

A STUDY ON THE INFLUENCE OF JORDANIAN EFL TEACHERS EXPERIENCE IN TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION

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ABSTRACT

Reading comprehension is a demanding skill for ESL/EFL learners. The objectives of the study were: 1) To investigate the use of reading strategies by the teachers, which can improve student's reading comprehension. 2) To investigate whether the activities, which given by the teachers can improve the student's reading comprehension. 3) To investigate the teacher's knowledge, which improves students reading comprehension. This research is quantitative research. The sampling of the study consists of 10% from the whole population which is 1150 EFL teachers at Irbid Directorate of Education at the Ministry of Education in Jordan. The researcher used a questionnaire which was adopted from both studies (Shulman, 2002; and Al-Dgheim 2001). The findings of the study were teaching vocabulary and preparation for reading materials are the most strategies used by EFL Jordanian teachers. Moreover, pre-reading is the most common activities given by Jordanian EFL teachers' in teaching reading comprehension. In addition, there is a statistically significant difference in teachers' knowledge.

Keywords: Reading comprehension, EFL teachers, Methods of teaching

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

English has become a universal language and essential for every learner to progress academically in most of the countries world-wide .In Jordan, English is the medium of instruction at both, the lower and higher levels of education especially in fields of technology and science (Teng, 2001).

In English, four skills were divided which are: Reading, writing, listening and speaking. Arthi & Srinivasan (2018) declare that reading is important for learners because it will increase students' knowledge by reading different texts. Rivers (1981) declares that reading is important because it is a source of information, and it is a chance for students to share thinking of great minds of another culture. Reading is classified into two main parts: initial and comprehension (Lambe, 2017). Educators in the classrooms especially EFL classrooms are always confused with choosing the correct way to teach reading (Lambe, 2017). Cahyono & Widiawati (2011) said that in teaching reading, reading comprehension is most suitable for EFL learners rather than initial reading.

In EFL context, English language is considered as a foreign language for Jordanian students at different levels. It is taught as a compulsory subject at schools from the first grade through to the twelfth grade. Students rarely use English outside or in their daily social activity (Al-Barakat & Bataineh, 2008; 2009). Learners all over the world usually face problems in learning a language because different reasons such as reading materials, teaching methods, environment whether social, economic, or Arabic-speaking environment, and other linguistic features like, syntax, phonetics, and semantics (McKeown & Beck, 2004). Furthermore, reading is a very essential skill in every student's life. It has received the attention of

researchers and scholars' world-wide. Comprehension; however, is the basic element in the reading process that EFL students should master in their circle of learning (Labah, 2007).

Statement of the Problem

Even though, reading is still important for EFL learners, but students as well as learners in general are still faced problem in reading in general, and in the way of teaching reading in specific. Furthermore, teaching reading comprehension has changed many times in the last two decades (McKeown& Beck, 2004). For example, in Jordan, researchers such as (Bataineh & Al-Barakat, 2011) declare that students at different levels problems in reading. Even other studies are agreed with the earlier views about the difficulty that students faced when then taught reading (Roebl & Shiue, 2013).

In the secondary level, students in Jordan are considered as poor readers based on some researchers such as (Al-Damiree & Bataineh, 2016). Jordanian EFL teachers' intermediate schools appear to have continuous complaints about their students' inability to comprehend English written text or answer referential or personal questions related to the reading text (Al-Barakat & Bataineh, 2008). For instance, Al-Regeb (2009) stated that in details Jordanian students at secondary stage have problem in reading, especially, when it comes to discover the main idea, supporting ideas of the text, and conclusion idea. In addition, they have problem in finding other texts which are similar to the background knowledge, explaining the author's perspective and purpose.

This level of students' comprehension will later lead to a failure in obtaining reasonable scores for future Tawjihi exams (Alkhaldeh, 2010). This problem is investigated by Al Dgheim (2001:9), who states that teaching vocabulary is the most common techniques used for teaching reading comprehension at public schools in Jordan, and the least techniques was information.

Also, teaching reading comprehension for Jordanian EFL students at intermediate schools is somewhat not given enough attention and suitable emphasis by teachers within classroom settings(Al-Dgheim, 2001).Furthermore, policy makers, researchers, and educators in Jordan state that reading comprehension is not given an appropriate weight and time, and somewhat neglected by EFL teachers in the classroom settings. This can be observed through the taught EFL series curriculum which was designed according to the communicative approach that confines the four integrated English language skills; reading, speaking, writing, and listening to enhance the Jordanian students communicative and comprehension skills.

Objective of the Study

- i. To discover the use of reading strategies by the teachers, which can improve student's reading comprehension.
- ii. To investigate whether the activities given by the teachers can improve the student's reading comprehension.
- iii. To investigate the teacher's knowledge which improves students reading comprehension.

Research Questions

- 1) To what extent can the use of reading strategies by the teachers improve the reading comprehension of students?
- 2) To what extent do the activities given by the teachers improve the students reading comprehension?
- 3) To what extent does the teacher's knowledge improve students reading comprehension?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading Comprehension: An overview

Reading comprehension a demanding skill for learners (Dubin, 1982). Lambe (2017) describes reading comprehension as getting information from different contexts, and then combining them in a new one. Reading comprehension is defined by different researchers such as (Snow, 2002). Snow defines it as “the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language”. This definition divides reading comprehension into three elements, which are: the reader, the text, and the activity. Reading comprehension is also defined by the Ministry of Education (2002) as "the language learners' ability to understand and comprehend a written text to find the main idea and specific information".

Teaching reading comprehension plays a very significant role in developing students' comprehension of reading text and improving students' reading comprehension (Tierney, Reedence, and Disher, 1980). Abbot, Mckeating, & Wingard (1981) clarified that the task of teaching reading is not an easy one, for one thing, they added that if your learners are reading silently, you are to a certain extent excluded and the interaction of oral activity between teacher and pupil will be lacking. They added that when teaching reading, we should bear in mind the following question: (i) Are we teaching our learners or testing them? In short, does the reading comprehension lesson differ from comprehension test? (ii) How can we help our learners cope with their reading ability? And (iii) are we helping our learners read on their own, i.e. to make them eventually become independent readers? We can conclude that an adequate consideration must be given to the teaching of reading comprehension. Teachers, researchers and experts must realize that teaching of reading comprehension is crucial for learners as it facilitates the reading process.

Teaching reading comprehension for Jordanian EFL students at public schools is somewhat not given enough attention and suitable emphasis by teachers within classroom settings (Al-Damiree & Bataineh, 2016). Reading is an important skill in teaching EFL in most of the countries in the world. Reading comprehension is considered as a very important primary part of the curriculum and teaching policy in Jordan. It had received the appropriate weight and time, yet it is still the cause of difficulty in learning EFL for most of the Jordanian students (Al-Damiree & Bataineh, 2016).

According to Al Dgheim (2001), the weakness in the reading comprehension skill among Jordanian EFL students can be noticed when dealing with it as teachers of the subject at public and governmental schools. Therefore, the most usual EFL reading comprehension teaching techniques in Jordan were observed to be: vocabulary teaching, silent and aloud reading, reading lesson discussion and preparation, following up the organization of the reading text information, and the preparation for the reading process, as well as establishing purposes.

This may not give students the appropriate chance for having a satisfactory and convenient achievement in their reading comprehension and making sense of the given reading text (Roehl & Shiue, 2013). So, building up a reading comprehension skill is one of the greatest challenges of teaching EFL reading to learners hence it is an abstract process happening in the brain; and is hard to notice, teach, or even measure straightforwardly (Roy, 1978).

Socio-cognitive Model of Reading

This study follows the socio-cognitive theory of reading and comprehension with main emphasis on the teacher's knowledge. When we talk about the teachers' knowledge then the teacher knowledge is mainly consist of:

1. Prior knowledge and beliefs
- 2-Knowledge used and control

1. Prior knowledge and beliefs:

For teachers to build an effective strategy in reading comprehension, this factor is very essential when it comes to prior knowledge and beliefs. Prior knowledge and beliefs mainly consist of two important conditions:

1. affective conditions
- 2- cognitive conditions

- **Affective conditions:** These condition involve the teachers' knowledge based on

1. Opinion
- 2- Assumptions
- 3- Convictions

The beliefs of the teacher are directly related to the affective conditions and they can affect the teacher strategy for: 1- Planning. 2- Instructional purpose.

In general, the followings are the affective conditions consider being essential for teachers.

1. Teachers' skill to motivate and engage the student.
- 2- Instructional stance
2. Socio cultural value and beliefs.

- Cognitive conditions

While discussing this, the researcher has to look on the teacher cognition first which dependent on the knowledge store the teacher has. Mainly three type of knowledge is essential in this regard.

1. Declarative knowledge
2. Procedural knowledge
3. Conditional knowledge

In connection to these, five factors are essential

1. Teachers knowledge of readers
2. Teachers knowledge of literature
3. Teacher's knowledge about strategieslike, DRTA, QARS, GMA, REQUEST, VVS. These entire strategies dependent upon the teacher's knowledge and ability for the reader assessment during instruction and how the teacher he can make affective use of strategies.
4. meta cognition: this mainly used by the teachers for
 1. Instructional purposes
 2. As an interactive or a relating factor for other affective conditions.
5. Teacher personal knowledge and world knowledge

2. Knowledge used and control

These direct the teacher in instructional and decision making process. Thus provide a mental instructional representation for evaluation purpose. This ability of the teacher is dependent on the following three factors:

1. Instrumental decision making process and strategy construction
2. Instructional representation
3. Teacher executive and monitor

- Outcomes of the instructional decision making

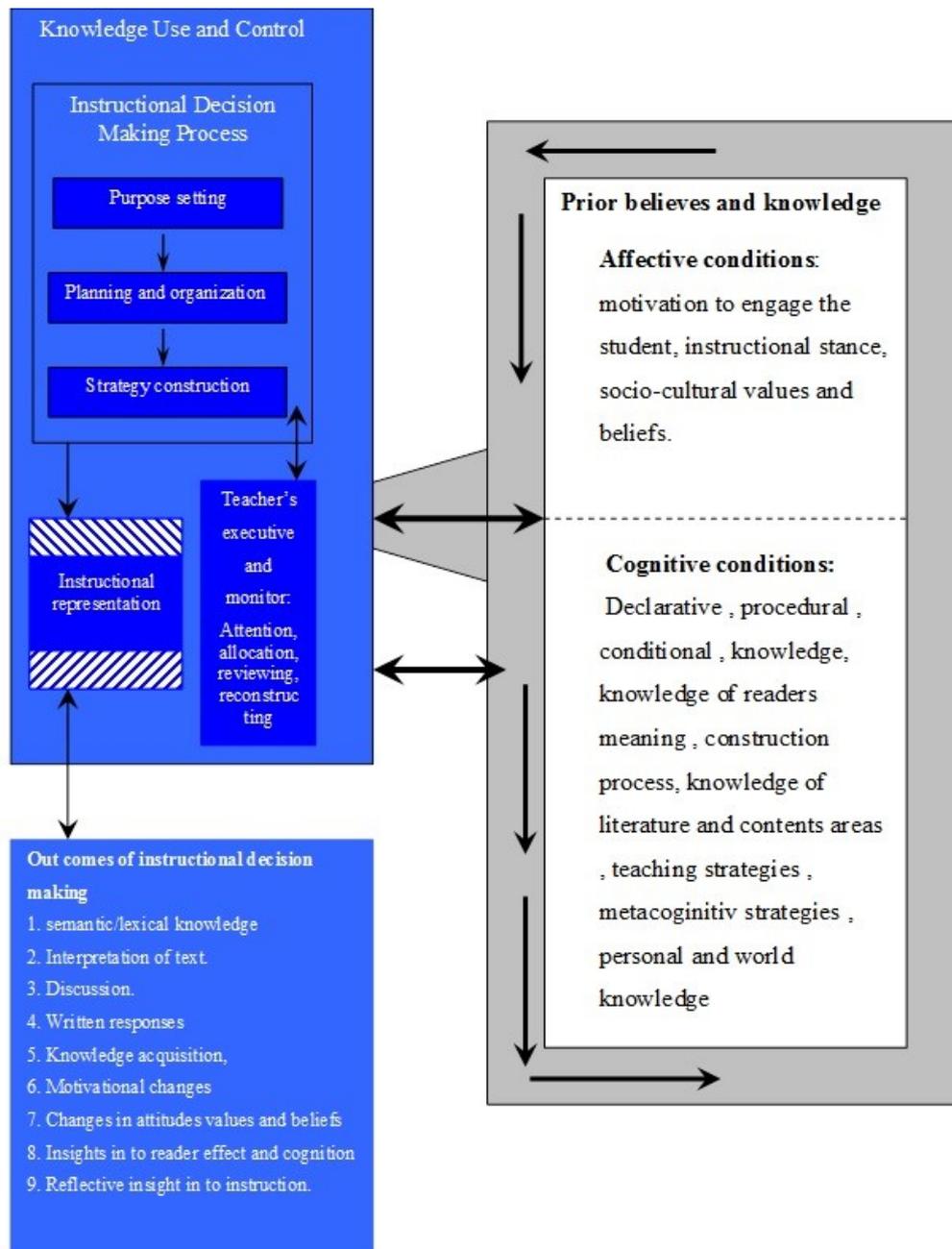
Two outcomes are more prominent in this regard:

- i. Teacher perception of readers understanding.

ii. 2- Teacher own understanding and insight.

During the instructional phase, teacher gets an understanding of the semantic and lexical knowledge, which readers will acquire; moreover, the teacher gets a good opportunity to increase the word vocabulary as well. Teacher’s semantic and lexical knowledge can be refined and extended. All this help teachers to improve the interpretation of the text, learner discussion regarding to the subject, written response to the text; moreover, teacher also learns how to bring improvements in the learner attitude, values and beliefs in order to develop and enhance the motivation among the students. This will help teachers to develop his/her own strategy in accordance with the reader response.

Theoretical Frame Work of Study (Ruddell & Unrau, 2004).



Adopted from (Ruddle&Unrau, 2004)

Reading Strategies

Reading strategies defines by Barnett (1988) as “the mental operations involved when readers approach a text effectively and make sense of what they read” (p. 150). Good language users employ a variety of strategies at one time. According to Chamot (2004), different sets of language learning strategies can be employed at the same time. For example, students who prepare for examination, focusing on grammar and vocabulary will find using the memorizing strategies as well the affective strategies helpful. On the other hand, for ESL students, in an academic context, the employment of cognitive strategies and affective strategies will be useful. A meta-cognitive model instruction will be helpful when readers plan to process, monitor, evaluate and solve problem.

Cohen (1990) claims that basic principles in applying reading strategies by formulating awareness on what strategies to use on targeted text to achieve better understanding. He also states that reading strategies are only beneficial depending on who is using them, the issue in the text, at what point of a time or circumstances and for what purpose in mind.

Sheorey & Mokhtan (2001) classifies reading strategies into three categories, cognitive, meta-cognitive, and support strategies. Cognitive strategies help readers in understanding the text, while meta-cognitive strategies are used to regulate readers’ understanding during reading and enable them to take necessary actions to fix reading problems.

In addition, O’Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Russo, and Kupper (1985) classify strategies into three different types, meta-cognitive, cognitive, and social/affective. Social/affective strategies may consist of using social interactions, such as working with a teacher or a peer to solve reading problems and to assist ones’ comprehension process.

Reading Comprehension Strategies

Reading comprehension considers as a process of demanding skills and strategies (Blachowicz & Ogle, 2008). Different studies all over the world such as (Davis, 2010; Mohammadi, 2009; Shang, 2010) have focused on the learning/teaching reading strategies. Using an appropriate reading comprehension strategy leads the learners to be a good comprehends. Choosing the correct strategy depends on different factors such as students' level, the type of text, students’ culture and background knowledge, the aim of reading, etc (Blachowicz & Ogle, 2008).

Researchers such as (McNamara, 2007) provide reasons of why do learners need to use reading comprehension strategies. First, learners are not sure about they adequately comprehend the text. Second, learners do not know what comprehension means. Third, deep comprehension is quite difficult for different level because it requires "inferences, linking ideas coherently, scrutinizing the validity of claims with a critical stance, and sometimes understanding the motives of authors” (McNamara, 2007, p. 4). Lastly, the strategies of reading comprehension are required to use before, during, and after reading (Lems, Miller, & Soro, 2010).

There are two main reading comprehension strategies which are: Single and combining reading comprehension strategies. The first part is Single Reading Comprehension Strategy is divided into seven strategies as Zimmermann and Hutchins (2003) classified them, and then cited in Moreillon (2007) which are: Activating or building background knowledge, Using sensory images, Questioning, Making predictions and inferences, Determining main ideas, Using fix-up options, and Synthesizing. While, combining reading strategies focused on how reading strategies work together in strategy packages (Guthrie, Wigfield, & Perencevich,

2004). A text needs a good reader who used a set of strategies (Reutzel, Smith, & Fawson, 2005)

Quandt (1977) introduced specific teaching strategies for comprehension guidance: (1) providing experiences, (2) asking questions, (3) the Directed Reading Activity (DRA), (4) task completion, (5) discussion, (6) conferences, (7) close procedures, and (8) projects and problem solving.

The DRA mentioned above, is a five-step lesson especially designed to help those students who are reading materials that are on their instructional, rather than independent, reading level (Burmeister, 1978). The steps of the DRA are: (1) explore student's background, (2) preview the assignment, and clarify purposes (3) students read silently, (4) student discuss and respond to the assignment, and (5) extend the activity.

One useful teaching strategy that accomplishes reading comprehension purposes are the Directed Reading –Thinking Activity (DRTA). The DRTA involves students directly in the process of constructing meaning. It may be used to guide reading of any type of reading text (Dixon & Nessel, 1992).

Terney (1980) pointed out that DRTA is intended to develop student's ability to read critically. This activity may be applied to reading selections varying in both length and readability and is suggested for use with students at all grade levels. The DRTA has two parts: a process and product. Using the DRTA with content field was suggested by Shepherd (1982). He stated that the DRTA indicates that the reading thinking process is as applicable to the content areas as it is to the basal readers of elementary school. The DRTA has the following steps:

1. *Preparation for reading includes:* (a) investigating and expanding the background of the student experience, (b) previewing the reading material, (c) introducing the vocabulary pertinent to the text, and (d) evolving purposes for reading.
2. *Reading the material silently includes:* (a) observing students to note vocabulary (word recognition), and (b) observing students to note comprehension (organization of data, finding answers to purpose and noting relationships within data).
3. *Developing comprehension includes:* (a) discussing answers, (b) clarifying and guiding further development of the concepts and vocabulary, (c) assisting the students in noting organization of information, (d) noting the need for further information from both the text and other sources of material, and (e) redefining purposes; setting new purposes for reading.
4. *Rereading includes:* (a) clarifying further essential information and concepts, and (b) giving specific skill training in comprehension as indicated by the needs of individuals and group.
5. *Following up the information include:* (a) setting up problems requiring further information, (b) choosing supplementary recreational reading to develop and extend interest, attitudes, and operational, (c) clarifying further concepts as necessary, and (d) analyzing the information and helping studying students to relate it to their own lives.

Reading Activities

Johnson (1992) investigated and defined the importance of classroom communication activities through which reading comprehension is taught. Pre-reading activities provides a new knowledge, which discovered the background knowledge of the reading passage. Varied strategies also actively engage students with the text while reading. Post-reading activities help students to discover what they understand and how the writer understands his own

production. Johnson found that classroom activities depending on research which indicated that reading comprehension is the interaction of the reader's knowledge of the topic with the writer and the content can lead to foreign language learners' successful construction of meaning from a written passage through oral and written communication activities.

According to Carrell and Eisterhold (1983), reading occurs for a purpose not for a space which aims to achieve an end. Therefore, to achieve this purpose, there are some activities given by the teachers to help students in comprehending the text. Reading activities include one or more purposes which contribute to process the text and consequently perform the activity which motivate the reader to comprehend the text. These activities include: Pre-reading: the reader has a purpose which is, for example, completing a class assignment and this purpose can be influenced by motivational variables including knowledge and interest. The initial purpose can be changed when the reader reads because the reader will encounter new questions through his reading which change the original purpose to be irrelevant. Moreover, pre-reading activity motivates the students before reading the text. For example, teachers can ask the students questions in order to attract them towards the text (Carrell&Eisterhold, 1983).

Paran (1996:29) stated that the while-reading activity enable readers to be "less reliant on top-down processing" and enable them to achieve "greater reliance on bottom-up strategies as they become more proficient". Karakas (2002) stated that the aim of post-reading activities is to help readers to explain any ambiguous meaning. In addition, He confirmed that the readers understand the text by using different activities such as summarizing, question and answer, drawing conclusions.

Post-reading activities encourage the readers to learn comprehension through the use of matching exercises, close exercises, cut-up sentences, and comprehension questions (Haller, 2000).

Types of Reading Activities

Types of activities presented by the teacher can be considered very important for reading comprehension. Abbot, et al. (1981) presented three types of activities by which the teacher can help the reading become mature and efficient.

A. Before reading activities: creating a positive in the learner's mind towards the text to be read is the overriding aim in doing any class work. This type of activities includes: (1) anticipating the content. Learners can be asked to read the heading of the section of the text and say or write down what they expect the text to be read is going to be about, (2) anticipating both content and the form. The teacher knows the language and activities that the learner may expect to come across. With familiar material we find it easier to predict what will occur –or is likely to occur, and (3) vocabulary work. Unknown vocabulary can be presented by the useful means of illustrations, demonstrations, synonyms and antonyms, definitions ..., etc.

B. While reading activities include: (1) identifying the main idea. The learners are asked to : (i) read the passage to give a title , (ii) read the passage to select the most appropriate title from those given , and (iii) identify the topic sentences , (2) reading for details . One useful strategy to use for this work is the information –gap strategies, whereby the reader has to fill in the missing information on a work –sheet by scanning a text which has the reacquired information, (3) following sequence. Here, the learner is involved in relating items in a particular order, (4) inferring from the text. The learners are asked to make conjectures, to workout what is implied in the text, (5) recognizing the writers purpose and attitudes, (6)

recognizing discourse features, and (7) the teacher's role. The teacher not only suggests ways of teaching the students, but also he will be there in the class, ready to help both individual learners with particular difficulties and the whole group if a general difficulty arises while the learners are busy with silent reading.

a. After reading activity: this type of activities includes the following: (1) checking on the reading text, (2) exploiting the learner's experiences, and (3) going from the receptive stage to produce a stage of learning certain word and using learning as a preliminary to some other language work like writing.

Nuttall (1982) suggested the following steps when teaching reading: (i) set overall purpose for reading, (ii) introduce the text by pointing the student in the right direction, getting them into the right mood for the text and if possible, making them feel interested in reading it, (iii) skimming /scanning exercises on whole text, (iv) address the text section by section, (v) assign tasks requiring assessment of the text as whole, drawing together information obtained from the detailed study and including the contribution of each part to the total message, (vi) groups or individuals attempt tasks, and (vii) report –back session and final discussion.

Related Studies in Jordan

In Jordan, a limited amount of research was done on teaching reading comprehension strategies. Al-makhzoomy (1986) described the strategies of teaching reading comprehension to secondary students and suggested a model for teaching reading comprehension. The subjects were 100 secondary school teachers of English in Irbid governorate. They were asked to list the strategies they use in teaching reading comprehension. Al-makhzoomy then analyzed and criticized the strategies. He found that the strategies used by the teachers concentrated on teaching the meaning of words and the accuracy of pronunciation. He stated that our students' level of reading could be improved by applying strategies that concentrate on reading for meaning. He recommended using a method that included the following steps: (1) selecting the reading passage, (2) introducing the text to the students, (3) providing readiness by introducing difficult lexical and syntactic items, (4) providing "anchorage", (5) reading the passage, (6) discussing the passage, and (7) evaluating students' comprehension.

Al-masri (1987) investigated the effect of what he termed "The New Proposed Method" on reading comprehension and language efficiency comparing it to the traditional method used in New Living English for Jordan. Two groups (experimental and control) consisting of 140 third- preparatory class students in Irbid directorate of Education were taken. The new proposed method consisted of three stages.

- 1- A pre-reading stage which includes the following steps:
 - a. preparing the students for the topic
 - b. finding out what the pupils already know, and
 - c. Pre-teaching any key words they do not know.
- 2- A reading stage which includes the following steps:
 - a. setting focus questions for global understanding through silent-reading
 - b. checking focus questions
 - c. setting more questions for more detailed reading, and
 - d. Teacher reading with questions and \or explanation.
- 3- following up reading activities includes:
 - a. providing problem solving situations

- b. relating information to students' own lives, and
- c. Encouraging the students to read supplementary texts in their spare time.

Al-Masri (1987) found out that the experimental group performed significantly better than the control group, which means that the new proposed method was superior to the traditional method. He also found that the experimental group achieved higher scores on the language than the control group.

Some of the reading comprehension strategies used by teachers were found to improve students' comprehension and meaning making of written texts. Rababa'h (1991) investigated the effect of using skimming and scanning strategies on first secondary scientific class achievement in reading comprehension. Rababa'h found that there was a high statistically significant difference between the two groups of students for the benefit of the experimental group due to the effect of using the strategies of skimming and scanning.

One of the issues in reading comprehension is the effect of relevant background knowledge. To explore the specific effect of background knowledge on reading comprehension, researchers conducted studies on this issue. Al-zubaidi (1995) investigated the effect of background knowledge on reading comprehension. A sample of 300 students (150 ninth graders and 150 twelfth graders) was randomly chosen. She found that there was a statistically significant difference in reading comprehension due to the relevant background knowledge; but she found no statistically significant differences in reading comprehension due to the grade level, and to the interaction between the background knowledge and the grade level.

Al-Aiasreh (1998) also investigated nine common vocabulary teaching strategies: word-list, definitional, visual-aids, a combination of strategies, context, translation, semantic-field, categorization, and guessing. The subjects were 235 teachers (123 males and 112 females) who were teaching English for the basic stage in Jerash Directorate of Education.

A significant positive correlation was found between female and male teachers in accordance with the order using these strategies. The effect of qualification on the use of these strategies was in favour of those with higher qualification, and in favor of teachers whose experience was 16 years and more.

Al-Omari (1996) assessed the reading comprehension skills at the basic stage exemplified by the tenth graders in Jordan. The subjects were 284 students divided into two groups 142 females and 142 males. He employed a test to assess their attainment of reading comprehension skills. A t-test was used to compare the means of the two groups on the whole test and on each of the reading comprehension skills, and also to compare each of the two groups with respect to their performance on the word-attack, sentence – attack and text attack skills. He found that the subjects (females and males) have scored very low on all reading comprehension skills, female groups were a head of the male group, and the subjects were a step further with respect to the sentence-attack skills.

It is noticed that most writers who introduced reading strategies agreed upon the following:

1. preparation for reading
2. establishing purposes for reading
3. silent reading
4. teaching vocabulary
5. re-reading
6. discussion

7. evaluating comprehension, and
8. following up the information

RESEARCH METHOD

The Population of the Study

The population of the current study consisted of all Jordanian EFL teachers in Irbid Directorate of Education in Jordan in the second semester of the academic year 2017-/2018. Moreover, the population of the study consisted of 1150 EFL teachers (617 females and 533 males). In addition, the directorate which was chosen for the current study was selected randomly.

The Sample of the Study

The same technique used to select the directorate of the conducted study was used to select the subject samples. The teachers who were selected for the sample of the study were 10% from the above mentioned population and they comprise 115 EFL teachers (55 males 60 females).

Data Collection

The researcher used a questionnaire to answer the research questions. The instrument for this study is questionnaire. The questionnaire is in English language covering four sections. The first section collects general information on the teacher's age, gender and experience. The second part examined the use of reading strategies by the teachers that can improve student's reading comprehension. The third part examined whether the activities given by the teachers can improve the student's reading comprehension. The final part examined the teacher's knowledge which improves students' reading comprehension.

The questionnaire was adopted from a study carried out by Shulman in 2002 (Truth and consequences? Inquiry and policy in teacher education) and Al Dgheim 2001 (the use of reading comprehension techniques). In the light of this, the validity and reliability of the questionnaire can be accepted because this questionnaire has been used in other countries including America and Jordan and also it could be useful for the purpose of the current study. The questionnaire used in Florida and Jordan consisted of reading strategies, reading activities and teachers' knowledge. The researcher has taken some steps to administer the questionnaire. These steps are necessary to ensure that the respondents' answers on the influence of Jordanian EFL teachers' experience in teaching reading comprehension are accurate.

Data Analysis

A total of 115 set of questionnaires were given to the teachers to be answered. Each teacher was given a sufficient time to answer the questionnaire. The data obtained after collecting the questionnaire will be analyzed using Microsoft Excel which can count the frequency and then data will be offered in Pie-Charts to show the percentage for the results. This will provide the researcher with an overview of the findings that will be obtained.

The procedures that were used in the methodology of the current study are referred to discuss the results of the study. The first section of the questionnaire which had 30 items, investigates the use of reading strategies by the teachers that can improve student's reading comprehension. The second section of the questionnaire which had 9 items, investigates whether the activities given by the teachers can improve the student's reading comprehension. The third section of the questionnaire which had 18 items, investigates the teacher's knowledge which improves students reading comprehension.

RESULTS

The study investigates the following research questions:

1. To what extent can the use of reading strategies by the teachers improve the reading comprehension of students?

The purpose of this question is to identify:

1. Teaching vocabulary
2. Preparation for reading materials
3. Silent reading
4. Establishing purposes
5. Evaluating students' comprehension
6. Re-reading (silent)
7. Discussion
8. Following up the information

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations and percentages of the teachers' responses to the items of reading strategies

N	Reading strategies	Mean	Std. Deviation	%
1	Teaching vocabulary	3.35	1.03	18.1
2	Preparation for reading materials	3.08	1.04	16.6
3	Silent reading	2.86	1.26	15.5
4	Establishing purposes	2.28	0.93	12.3
5	Evaluating students' comprehension	2.08	0.97	11.2
6	Re-reading (silent)	1.81	0.71	9.8
7	Discussion	1.60	0.69	8.6
8	Following up the information	1.46	0.50	7.9

Table (1) shows that teachers use all the types of teaching reading comprehension strategies included in the questionnaire with different degrees. The order of the strategies according to their use is as follows: teaching vocabulary (3.35), preparation for reading (3.08), silent reading (2.86), establishing purposes (2.28), Evaluating students' comprehension (2.08), re-reading silently (1.81), discussion (1.60), and following up the information (1.46). It is noticed that teaching vocabulary is the most used strategy, while following up the information is the least used by EFL teachers.

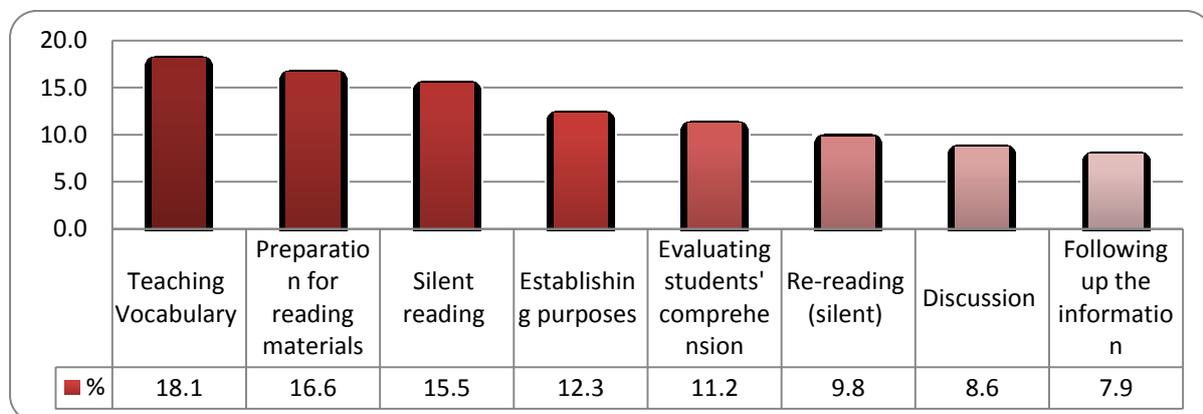


Figure 1. Teachers' percentages to the use of reading comprehension strategies

As can be seen from figure 1 above, of the eight strategies, the strategy (Teaching Vocabulary) is used more than the other strategies for reading comprehension purposes, followed by the strategy (Preparation for reading materials). Therefore, these two strategies are the most common among Jordanian EFL teachers. It is clear that teaching vocabulary strategy headed the list of all strategies whereas following up the information came last. Communication cannot take place in any language without lexical content. Accordingly, it is important that the teacher knows how to help the students to build up their vocabulary stock in a way that the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are developed.

2. To what extent do the activities given by the teachers improve the students reading comprehension?

The purpose of this question is to identify:

1. Pre-reading
2. While-reading
3. After-reading

Table 2. Displays means, standard deviations and percentages of teachers’ responses to the reading comprehension activities items

Each of the reading comprehension activities were analyzed in an individual basis. The means for each of the analyzed activities are shown in table 2 below. The findings are presented in terms of their means value.

N	Reading Comprehension Activities	Means	Std. Deviation	%
1	Pre-reading	4.09	0.87	41.9
2	While-reading	3.17	1.03	32.5
3	After-reading	2.50	1.26	25.6

Table (2) shows that teachers use all the types of teaching reading comprehension activities included in the questionnaire with different degrees. The order of the activities according to their use is as follows: Pre-reading (4.09), while-reading (3.17), After-reading (2.50). It is noticed that Pre-reading is the most used activity, while after-reading activity is the least used by EFL teachers.

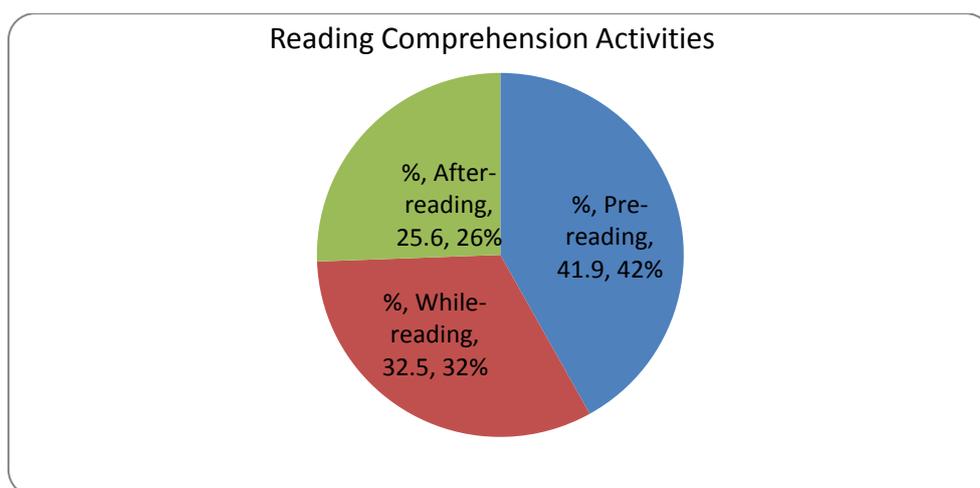


Figure 2. Teachers’ percentages to the use of reading activities for improving reading comprehension

It is obvious from figure (2) that teachers do not show very favorable responses on after-reading activity for reading comprehension. Only 25.6% of respondents use after-reading activity to improve reading comprehension. It could also be seen that the percentage of the respondents who use while-reading is 32.5%. It could be noticed that the percentage of the respondents who use (pre-reading) activity is the highest which is 41.9%. This could be due to teachers' high desire to use pre-reading activities while teaching their students in which they are mostly familiar with. Although reading comprehension activities such as after-reading and while-reading can be helpful for students to improve their reading comprehension skills, meanwhile the current study has shown that not many teachers use these activities for improving reading comprehension.

3. To what extent does the teacher's knowledge improve students reading comprehension?

The purpose of this question is to identify the following:

1. Reading instructions in teaching vocabulary.
2. Reading instructions in teaching content.
3. Reading instructions in teaching the main ideas.

Table 3. Displays means, standard deviation and percentages of the teachers' responses to the teachers' knowledge

N	Teachers' knowledge in teaching reading comprehension	Means	Std. Deviation	%
1	Reading instructions in teaching vocabulary	4.35	0.70	43.0
2	Reading instructions in teaching content	3.07	1.06	30.3
3	Reading instructions in teaching the main ideas	2.70	1.02	26.7

In order to find out whether there is a significant difference due to the teachers' knowledge in teaching reading comprehension, the researcher divided it into three levels, knowledge of reading instructions in teaching vocabulary, knowledge of reading instructions in teaching content, knowledge of reading instructions in teaching the main ideas. It is obvious from the table above (3) that the knowledge of teaching vocabulary was the most available among Jordanian EFL teachers which took a mean rating of (4.35), while knowledge of teaching content had a mean rating of (3.07) whereas, the knowledge of teaching the main ideas had a mean rating of (2.70). Collectively, there is a statistically significant difference in teachers' knowledge included in the questionnaire which can be attributed in teaching reading comprehension.

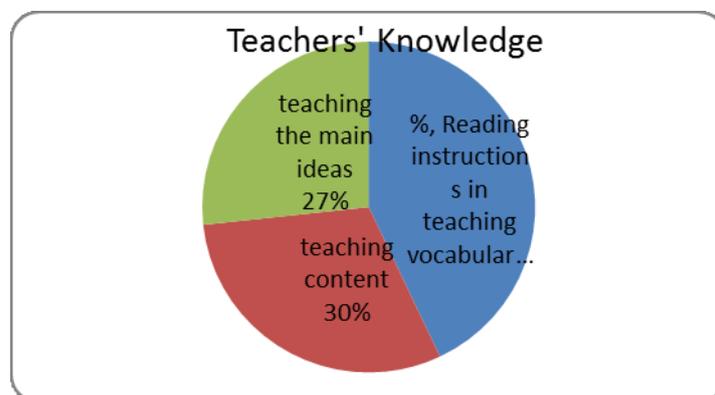


Figure 3. Teachers' percentages to the knowledge of teaching reading comprehension

It shown from figure (3) that the knowledge of teaching vocabulary has a percentage which is (43.0%) among Jordanian EFL teachers, while knowledge of teaching content has a percentage which is (30.3) whereas, the knowledge of teaching the main ideas has a percentage which is (26.7).

SUMMARY OF THE ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The use of reading strategies by the teachers that can improve student's reading comprehension

- i. Teaching Vocabulary and Preparation for reading materials are the most strategies used by EFL Jordanian teachers more than the other strategies.
- ii. Re-reading (silent), discussion and following up the information were the least strategies used by EFL teachers according to figure (1).

Reading comprehension activities given by the teachers which can improve the student's reading comprehension

- i. Pre-reading is the most common activities given by Jordanian EFL teachers' in teaching reading comprehension.
- ii. While-reading and After-reading recorded the least activities given by Jordanian EFL teachers' in teaching reading comprehension in which it should be highlighted in order to enhance students' reading comprehension.

The teacher's knowledge which improves students reading comprehension

- i. Reading instructions in teaching vocabulary was noted as being the most available knowledge among EFL teachers'.
- ii. While reading instructions in teaching content took a medium usage among EFL teachers' and it should be given more attention in order to enhance students' reading comprehension.
- iii. The lack of knowledge in teaching the main ideas among EFL teachers influences students' reading comprehension which should be highlighted and given more attention.

CONCLUSION

The study has shown that some reading comprehension strategies are more useful than the other strategies for improving students' reading comprehension. Students can benefit from these strategies in improving their reading comprehension. The study has also shown favorable activities given by the teachers to improve reading comprehension. Finally, the study has shown the influence of teachers' knowledge to improve students' reading comprehension.

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