills for younger readers compared to older ones. As text becomes more challenging with each grade level, fluency becomes less predictive of reading comprehension and, instead, gives way to vocabulary (Yovanoff, Duesbery, Alonzo, and Tindal, 2005). In a multivariate study of Florida students' reading comprehension scores, Schatschneider et al. (2005) discovered that oral reading fluency did explain the differences in comprehension among third grade students while vocabulary emerged as a major factor among older students. In the section that follows, research on the role of vocabulary in comprehension development is discussed.

Vocabulary and Semantic Processing:

In order to extract meaning from text, a strong sense of semantics is required. That is, children have to understand what words mean before they can construct understanding of text passages. The first empirical study of the correlation between word knowledge and reading comprehension was published over 70 years ago (Davis, 1942), and has been replicated in decades of research consistently identifying knowledge of vocabulary as a primary predictor of reading comprehension development (Thorndike, 1973; Beck, Perfetti, and McKeown, 1982; Carroll, 1993; Torgeson et al., 1997; de Jong and van der Leij, 2002; Braze, Tabor, Shankweiler, and Mencl, 2007). In one longitudinal study of children from kindergarten through second grade, Roth, Speece, and Cooper (2002) discovered that vocabulary skills, such as oral definitions and word retrieval, were the best predictors of reading comprehension development. A similar study of at-risk second graders revealed that verbal IQ was a statistically significant predictor of reading comprehension in both the beginning and end of school year assessments (Berninger, Abbott, Vermeulen, and Fulton, 2006). Further, vocabulary knowledge is a consistent predictor of reading comprehension from fourth through eighth grades as well (Bos and Anders, 1990; Yovanoff, Duesbery, Alonzo, and Tindal, 2005). Finally, research suggests that students with poor comprehension exhibit a lack of semantic awareness characterized by an inability to attach meaning to words (Sencibaugh, 2007).

In a comprehensive review of research, the National Reading Panel (2000) concluded that vocabulary instruction facilitates the development of reading comprehension, especially when students are repeatedly exposed to vocabulary words. Further, the Panel recommended explicit instruction in vocabulary through a variety of active learning methods and contexts. Indeed, the preponderance of research indicates that vocabulary is a key contributor to reading comprehension development.

Visualization:

Another key component of reading comprehension is the active construction of a mental image of the text. These mental images are fluid and change as the reader

continually assimilates new text (Woolley, 2010). Visualization is an application of the dual-coding theory of reading (Sadoski and Paivio, 2004), the concept that readers process both visual representations of verbal information and of objects to create meaning. Also referred to as mental imagery, research suggests that this skill contributes to comprehension (Pressley, 2002; National Reading Panel, 2000) and enhances memory of the text (Romeo, 2002).

Instruction in visualization is supported by research as well. In a large-scale study of Pueblo County Schools, third through fifth graders trained in mental imagery while reading made greater reading comprehension gains than their matched control group (Sadoski & Wilson, 2006). In addition, Center et al. (1999) and Brown et al. (1995) found statistically significant correlations between visualization training and reading comprehension scores of students when used as part of a multiple-strategy instruction intervention.

Working Memory. Working memory has also been identified as an integral part of reading comprehension. Working memory is defined as an executive function responsible for keeping and updating information in the mind (Rothlisberger, Neuenschwander, Cimeli, and Roebers, 2013). Further, working memory is responsible for managing the process of extracting information from text and integrating it with prior knowledge to create meaning (Garcia-Madruga et al., 2013). Sequences of text-based information are held in working memory and integrated with new incoming text and with prior knowledge held in long-term memory. Research has established a correlation between working memory and comprehension (Cain, Oakhill, and Bryant, 2004). In two studies, Seigneuric (2000, 2005) and his colleagues found working memory to be a direct predictor of reading comprehension scores among third and fourth graders, although not significant for first and second graders. Further, a similar result emerged from a study of 8 to 16 year olds, identifying working memory as a statistically-significant predictor of reading comprehension (Christopher et al., 2012). The findings from these three studies suggest that as text complexity increases with grade level, a greater amount of

working memory is needed for assimilating longer sentences with new vocabulary into rapidly changing mental images. However, recent research indicates that composite executive function scores are statistically significant predictors of reading comprehension scores in pre-kindergarten through third grade as well (Rothlisberger, Neuenschwander, Cimeli, and Roebers, 2013). Indeed, working memory seems to play a critical role in reading comprehension across age groups.

Reasoning and Inference. Inferential reasoning is the ability to use information in the text to determine additional information that is only implied by the text. In a review of studies on inference skills for reading, researchers at the National Foundation for Educational Research (2008) discovered that the ability to draw inferences is directly related to reading comprehension ability. In unrelated studies, Cain and Oakhill (1999, 2007) reported that students' inferencing skills contribute to future comprehension skills; and Bowyer-Crane and Snowling (2005) discovered that students with poor comprehension also lack inferencing ability. The process of inferential reasoning requires both short-term and long-term memory, acting on retrieval of background knowledge combined with the text to arrive at the implicit information from the text (NFER, 2008). In a study of the factors that contribute to reading comprehension among Florida students, Schatschneider et al. (2005) discovered that in addition to verbal knowledge, reasoning ability was the dominant factor among 10th grade students' reading comprehension scores. The growing body of research continues to acknowledge the role of reasoning and inferencing abilities in reading comprehension.

2.16 The Previous Studies:

Ibrahim Mohammed Ibrahim Khirallah (2017) PHD, Obstacles Facing EFL Learners to Develop Vocabulary through Reading Comprehension,

This study aims to hence, practicing English in daily life for EFL learners is limited. The main source of learning new vocabulary is reading English texts. Several studies have reported that EFL learners encounter difficulties in learning English. Therefore, this study investigated the obstacles encountered by EFL learners in developing vocabulary through reading comprehension. English language learners face difficulties and hindrances in word meaning. Therefore, this study aims to help

English language learners to overcome those problems. This study has found out: most of the teachers agreed that learners don't know how to practice vocabulary learning strategies through reading comprehension. The lack of vocabulary is due to the lack of language practice, motivation, awareness and techniques. The students' performance was improved significantly and they developed better attitudes towards learning vocabulary via techniques and strategies. The study recommends that proper techniques and strategies should be adopted in teaching vocabulary. Inferring vocabulary meaning from the text is an essential strategy for developing student's performance.

Taylar Brooke Clements" *The Role Of Cognitive And Metacognitive Reading Comprehension Strategies In The Reading And Interpretation Of Mathematical Word Problem Texts: Reading Clinicians' Perceptions Of Domain Relevance And Elementary Students' Cognitive Strategy Use*" 2004

The study aimed to examine teacher perceptions and student applications of cognitive reading comprehension strategy use as applied to the reading and interpretation of a mathematics word problem. Teachers' perceptions of the relevance and application of cognitive reading comprehension strategies to mathematics contexts were investigated through survey methods.

The results of this study indicate that the elementary student participants did not recognize the cognitive comprehension strategies that they were using during the initial reading of the mathematical text as relevant to mathematics based text, which is why initial patterns of strategy use were not sustained or renegotiated, but were instead replaced or extinguished without replacement upon identification of the text as mathematical. This may be due to a lack of:

1) domain-general instruction,

2) varied text examples in their schooling,

3) conditional knowledge instruction for strategy use, effects

That may be caused by the students' teachers' own domain-specific perceptions of cognitive strategy use at the elementary level.

Anne Ratna S: The Use of Cognitive Reading Strategies to EnhanceEFL Students' Reading Comprehension 2014

The study aims at investigating cognitive reading strategies frequently used among EFL students at one of universities in Garut, Indonesia, to enhance their reading comprehension. This study alsoaims to find out which cognitive reading strategies considered the most helpful to be developed by the EFLstudents especially in answering questions in reading comprehension test successfully.

The study found that: The students need to know in what circumstance they should use the strategies. For example, theyshould know what strategy to use when they want to know the meaning of the unknown wordwithout looking up in the dictionary. Certainly, they are supposed to practice using those goodreading strategies in reading. Therefore, the lecturers are suggested not only to teach those good reading strategies but also to encourage the students to use the strategies. Since the study is also expected to develop the awareness of reading strategies to enhance university students' reading comprehension, it is recommended to identify students' awareness of good reading strategies and what strategies they have already employed. This can help to think further what treatment should be conducted for the sake of the students' success in continuing their academic studies especially in reading comprehension course.

The study which used the data from self-reported questionnaire can be bias in case of the participants tried to make them look competent by giving the score as high as possible. In order to anticipate such situation, the participants were not obliged to write their names on the questionnaire form. The questionnaire used in the present study contains not only good reading strategies but also some other poor reading strategies to avoid bias.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is about the methodology of this research which used the descriptive analytical method, the instrument which employed by the researcher in order to facilitate the process of data collection as well as to obtain secondary school teacher's opinions.

3.1 The Population of the Study

The populations of this study were English language teachers at secondary schools. The study covers English language teachers in El-Hassahiesa locality.

3.2 Sample of The Study

The sample is randomly selected from the teachers of the secondary level chosen from the subject they were about (50) teachers.

3.3 Tool of the Study

The study uses the questionnaire as the tool for collecting data. The questionnaire is composed of fifteen statements. Each statement has three options for correction, they are: agree, to some extent, disagree. It is distribute to the group of teachers (male and female in Arabje) to give their responses for the presentation of results. The research use percentage's table and figure for more explain.

3.4 Reliability of Questionnaire

The study uses the SPSS programme for statistical and analytical operation. The research use present correction and the results options of followers.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

$$r_{XY} = \frac{N(\Sigma XY) - (\Sigma X \Sigma Y)}{\sqrt{\left[N(\Sigma X^2) - (\Sigma X)^2\right]\left[N(\Sigma Y^2) - (\Sigma Y)^2\right]}}$$

Where

r = correlation

R: Reliability of the test

N: number of all items in the test

X: odd scores

Y: even scores

∑: Sum

R   2×r

1+r

Val =

Correlation   = 0.90

         Reliability   = 0.95

Val =   Validity = 0.97

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter sets for analyzing and discussing the collected data, which have been collected by means of the questionnaire. So as to describe, the results that have been found from the field work the descriptive study.

4.1 The Analysis of the Result of the Questionnaire:

Statement(1): EFL students in secondary need practice and encouragement to use their cognitive abilities

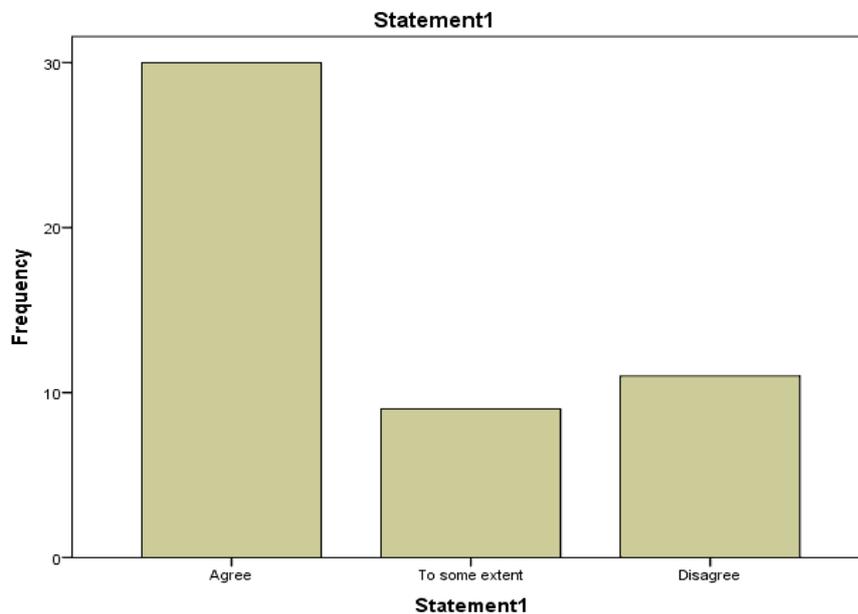| Table (4.1) EFL students in secondary need practice and encouragement to use their cognitive abilities			
Options		Frequency	Percent
	Agree		6
	To some extent		1
	Disagree		2
	Total		10

Figure (4.1) EFL students in secondary need practice and encouragement to use their cognitive abilities

The statistical analyses of statement (1) in table and diagram (4.1) show that (60%) of the respondents agree. (18%) of the sample choose the answer to some extent and (22%) disagreed.

Statement(2): Topics with vary situations in EFL classes stimulate students to think and give responses

Table (4.2) Topics with vary situations in EFL classes stimulate students to think and

give responses

Options		Frequency	Percent
	Agree	4	80
	To some extent		6
	Disagree		14
	Total	5	100
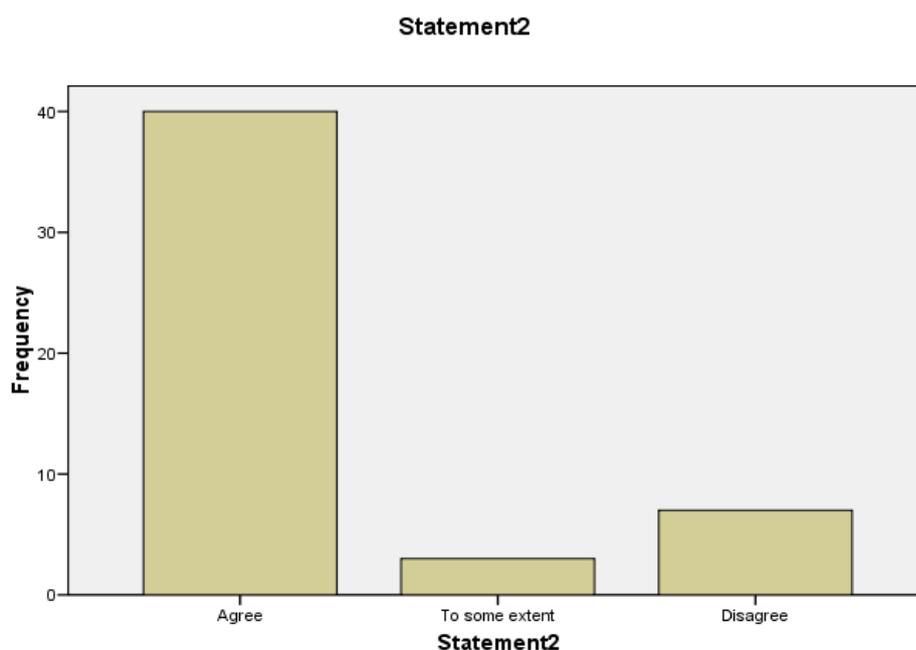
Statement2

Figure (4.2) Topics with vary situations in EFL classes stimulate students to think and

give responses

Table and diagram (4.2) show that, (80 %) of the respondents agreed, (6 %) of the sample to some extent and (14%) disagree with the statement. Therefore the statement is accepted.

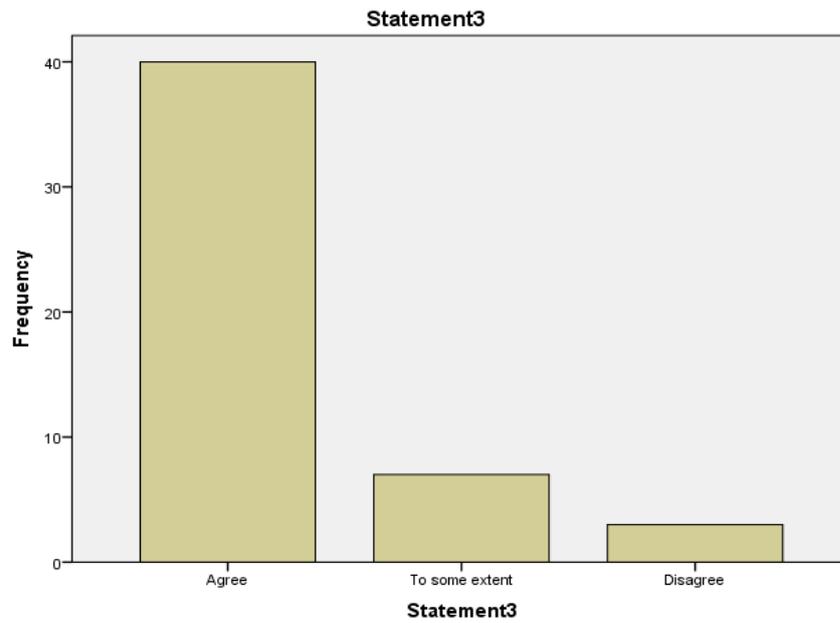**Statement(3): Using reading comprehension techniques by teaching the text in critical way develop students cognitive skills**

Table (4.3) Using reading comprehension techniques by teaching the text in critical way develop students cognitive skills		
Options	Frequency	Percent
Agree		8
To some extent		1
Disagree		
Total		10

Figure (4.3) Using reading comprehension techniques by teaching the text in critical way develop students cognitive skills

Table and diagram (4.3) show that, (80 %) of the respondents agree with the statement, (14 %) of the sample answer to some extent and (6%) sample disagree with the statement, therefore the statement is accepted.

Statement(4): reading comprehension can improve EFL learner performance

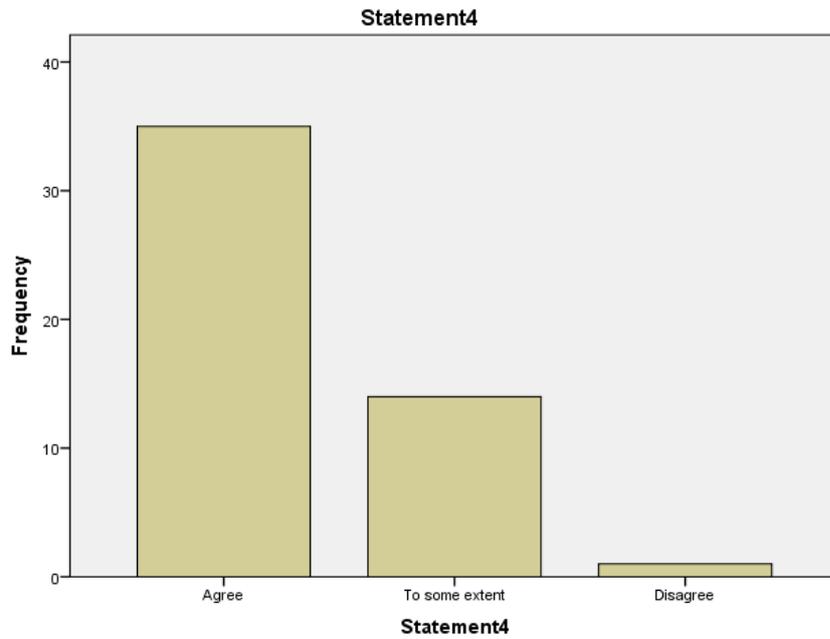| Table(4.4) Learners can understand sentence relation through reading comprehension		
Options	Frequency	Percent
Agree		7
To some extent		2
Disagree		
Total		10

Figure (4.4) Learners can understand sentence relation through reading comprehension

Table and diagram (4.4) show that, (70 %) of the respondents agree with the statement, (28%) of the sample choose the answer to some extent and (2%) of the sample disagree with the statement. Accordingly this statement is accepted.

Statement(5): Reading comprehension activities make students familiar with language usage

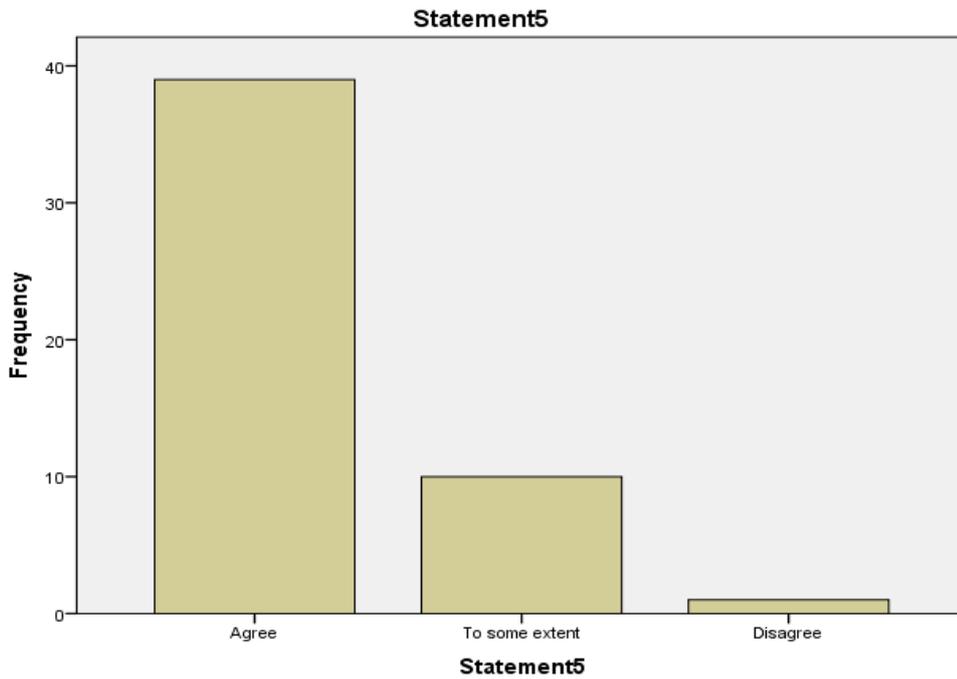| **Table (4.5)** comprehension can improve EFL learner performance		
Options	Frequency	Percent
Agree		7
To some extent		2
Disagree		
Total		10

Figure (4.5) comprehension can improve EFL learner performance

Table and diagram (4.5) show that, (78 %) of the respondents agree, (20 %) of the sample choose the answer to some extent and disagree (2%) with the statement. The statement is accepted.

Statement(6): Learners can understand sentence relation through reading comprehension

Table (4.6) Reading comprehension activities make students familiar with language

Usage

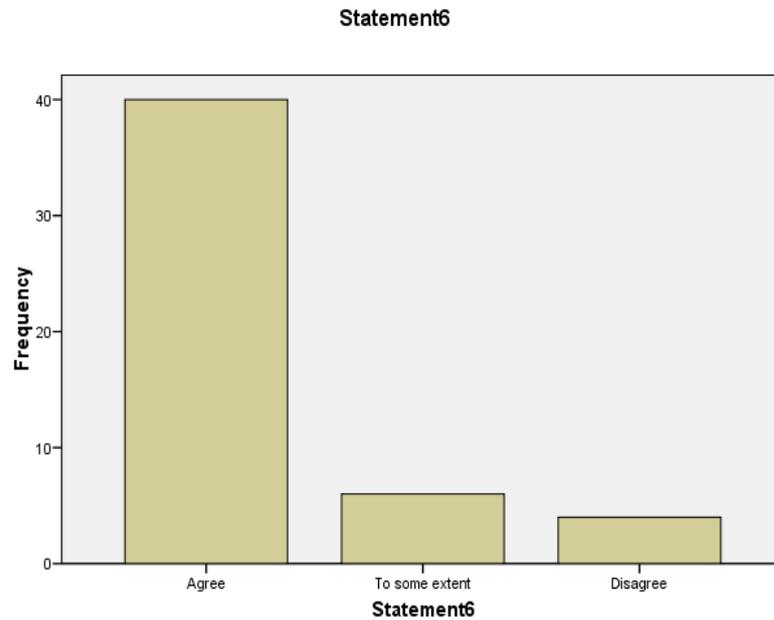| Options		Frequency	Percent
	Agree		80
	To some extent		12
	Disagree		8
	Total		100

Statement6

Figure (4.6) Reading comprehension activities make students familiar with language Usage

Table and diagram (4.6) show that, (80 %) of the respondents agree with the statement, (12 %) of the sample's answer to some extent and (8%) of the sample disagree with the statement, therefore the statement is accepted.

Statement(7): the process of teaching the text critically was neglected by the traditional (teacher- centered) techniques

Table (4.7) the process of teaching the text critically was neglected by the traditional (teacher- centered) techniques

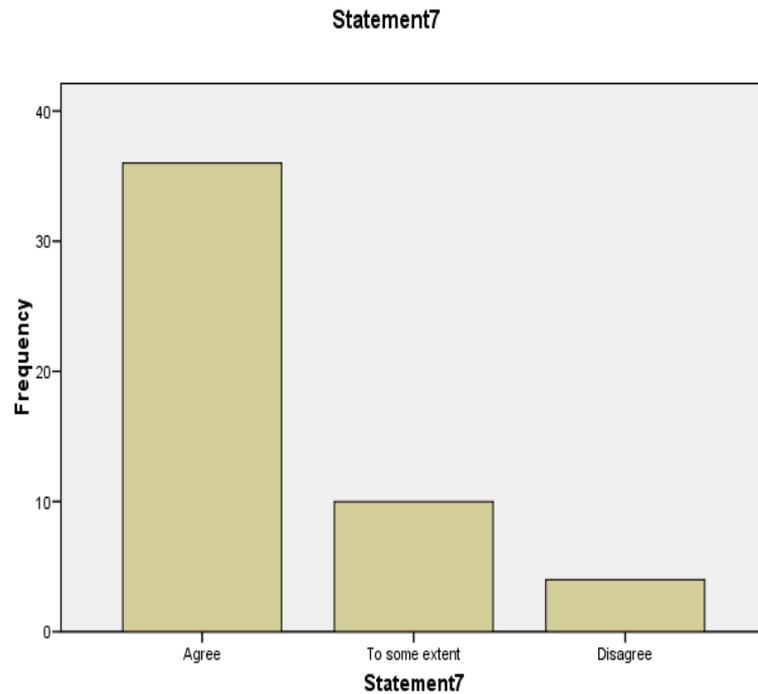| Options		Frequency	Percent
	Agree		72
	To some extent		20
	Disagree		8
	Total		100

Figure (4.7) the process of teaching the text critically was neglected by the traditional
(teacher- centered) techniques

The statistical analyses of statement (7) in table and diagram (4.7) show that (72 %) of the
respondents agree. (20%) of the sample choose the answer to some extent and (8%)
disagreed.

Statement(8): Reading comprehension has a role in stimulating the productive skills

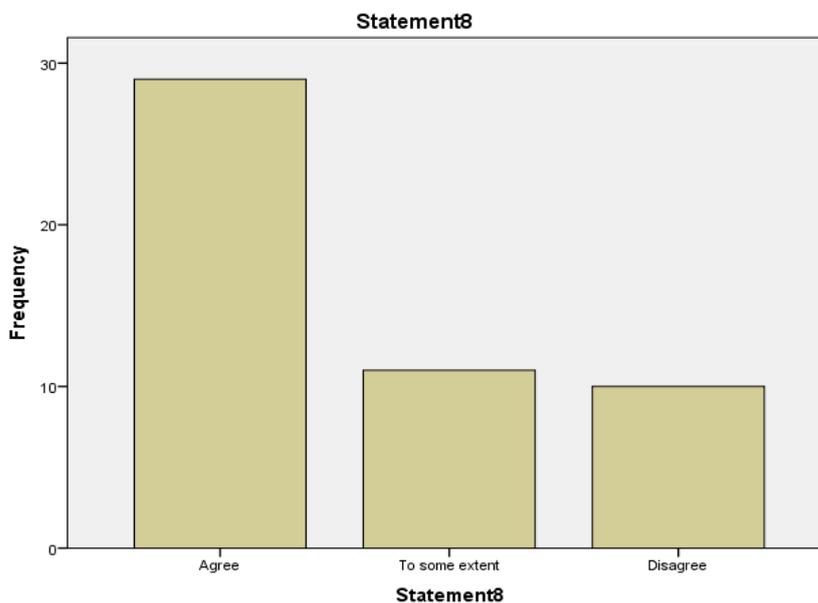| Table (4.8) Reading comprehension has a role in stimulating the productive skills		
Options	Frequency	Percent
Agree		5
To some extent		2
Disagree		2

	Total		10

Figure (4.8) Reading comprehension has a role in stimulating the productive skills

Table and diagram (4.6) show that, (58 %) of the respondents agree with the statement, (22 %) of the sample's answer to some extent and (20%) of the sample disagree with the statement, therefore the statement is accepted.

Statement(9): The inappropriate teaching of reading comprehension texts may lead to the distraction as it includes too much vocabulary to be comprehended well

Table (4.9) The inappropriate teaching of reading comprehension texts may lead to the distraction as it includes too much vocabulary to be comprehended well

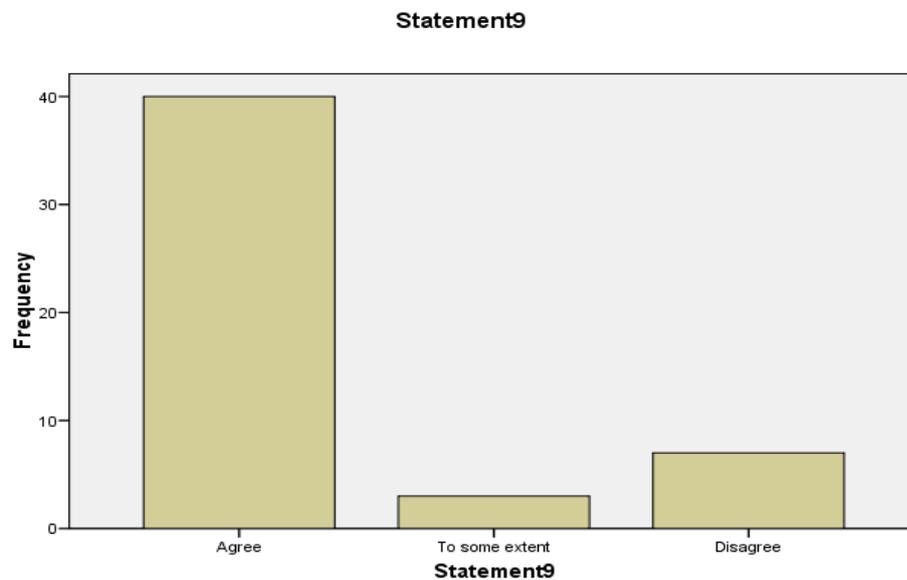| Options		Frequency	Percent
	Agree		80
	To some extent		6
	Disagree		14
	Total		100

Figure (4.9) The inappropriate teaching of reading comprehension texts may lead to the distraction as it includes too much vocabulary to be comprehended well

Table and diagram (4.9) show that, (80 %) of the respondents agree, (6 %) of the sample choose the answer to some extent and (14%) with the statement. The statement is accepted.

Statement(10): Reading comprehension requires much attention and following up

Table (4.10) Reading comprehension requires much attention and following up

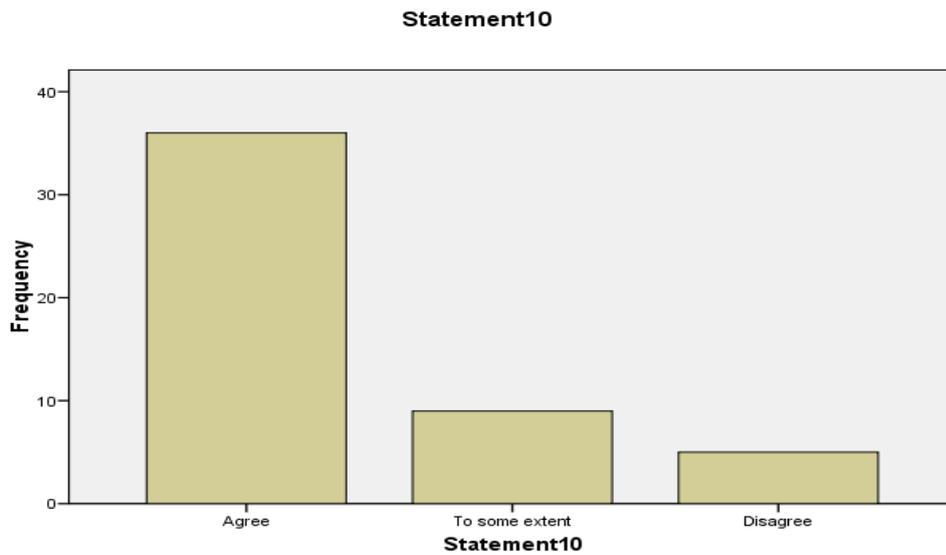| Options		Frequency	Percent
	Agree		72
	To some extent		18
	Disagree		10
	Total		100

Figure (4.10) Reading comprehension requires much attention and following up

The statistical analyses of statement (10) in table and diagram (4.10) show that (72 %) of the respondents agree.   (18%) of the sample choose the answer to some extent and (10%) disagree that,

Statement(11): Diversity in topics through reading comprehension texts may increase students awareness about many issues in the life

Table (4.11) Diversity in topics through reading comprehension texts may increase

 students awareness about many issues in the life

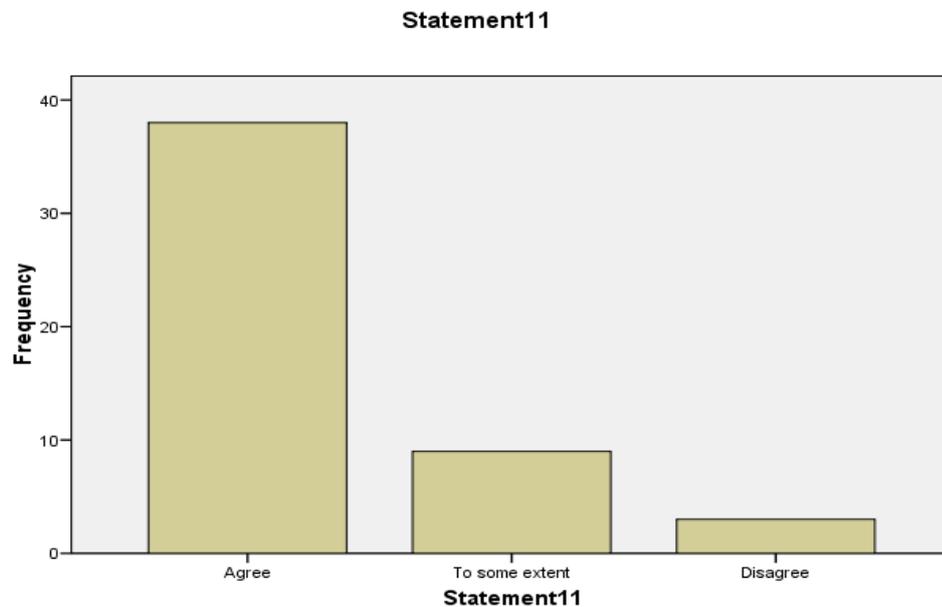| Options		Frequency	Percent
	Agree		76
	To some extent		18
	Disagree		6
	Total		100

Figure (4.11) Diversity in topics through reading comprehension texts may increase students awareness about many issues in the life

Table and diagram (4.11) show that, (76 %) of the respondents agree that diversity in topics through reading comprehension texts   increases students awareness about many issues in the life, (18 %) of the sample to some extent and (6%) disagree with the statement. Therefore the statement is accepted.

Statement(12) Learners can be able to think about the different topic after being taught in reading comprehension class

Table (4.12) Learners can be able to think about the different topic after being taught in reading comprehension class

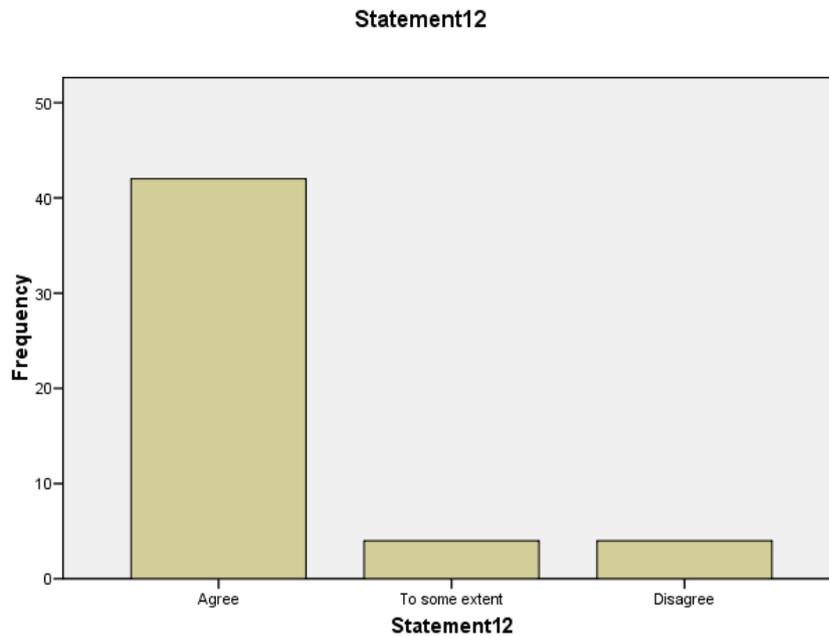| Options		Frequency	Percent
	Agree		84
	To some extent		8
	Disagree		8
	Total		100

Statement12

Figure (4.12) Learners can be able to think about the different topic after being taught in reading comprehension class

Table and diagram (4.12) show that, (84 %) of the respondents agree with the statement, (8 %) of the sample's answer to some extent and (8%) of the sample disagree with the statement, therefore the statement is accepted.

3.2 Testing of The Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: Reading Comprehension Is An Important Method In EFL Teaching And Learning, It Also Has Significant Role In Mastering Language Skills.

Table and diagram (4.4) show that, (70 %) of the respondents agree with the statement and the other samples disagree with the statement. Accordingly this hypothesis is accepted

Hypothesis Two: Reading comprehension has a great role in developing students' cognitive skills as it encourages them to think critically about the selected topics.**.**

Table and diagram (4.3) show that, (80 %) of the respondents agree with the statement of the sample answer to some extent and other sample disagree with the hypothesis, therefore the statement is accepted

Hypothesis Three: Employing reading comprehension texts in improving mental abilities requires a well trained teacher to be aware of the mental benefits of the text.

Table and diagram (4.9) show that, (80 %) of the respondents agree and the other samples disagree with the statement. The hypothesis is accepted

CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSION, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides the conclusion and findings of research with many recommendations.

5.1 Conclusion

The process of investigating the topic concluded that; reading comprehension is a vital in the process of learning EFL. Beside its importance in improving language skills, it is effective for students cognitive skill as it links the process of reading with mental abilities.

5.2 Findings

1. Reading comprehension has great benefits in learning EFL classes.
2. Students in secondary level need to improve their cognitive skills as they are getting ready to face the world widely.
3. Reading comprehension makes link between reading and thinking so it is a good stimulator for students mental abilities.
4. Variation of topics in EFL classes encourages students to think and broaden their minds.
5. Using reading comprehension affect students' performance in EFL classes.
6. Learners can comprehensibly get the essence of the topic after being taught in reading comprehension class.
7. Reading comprehension lessons requires much attention and following up

5.3 Recommendations

1. Teachers should be well trained to find the proper techniques for teaching reading comprehension.
2. Students should be encouraged to read not only in classes but also outside the classroom.

3. Teachers should divide the pupils into group and pair works in order to develop their use of reading comprehension.
4. Teachers need techniques and strategies of teaching reading comprehension.
5. Syllabus designers should be attention to the activities and choose th activities that motivate students to think.

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Appendix