Improving The Reading Skill of the Fourth Year Middle School Pupils in Tsabit

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the 'Master' Degree in Linguistics and Didactics

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Academic Year: 2016/ 2017

Dedication

We dedicate this work:

To our beloved parents

To our sisters and brothers

To all our friends without exception

To all who help us to accomplish this work

Acknowledgements

First of all, Thanks to Allah the almighty, the most merciful

We would like to express our sincere thanks to our parents, sisters and brothers for their priceless encouragement and financial support

We wish also to express a special thank to our supervisor **Mr. Keddouci** for his significant guidance and pieces of advice

We would like to thank the headmaster of Rahmane Boufeldja Middle School and all the teachers who help us to carry on our case study.

Last but not least, we would like to thank all our friends, classmates and teachers in the department of English

Abstract

The purpose of the present research is to investigate the techniques that the EFL teachers use to improve the fourth year middle school pupils reading skill in English. In order to achieve this aim, a questionnaire has been submitted to the middle schools teachers of English in Tsabit since teachers have direct contact with their learners and they are aware about their actual level. In addition, classroom observation is used; this gives us the chance to observe pupils in the classroom to know the source of the difficulties in order to provide valid solutions to them. The results showed that EFL teachers should conduct practicable techniques and strategies to improve their pupils' reading level. Moreover, when designing and planning lessons, they should take into consideration pupils' social environment.

Key words: Reading Skill, Techniques and Strategies to Improve Reading Skill, EFL Teachers, Fourth Year Middle School Pupils.

List of Acronyms:

AM: Année Moyenne

CBA: Competency- Based Approach

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

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General Introduction

General Introduction

The reading skill plays an important role in teaching and learning processes. Hence, it should be given much attention by both of the teachers and the learners because it has good effects in enhancing learners' vocabularies, spelling and eventually, writing skill. Moreover, it is useful in increasing the learners' knowledge about several topics.

Although reading is an essential skill, especially in English as the first language in the world, pupils of the fourth year middle school are still facing difficulties in reading in English. They cannot read long texts of their own, and they make so many mistakes (pronunciation, grammar, etc) when reading short texts.

The aim of this study is to improve fourth year middle school pupils' reading skill. In other words, we seek to determine the causes behind their low reading level, is it due to the educational system with its new reform (CBA), teachers' ways of teaching or due to the pupils. Moreover, we try to identify the strategies, the techniques and the approaches used by EFL teachers at the level of teaching the reading skill in English, and to find out to what extent they are effective. Finally, we attempt to recognize the role of pupils in increasing this issue i.e. their attitudes towards the reading skill in English in particular, and the English language in general.

Thus, this research paper tries to find convincing answers to the following research question:

- What are the techniques and approaches conducted by EFL teachers to enhance fourth year pupils' reading skill?

This question originates from the following hypothesis:

If teachers truly use effective strategies and techniques while teaching reading with their fourth year middle school pupils, then they will identify the secrets to decoding words and putting them together to read sentences, paragraphs and even short stories.

This work is composed of three chapters; the first two are theoretical whereas the third is practical. Chapter one is devoted to define reading, its importance, types, purposes, models and assessment. The second chapter is concerned with the importance of teaching English in Algeria and the developments of the Algerian educational system. It also tackles the process of teaching reading under the different approaches and under The Competency Based Approach (CBA). The last chapter is the frame work of the study. It includes the data collection instruments (questionnaire and classroom observation), the qualitative and quantitative analyses of the data collected by the two mentioned instruments, the discussion and the interpretations of the results, and it concludes with some recommendations and suggestions to improve fourth year middle school pupils' reading skill.

Theoretical Part

Chapter One : Reading

Chapter One: Reading

1.1.Introduction

Teaching language is based on teaching the four skills. The latter are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Being the subject of the present research, reading is one of the skills defined by Wixon, Peters, Weber and Rober (1987) as *"the process of constructing meaning through the dynamic interaction among the readers, the text and the context of the reading situation"*. Reading is not only a way of getting information and searching for pleasure or a hobby; it is rather a means of enriching one's knowledge with the language. It also helps at obtaining information about the other cultures and, thus, having attitudes about them. The present chapter is divided into eight sections. First, it presents a brief introduction about the reading skill. Second, mentions the reasons behind reading. Third, it lists reading types. Fourth, it sheds light on the notion of reading comprehension. Fifth, it introduces reading comprehension strategies. Sixth, tackles the models of reading process. Seventh, it discusses the assessment of reading: what is it? What are its materials? And what are its benefits? Finally, it ends with a summary.

1.2. Reading

The definition of reading differs from one scholar to another. It is generally defined as *"the receptive skill in the written mode"* (Harmer, 2001, 200). Reading is, according to, Ziegler and Gorwani the process of understanding written speech in order to understand the meaning (2005, p.03). Moreover, Mikulecky (2008) states that:

> *Reading is a conscious and unconscious thinking process. The reader applies*
>
> *many strategies to reconstruct the meaning that the author is assumed to have*

intended. The reader does this by comparing information in the text to his or

her background knowledge and prior experience (p.01).

This quotation implies that reading is a cognitive process. It involves many strategies such as enhancing prior knowledge, and experience in order to recognize the desired meaning of the text.

Moreover, reading is a complex cognitive process which takes place by the combination of biological functions (seeing, pronouncing) and cognitive functions (comprehending, and constructing in the brain) (Ayhan, Simsek, and Bicer, 2014, p.13). Pang et al (2003) add that reading consists of two related processes: word recognition (the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language) and comprehension (the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text) (p.06).

On the importance of reading Ayhan, Simsek, and Bicer, (2014) state that reading enables the individual to express him/herself better and more accurately because it gives him/her the opportunity to speak, improves his/her abilities and skills, cognitive and concrete thoughts, imagination and it supports his/her personal development. Moreover, it has a great role in determining a society's status within civilization, its economic backgrounds and cultural level (p.13).

To sum up, researchers agree that reading is a fundamental receptive skill which has a variety of definitions. They also have the same opinion that it is not a passive action; it is rather a cognitive 'process'. It is also important because it gives the readers the opportunity to speak and improves their thinking and imagination.

1.3. Purposes behind Reading

The purpose of reading is different from one reader to another. For example, a fourth year middle school pupil and a person outside school; the two may read the same text in the fourth year textbook book but their objectives are different. The first is obliged to read for

academic purposes, whereas the second may read for entertainment and pastime. Thus, the latter brings about two reasons to be discussed in the following section.

1.3.1. Reading for Pleasure

Reading for pleasure refers to voluntary reading which leads to the satisfaction got from the act of reading. It also refers to reading that have begun at someone else's request (teacher, for instance) and the reader continues because he/she is interested in it. It also involves materials of the readers' choice, and time and place that suit them (Clark and Rumbold, 2006, p.05). Moreover, it is an activity shaped by the reader's expectations and experiences in addition to the social contexts in which it takes place (Graff, 1982 cited in Clark and Rumbold, 2006, p.05).

1.3.2. Reading for Information (Instrumental)

This kind of reading takes place most of the time. It means that readers read in order to fulfill a specific aim. For instance, they read a book to obtain given information, they read the instructions in or order to know how a machine works, and they read a sign road to know where to go (Harmer, 2001, p.200).

1.4. Forms of Reading

In academic context, learners read different types of texts for different objectives. To fulfill the goals behind their reading, learners involve in many types of reading. In this section we will discuss four main forms: extensive, intensive, skimming, and scanning.

1.4.1. Extensive Reading

Reading is one of the most important teaching/learning skills in foreign language classes. However, middle school learners, for example, may find difficulties in reading acceptably. They cannot read an English text for pleasure; they can only read small sentences.

One way to solve this problem is 'extensive reading'. This latter is defined by Richards and Schmidt (2002, pp.193-194, cited in Yamashita, 2008, p.01) as reading in quantity in order to get a general understanding of what is read. Its objective is to create good reading habits, and build up vocabularies, knowledge and structure. In other words, in extensive reading, the readers have the opportunity to select by themselves what they want to read in terms of content, level of difficulty and length, and it helps them to obtain a good amount of vocabularies. In this sense Ewert and Vellenga (2014) state that extensive reading is the quick reading of a large amount of easy, varied, and interesting self-selected materials (p.4).

Ewert and Vellenga also suggest six alternative names for extensive reading which are: abundant reading, sustained silent reading, pleasure reading, free voluntary reading, supplementary reading, and book flood (p.4). From the definitions above we can conclude that extensive reading is defined from two different views: on one hand, it refers to skimming and scanning activities, on the other hand it is related to the amount and kinds of materials used by the reader (Hedge, 2003, p.202). Moreover, extensive reading helps the learners to build their competence, progresses their reading ability, become more independent in their study, acquire cultural knowledge and develop confidence and motivation to carry on their studies (Ewert and Vellenga, 2014).

To sum up, extensive reading is characterized by the freedom in choosing the materials, the place and time. Moreover, it does not go deeply inside the text, but it requires only general understanding.

1.4.2. Intensive Reading

It is likewise known as 'creative reading' in which learners usually read a passage in order to understand the meaning and to be familiar with the writing mechanisms and techniques (Alyousef, 2006, p.66). Intensive reading is important because it enhances student's reading comprehension (Blackman et.al (2004) cited in Erfanpour, 2013, p.13), i.e.

it helps students to understand the meaning of the text and know how this meaning is constructed in terms of grammar and vocabulary, for example.

Nation (2009) argues that explanation of the text in intensive reading should not be done in the L1 and he lists eight aspects that intensive reading focuses on: comprehension (the aim is understanding the text), regular and irregular sound-spelling relation (through teaching phonetics, spelling and reading aloud), vocabulary (learners focus on useful words, their meaning and use), grammar (grammatical features analyzed and explained), cohesion (it helps learners to interpret what a word, a conjunction, a pronoun means in a text), information structure (each text has certain kind of information determined through intensive reading), genre features (vocabulary, grammar, cohesive, and information help in achieving its purpose), strategies (it helps learners develop useful reading strategies) (p.27).

To conclude with, intensive reading involves deep reading under the guidance of teachers. Its goal is to understand the ideas of the text, besides, recognizing how those ideas are structured i.e. studying the text grammatically, semantically, phonetically, etc.

1.4.3. Intensive Vs Extensive Reading

Intensive and extensive reading techniques have a great effect in enhancing reading skills. However, some researchers prefer intensive reading while others prefer extensive reading as will be discussed in this section.

Haviz and Tudor (1989 cited in Alyousef, 2006) make a distinction between extensive and intensive reading as follows:

> *"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 target 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 (p. 66).

This quotation implies that, intensive reading is used as tool to teach lexis, syntax, or discoursal systems of the L2. While, extensive reading is way to acquire knowledge and vocabularies.

Powell (2005) argues that *"there is enough evidence to suggest that extensive reading program would be valuable complement to existing methodologies"* (p.28). He reports that in Japan most students enjoy and practice extensive reading more. In a study in Saudi Arabia, Al-homoud and Schmitt (2009 cited in Erfanpour, 2013, p.2) have reported that those who read extensively have positive attitudes toward reading than those who read intensively. Bamford and Day (2004 cited in Day, 2003, p.01) pointed out that extensive reading changes the students' attitudes, interest and keen. Haviz and Tudor (1989 cited in Erfanpour, 2013, p.2) concluded that extensive reading is useful for students when they feel shy of speaking because of their lack of self confidence in terms of vocabulary, grammar and knowledge.

Erfanpour (2013), however, believes that intensive reading has a great role in enhancing the language proficiency i.e. it results a huge improvement of comprehension ability, vocabulary, grammatical structure, meaning, summary, etc. whereas, extensive reading is dominant in teaching in terms of time and effort of the teachers and students (p.03).

Ewert and Vellenga, (2014, p.6) sum up the differences between extensive and intensive reading as follows:

The Source: Awert and Vallenga, 2014, p.6.

Types of reading	Intensive reading	Extensive reading
Class goal	- read accurately	- read fluently
Reading purpose	- answer questions - study	- get information - enjoy
Focus	- words - pronunciation	- meaning
Material	- teacher chooses - often difficult	- student chooses - easy
Amount	- no much	- a lot
Speed	- slower	- faster
Method	- must finish - use dictionary	- stop if you don't like it - no dictionary

Table 01.1. The Differences Between Extensive and Intensive Reading.

To conclude, Nattall (1996 in Mart, 2015, p.85) argues: "intensive and extensive readings are complementary and both are necessary" i.e. extensive and intensive reading strategies are closely related; they complete each other and help to achieve the goals of reading. Thus, syllabus designers should design a curriculum or a programme includes both extensive and intensive reading at the same time (Mart, 2015, p.85).

1.4.4. Skimming

It is reading for gist, it is a type of rapid reading which is used when the reader wants to get the main idea or ideas from a passage (Liu, 2010). It is also defined by Nuttall (1996) as:

"glancing rapidly through to determine its gist, for example in order to decide whether research paper is relevant to our own work…or to keep our selves superficially informed about matters that are not of great important to us".

This means that skimming is a quick reading that helps the readers to decide whether keeping reading a texts or parts of it or it just a waste of time.

1.4.5. Scanning

It is reading selectively to achieve very specific reading goals, e.g. finding a given date in a historical text, or an idiom in a poem. It is used when the reader needs to find a pre-selected piece of information without necessarily understanding all the text or passage and this is what differentiates it from the other types (Liu, 2010, p.155). It is, according to Nuttall (1996) taking a quick look through a text either to search for specific piece of information or to get an idea of whether the text is suitable for our purpose or not.

In general, skimming is reading fast in order to get the general main ideas of what is being read. Whereas, scanning is reading quickly for specific information.

1.5. Reading Comprehension

According to Pang et al (2014), Comprehension is the process of extracting meaning from the text being read. It involves word knowledge (vocabulary) as well as thinking and analyzing. Hence, comprehension is not a passive but an active process. In other words, the reader engages actively with the text to derive meaning. This active engagement includes using of prior knowledge, and drawing conclusions from the words and expressions that the writer uses to communicate information, ideas and points of view (p.14).

1.5.1. Reading Comprehension Strategies

Paris et al (1996) have listed three strategies that facilitate reading comprehension. These strategies are to be applied before, during and after reading as illustrated in the table below:

The Source: Paris et al (1996).

Pre-Reading Strategies	While-Reading Strategies	Post-Reading Strategies
1. Establishing a good physical environment	1. Checking comprehension throughout the reading activity	1. Appreciation of text and writer
2. Setting reading purpose	2. Identifying the main idea	2. Revisit pre-reading expectations
3. Accessing prior knowledge	3. Making inferences	3. Review notes, glosses, text markings
4. Asking questions based on the title	4. Recognizing patterns in the text structure	4. Reflect on text understanding
5. Semantic mapping	5. Looking for discourse markers	5. Consolidate and integrate information
6. Skimming for general idea	6. Monitoring vocabulary knowledge	6. Review of information
7. Previewing the text: examining headings, etc.	7. Predicting the main idea of each paragraph	7. Elaborate and evaluate
8. Reviewing instructions	8. Glossing	8. Determining what information is needed

9. Identifying text structure and genre	9. Comparing what is read with what is known	9. Apply new information to the task at hand
10. Determining what is known about the topic	10. Evaluating value of what is being learned	10. Relate the text to own experience
11. Predicting what might be read	11. Rereading text or skipping ahead	11. Critique the text

Table 01.02. Reading comprehension strategies.

1.5.2. Reading Process

According to Alderson (2000, p. 4) reading process is what is meant by reading proper: the interaction between the reader and a text. During that process, many things are happening. Not only is the reader looking at print, making sense of the symbols on the page, and how they relate to each other; but also he is thinking about what he is reading, how it relates to his/her prior knowledge, and guess what comes next. He/she also thinks about how useful, entertaining, boring, crazy, easy, or difficult the text is. For Alderson (2000) the process of reading is likely to be active, changeable for the same reader on the same text at a different time or with a different purpose of reading.

1.6. Models of Reading Process in L1and L2

There are three models of reading process that are used in both L1 and L2: bottom-up, top-down and the combination of the two or what is called 'interactive reading'. These methodologies will be discussed in details in this section.

1.6.1. Bottom-Up Process

It is the oldest approach or traditional view of reading process which many reading researchers believe that it is the best methodology to teach reading. In this process, reading occurs by linking sounds and letters, i.e. during reading, the learners are asked to focus on

language knowledge, vocabulary, and structure of a passage (Nagao, 2002, p.07, Kader, 2008, p.105). Moreover, this process goes from the smaller units of the text to the larger units of it. In other words, after the readers recognize the letters and know what words they form, they extract its meaning from the lexicon, then they construct the meaning of a phrase or clause by gathering the meanings of those word. Finally, they build up the meaning of sentences by combining the meanings of each phrase or clause (Carrel, 2000, and Goodman (1970 cited in Kader, 2008, p.106).

1.6.2. Top-Down Process

Khaki (2014) argues that 'top-down' process is also called psycholinguistic theory about learning in which the prior knowledge of the reader is so important. Goodman (1970 cited in kader, 2008, p.106) states that in 'top-down' strategy the readers use prior knowledge and assumptions because they go down from more general knowledge and meanings to the more specific ones of the text. In other word, the readers use their experience, prior knowledge and intelligence to understand a text.

To conclude with, Nuttal (1996 cited in Kader, 2008, p.106) compares bottom-up process with a scientist with a magnifying glass or microscope examining all the minute details of a phenomenon, while top-down processing is like taking an eagle's eye view of landscape bellow.

1.6.3. Interactive Reading

This method involves both processes: 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' which are used depend on the situation the reader finds him/herself in. in other words, if the reader has prior knowledge about the text, he/she will apply 'top-down' process. By contrast, if he/she does not have enough knowledge about the topic, he/she will use the 'bottom-up' process (Harmer, 2001). Brown (2002 cited in kader, 2008) states that 'interactive reading' is the combination

of top-down and bottom-up processing. He also argues that recently researches have shown that it is important in successful teaching methodology because both processes are important. Nuttal (1996 in kader, 2008) said that in practice, a reader continually shifts from one focus to another, initially adopting a top-down approach to predict meaning, then moving to the bottom-up approach to check whether his/her prediction is true (p.106).

1.6.4. Reading Product

According to Alderson (2000) the product of reading is the result of the process, i.e, the understanding the readers reach. Although different readers engage in the same process of reading, the product is different (p. 4).

1.7. Reading Assessment

Assessment is according to Spiller (2009) "the single most important determinant of student learning through by which teachers communicate to students their values, priorities and expectations" (p.02). It is a basic component and a useful part of reading program.

For Nation (2009, p.75), good assessment should have three principles. First is reliability, i.e. by having a number of points to be measured, by using a common test format and by using reliable delivery and making procedures. Second is validity which is realized by applying reliable measures being at the same time aware of what is being measured and why. Practicality is the third one; it can be achieved by making an easy test and being very careful about how the learners will answer it and how it will be marked (p.75).

According to Nation (2009, p.75) there are many reasons for assessing reading. First, it encourages learning. Second, it is a good way to monitoring progress and providing feedback. Third, it is devoted to diagnose problems. Finally, it is useful in measuring proficiency.

According to Grabe (2007, p.253) reading assessment is organized and described in terms of five basic assessment purposes:

1. Reading-proficiency assessment: it is also called 'standardized testing' which is devoted to understand students' reading abilities and whether they are ready for further educational progress and learning. It is occasionally used for students placement, policy decisions, curriculum changes, reading-disability designation, for programme, teacher or institutional evaluations.

2. Assessment of classroom learning: it is referred to as summative or achievement testing which is implicated for assessing reading improvement and measuring of skills and knowledge gained during a period of time. It uses tasks that reveal the material thought and the skill s practiced in class, this helps teachers to decide the measure of success and the steps taking as a result of assessment outcomes.

3. Assessment for learning (support student learning): which aims to support student reading abilities. The goal is to provide immediate feedback on tasks and to teach students how to engage in more effective learning.

4. Assessment of curricular effectiveness: in which outcomes include standardize testing cumulative records over years that indicate games or losses in student outcomes, interviews with teachers and students and school administrated on a summative test performance and innovative assessments that highlight specific school or programme.

5. Assessment for research purposes: that sometimes uses standardize assessment of instruments to measure student level or student instructional outcomes (p.355).

1.8. Chapter Summary

This chapter is devoted to the nature of reading and the concepts related to this term. As mentioned before, the definition of reading is not an easy task. However, researchers agree

on the reality of reading as a process not just decoding codes and symbols. This active process occurs because of two reasons: for pleasure and for information and it has four types: extensive reading, intensive reading, scanning and skimming. Reading process involves the interaction between reader and text which leads to comprehension. This later will be easier if some strategies are applied before, while and after reading process. We have also seen that there are models to the process of reading: bottom up, top down, and interactive process. We have ended this chapter by highlighting the ways used to assess reading comprehension.

Chapter Two : Teaching Reading under the CBA

Chapter Two: Reading under the Competency Based Approach

2.1. Introduction

Algeria has reconstructed its educational system many times after independence in 1962. The last reform was introduced in 2002 which was characterized by using a new approach called 'The Competency Based Approach' (CBA hereafter). In this chapter we set the objectives of teaching English in the Algerian middle schools. Next, we will define the terms approach, method, and technique. Then, we will introduce the CBA shedding light at the same time on the terms: competence and competency. After that, we will identify its main characteristics and components. Finally, we will discuss its objectives and effects on the teaching of reading in the Algerian fourth year middle schools.

2.2. The Educational System in Algeria

Bendala (3013, p.145) reports that since its independence, Algeria has witnessed several changes in its educational system. First, from 1962 to 1970, Algeria followed the French colonization educational system and applied the grammar translation method, but it was canceled because it focuses on L1 and translation and does not give attention to spoken language and have no theory. Then, in the early 1970's the audio-lingual method was adopted, but it was soon annulled because of its weaknesses in that it treats the learner as a machine and thus they cannot effectively communicate with language. Next, during the 1980's the communicative approach was implemented along with the 'teaching with objectives method', but it also it was also abandoned because the Algerian classrooms were not well prepared for it especially because they were crowded and there was lack of teaching tools. Bendala (2013, p.145) also reported that after these failures, searching for an effective approach was urgent. The adaptation of the principles of CBA in 2002 was the solution (More information about

this approach will be given in details in the following sections). CBA application was accompanied with a change in terms of the number of academic years given to each level. In other words, pupils stay only five years in primary school instead of six ended with a national final exam. Then, they study four years in the middle school instead of three with a national final exam at the end of this stage. Finally, students stay three years period in the secondary school ending with a national 'baccalaureate' exam before passing to the university (p.145)

2.3. The Objectives of Teaching English in the Fourth Year Middle School

Nowadays, because of globalization the world becomes a small village. Thus, Teaching English has become an important issue not only in Algeria but also all over the world. This importance is the effect of the status of English as a lingua franca because of many reasons such as: simplicity of English, language of travel and internet, the language of business, many films are in English, etc. In order to make learners parts in the world of globalization , the educational authority introduce English in the age of 11 (first year middle school) instead of 13; and extend the number of years to seven years (four in middle school and three in secondary school) (Rezig, 2011, p.1329).

The objective of teaching English in Algeria is to help the Algerian citizens to integrate in the world of globalization, modernity, participate linguistically in the world, and access to science and technology using this lingua franca (proramme de 4AM, p.48). Therefore, the objectives of teaching English in the 4AM as set in the fourth year middle school syllabus are divided into three categories: linguistic, methodological, and cultural. First, the linguistic objective is the development, and the mastery of the bases and language forms acquired in the 3AM and being ready for the secondary school. Second, the methodological objective is the development of strategies of learning, skills, and methods of thinking acquired in 3AM. Finally, the cultural objective is the development of the learners'

cultural contribution, awareness, and understanding of the Anglophone civilizations and cultures (p. 48).

2.4. Approach, Method and Technique

When teaching, teachers use a variety of approaches, methods and techniques. These terms are defined as follows:

2.4.1. Approach: is the first element of the hierarchy of Antony (1963 cited in Richards and Renandya, p.9) defined as a group of assumptions about the nature of language learning and teaching. In other words, an approach refers to theories about the nature of language and language learning that function as the source of practices and principles of language teaching (Richards and Rodgers, 1986, p.16). Harmer (2001, p.78) believes that the term approach means how people acquire their knowledge and makes decisions about the conditions which will encourage successful language learning. It, thus, explains how language is used and how its parts are interlock.

2.4.2. Method: is the second element of the hierarchy of Anthony. Anthony (1963, cited in Richards and Renandya, 2002, p.9) defines it as "an overall plan for systematic presentation of language based on a selected approach". It is a range of theoretically related classroom techniques which can be generalizable across a variety of contexts and audiences (Richards and Renandya, 2002, p.9). Harmer (2001, p.78) states that a method is "the practical realization of an approach". For him, the originators make decisions about types of activities, roles of teachers and learners, the kinds of materials, and they include various procedures and techniques. These principles, procedures or strategies according to Liu and Shi (2007, p.70), are used by teachers to achieve the goals of teaching and learning and they are according to Westwood (2005, p.7) determined either by the nature of the subject matter to be taught, or by beliefs or theories about how students learn.

2.4.3. Technique: is the third element of the hierarchy of Anthony (1963, cited in Richards and Rinandya, 2009, p.9) he defines it as particular classroom activities related to a method, and in accord with an approach. Harmer (2001) clarifies with this example: a known technique when using video material is 'silent viewing' where the teacher plays a video with no sound. Thus, silent viewing is a single activity rather than a sequence and a technique rather than whole procedure (p.78).

2.5. Teaching Reading under the Well Known Methods

In this section we talk about the known methods of teaching foreign language, their purposes and principles. The purpose is to discuss how much or less attention is given to teaching reading in each of the methods. It is important to mention that the following methods are chronologically introduced from the early used to the currently applied.

2.5.1. Teaching Reading under Grammar Translation Method

When using the grammar translation method in teaching reading, before reading the teacher introduces the topic in relation to the previous read topics. While reading the teacher reads the text aloud and asks learners to read loudly one by one. In this phase, the new terms and sometimes the whole text is translated into L1. After reading, the teacher gives instructions and questions (multiple choice questions, yes/no questions, synonyms and antonyms) in L1. In this step, the learners may answer the questions using L1 or mixture of L1and the target language. However, it is important to say that in grammar translation method, little attention is given to the content of the text; the goal is to be able to scan and skim in order to get the main ideas. Moreover, no intention is given to pronunciation, i.e. learners may utter the words incorrectly but answering the questions (Priyanka, 2015, p.08).

2.5.2. Teaching Reading under Direct Method

According to Priyanka (2015) a typical reading lesson under the direct method is distributes into three steps: before reading, during reading and after reading. In the first step, the teacher anticipates the learners' prior knowledge, prediction and imagination about the topic of the passage they will read. In the second step, after making sure that all learners have read aloud, he/she explains the unfamiliar vocabularies by using illustrations, gestures or pictures because unlike grammar translation method using L1 is not permitted neither for teachers nor for learners. After reading, the comprehension questions and the instructions are given in the target language. Moreover, learners should answer the questions using the target language and their pronunciation mistakes should be corrected because this method in contrast to grammar translation method emphasizes the oral proficiency in the target language (p.09).

2.5.3. Teaching Reading under Audio-Lingual Method

A reading course using the direct method is divided into three phases: before, while and after reading. In the first phase, the teacher presents the topic in a brief introduction to motivate learners about what is coming next. While reading, the teacher and learners read loudly and the new concepts are explained in the target language or through using pictures or actions. In the post reading phase he/she asks comprehension questions and the learners answer them using the target language because this method holds in its principles that learners should be rewarded and reinforced so as to be good target language speakers. In addition, learners' mispronunciations while answering are immediately corrected and should imitate the teacher in order to correct their mistakes (Lui and Shi, 2007).

2.5.4. Teaching Reading under Communicative Approach

In communicative approach, the reading course should be fulfilled by using authentic texts and it is divided into three parts: before reading, during reading, and after reading. In the first part, the teacher gives a short introduction about the topic. While reading, the teacher should give instruction in the target language and the learners should be able to read well, quickly and precisely. Moreover, they are asked to guess the meaning of new words based on the context in which they are used without using translation to L1. After they finish reading, they should be able to determine the main ideas of the reading text, to make summary. In addition, they need to be able to express their opinions verbally in correct English. Furthermore, the teacher should motivate learners and give the chance to speak by saying, for example, 'any idea, someone else, the others, etc' and he/she should guide, control, and evaluate them (Irmawati, 2012, p.93).

In conclusion, reading is an essential skill in all the previous methods: grammar translation method, the direct method, the communicative approach, and the audio-lingual method. Therefore, the grammar translation method, the learners start reading difficult texts early with no attention given to its contents; the goal is to be able to read the target language literature well. On the hand, communicative approach uses reading aloud as a means to improve pronunciation skills. Though the audio-lingual method emphasizes speaking and listening, it use reading as a way to correct pronunciation mistakes and thus learners become fluent speakers. Finally, the direct method utilizes reading to improve learners' prediction and imagination and also to help them to reach fluency in the target language.

Definition of the Competency Based Approach

According to Nkwetisama (2012) CBA also referred to as 'the pedagogy of integration' or as 'an outcomes approach' emerges in the 1970s' in the United States. This approach means being linguistically, communicatively and sociolinguistically competent with the learned language. In other words, it entails using all the knowledge, skills (the grammar, vocabulary, punctuation and pronunciation) and attitudes required for the solution of real life situations with reference to language learning, and using listening, speaking, reading and writing to communicate effectively in real situations. Moreover, it involves knowing what to do, where, when and with whom (p. 519). In addition, it focuses on teaching the skills and behaviors needed to perform competences and on the outcomes of learning and on what the learners are expected to do rather than on what they are expected to learn about (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, cited in Weddel, 2006, p.02).   According to Richards (2002) CBA is one of the current methodologies that can be described as an extension of communicative language teaching movement (p.126).

The competency based model was defined by the U.S. office of Education as a performance based process which leads to the mastery of the individual's basic life skills that are necessary to function effectively in the society. Thus, it is a functional approach to education that gives attention to life skills and evaluates the mastery of those skills according to the actual learner's performance (Savage, 1993 cited in Nkwetisama, 2012, p.520).

2.6.1. Definition of Competence (Competences):

This term has many definitions. It is defined as *"the metal resources of an individual that are used to master tasks, acquire knowledge and achieve a good performance"* (Mulder, Weigel, and Collins, 2006, p.6). it is, as indicated by Westera (2002, p.05), an important criterion that takes in account the valuable use of one's knowledge and skills in specific contexts. In addition, Richards and Schmidt (2002) believe that it is the learners' ability to use different basic skills in situations that are commonly encountered in everyday life (p 94).

2.6.2. Definition of Competency (Competencies):

Mrowicki (1986, cited in Nkwetisama, 2012, 520) argues that competencies are the essential skills, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors required for effective performance of real life tasks or activities in any domain of life. In addition, Weddel (2006, p.2) adds that these essential skills are needed adults to be successful members of families, the community, and the workplace. Whereas, Schneck (1978, cited in Nkwetisama, 2012, 520) believes that competencies also describe the students' ability to use basic skills in situations that they encounter in their everyday life. Furthermore, Benramdane (2017) indicates that a competency does not simply entail perfection; it entails performance at a stated level or criterion which needs to be specific for each occupational area (p.11).

2.6.3. Components of the Competency Based Approach

Weddel (2006, p.03) list the following components of CBA:

1. An assessment of the learners' needs

2. The selection of the competencies

3. The target instruction

4. An evaluation of the competency attainment
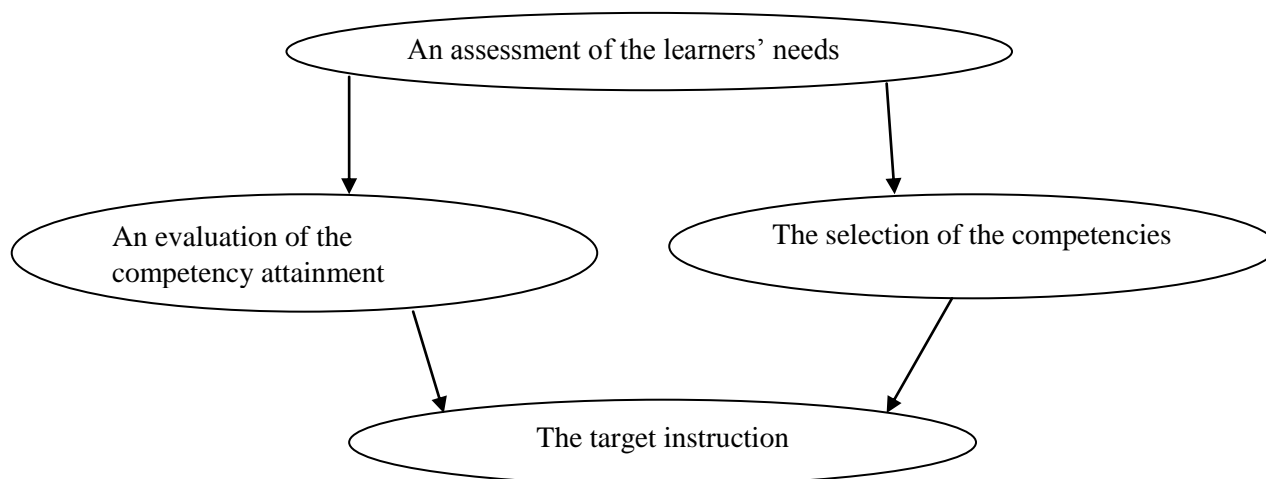
Figure 01: the four components of the competency based approach. Weddel (2006, p.03)

The figure above shows that this approach works in a cycling process. The teachers start from assessment of learners' needs, from the assessment they select the competencies and the target instruction, then they move to the evaluation of the competency attainment and return back to the assessment of learners' needs.

2.6.4. Characteristics of the CBA

Auerbach (1986 cited in Richards, 2003, p. 37) listed the following eight key features of (CBA) in ESL:

- A focus on successful functions in society. The objective is created autonomous learners capable of coping with the obstacles and demands of the real world.

- A focus on life skills rather than teaching language in isolation. Language is taught as a means of communication. Learners are prepared to be competent and good users of language in real-life situations by teaching them language forms and skills that are needed.

- Task or performance oriented instruction. The emphasis is on the reaction and response of learners, i.e. what they can do not just what they have in minds.

- Modularized instruction language learning is broken down into meaningful chunks. objectives are broken into narowly focused subobjectives. That help both teachers and learners to know their progress.

- Outcomes are made explicit. Outcomes mean public knowledge, specified, known and agreed upon by both learners and teachers in terms of behavioral objectives, in order that students know what behaviors and reactions are expected from them.

- Continuous and ongoing assessment. A pretest is advocated to learners in order to know what skills they master and what skills still needed and posttested after teaching those needed skills. İn case they do not reach the desired level of mastery, they will contiue to work on the same objectives and are retesed.

- Demonstrated mastery of performance objectives. assesment is relied on demonstration of specific behaviours.

- Individualized student centered instruction. Objectives are stated acording to individual needs, curricula are developed based on prior knowledge and achievements of learners. No matter how much time students need to progress and teachers concentrate just on those areas in which students are not competent.

These features reveal that in the CBA the learner is the center. Thus, it focuses more on the competences that are required, and the results of teaching and learning more than the way followed to reach the objectives. It also does not care about time; students rather take their time to develop.

2.6.5. Teacher's Role in the CBA

Cheli (2010) stated that the role of teachers in CBA is 'facilitators' i.e. they facilitate the process of language acquisition through the development of appropriate learning environment and conditions. They are also researchers who observe students, listen to them and ask them questions in order to know their level, and their capacities and therefore being helpful to students. Moreover, CBA is learner-centered, so, it does not require teachers' involvement. Meanwhile, it is action oriented; it requires teachers as actors to represent their professional skills in subject matter, methodology, and decision-making in order to help learners to success. This also requires a specific style based on reflection on what, why and how to teach the objectives and relating teaching strategies with learning strategies (p. 25).

2.6.6. Student's Role in the CBA

Cheli (2010) argues that as the program the Algerian educational syllabus is based on socio-constructivism; the learner should go through a process of personal appropriation to determine his/her own convictions. This leads the learner to revise his/her prior knowledge to compare his/her own representations with those of his/her classmates, to search for information and confirm it through checking various sources of documentation and people who have information. In doing so, the learner needs cognitive, affective and motivational strategies in order to set a balance between his/her prior knowledge and his/her newly acquired knowledge (p. 25).

2.7. Reading and the CBA

Reading in the text book of fourth year (On the Move) is mostly for purpose. Through our reading to the 'Contents' (pp.2-3), 'To the Students' (pp.4-5) and 'Book Map' (pp.10-11-12-13) of the 'On the Move', we notice that it is composed of six files. Each file is divided on two parts: 'Language Learning' and 'Skills Building'. Under each of these parts there are other sub-parts. From those sub-parts, we find 'Read and Consider' under the first part, and

'Reading and Writing' appears in the second part. 'Read and consider' is divided into three phases: 'Before You Read' (in the form of questions to enhance prior knowledge and brain storm ideas (anticipation) to guess what is coming next', 'As you Read' (in the form of instructions to understand the text), and 'After You Read' (in the form of questions to check understanding). The purpose of 'Read and consider' as set in the 'on the move' is "discover, analyze and practice Grammar in oral and written texts […] will help you master the rules. You will use these rules in the write up and the write it out rubrics" (p.5). Whereas, the objective of 'reading and writing' is "acquire a good command of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills and strategies. The coping windows will give you tips and hints for the purpose. These tips and hints will also help you develop social skills" (On the Move, p.06). Therefore, the objective of CBA in teaching reading in 4AM is to introduce new language forms. Moreover, reading activities in 'On the Move' are designed to make pupils able to read for specific information, predicting and checking prediction, recognize and interpret the communicative purpose of the texts (pp.10-11-12-13-14-15). For example, in file four, page 133, 134, 135, the purpose of reading is to teach learners kinds of letters, especially, how to write a letter of agony to ask for advice and to send it to a magazine. To accomplish this, before reading, the teacher asks questions to enhance their anticipation and help them predict the topic of the text. Then, they start reading one by one, and at that time the teacher also poses questions to make them guessing the meaning of the new words. Finally, after they complete reading, the teacher asks questions to check their understanding of the topic and then helps them to write at the same model and at the same time uses the text to teach a language form.

2.8. Chapter Summary

CBA aims to make a relation between school and society. It helps the learner to get information through listening, reading, writing and speaking and through dealing with people in real life (at home, roads, markets, hospital, school, bus, airports, offices, etc). In this chapter we have stated the status of teaching English in Algerian middle school which we determined that is very important because of the role of English in the world. We have also provided definitions of the terms approach, method and technique according to different authors. We then tried to discuss the status of teaching reading under the very famous approaches: grammar translation method, direct method, audio-lingual approach, and communicative approach. Next, we have spoken in details about the CBA, its definitions, goals and principles. Finally, we have ended the chapter by taking about the status of reading under the competency based approach

Practical Part

Chapter Three:
Case Study

Chapter Three: The Case Study

3.1. Introduction

Reading is an important productive skill. In teaching this skill, teachers apply a variety of methods, techniques and strategies (extensive, intensive, reading comprehension strategies, scanning and skimming, silent and aloud reading). This chapter is devoted to know which of those techniques are used in the case of fourth year middle school pupils and to what extent these techniques are succeed or fail. To achieve this purpose we have opted for qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The qualitative research methodology is conducted by distributing a questionnaire to middle school teachers in Tsabit middle schools besides classroom observation in "Rahman Boufeldja Middle School". Tasbit is located in the north east of Adrar. It is surrounded by Charouine from the north, Bouda from the south, Aougrout from the east and Bechar from the west (see appendix 03). It contains 12 villages (ksours) which are: Bentalha, Ghabet Moulay Ali, Ksabi, El Habla, Lamaïz, Oujlane, Laayad, Hammad, Amor, Brinkane, Arain Arrass and Kaberten. Whereas, the quantitative methodology is accomplished by analyzing the data collected by the two quantitative methods in the form of pie-charts. Therefore, this chapter focuses on the analyses of the data gathered through the two research tools mentioned above. It also contains discussions and results of these analyses. Finally, it includes recommendations and suggestions to improve the fourth year middle school reading skill.

3.2. Research Methodology

The population of our research is teachers and pupils of middle schools in Adrar, more precisely, in Tsabit. Our sample is fourth year middle school teachers and pupils. Those latter

are chosen on the reason that fourth year pupils are studying English for 04 years. Thus, they normally have an acceptable English reading level.

3.3. Data Collection Instruments

There are many tools to collect data. In this study we opt for two data collection instruments: questionnaire and classroom observation. The first is a popular method of collecting data. It contains a set of questions (closed (yes, no), open-ended (free answers), and multiple choice questions) conducted to the participants with a request to answer them and return it back (Kothari, 2006, p.101). The second involves observing behaviour and systematically recording the results of those observations. Moreover, it enables the researchers to obtain what is currently happening (Kothari, 2006, p.96).

3.3.1. Questionnaire

In order to collect data for our research case study, we have designed a questionnaire. This latter is distributed among 11 teachers in 04 middle schools in Tsabit. It composes of 17 questions, most of which are in the form of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ). Moreover, some of the questions contain gaps in which teachers justify their choices or give suggestions or proposals. The questions in the questionnaire are about: the syllabus of English, the CBA application, the techniques and strategies used to teach reading in the middle school and reading level of fourth year middle school pupils and ended with two questions for suggestions and proposals to improve reading skill of pupils and their English level in general.

3.3.2. Classroom Observation

Classroom observation is the second tool that we have used to collect suitable data. This latter is conducted in 'Rahmane Boufeldja' middle school in Bentalha, Tsabit to 80 fourth year pupils randomly chosen. Its purpose is to notice the real level of fourth year middle school pupils. It also helps us to know whether teachers of the fourth year middle school are

using the strategies and techniques (extensive, intensive, reading comprehension strategies, scanning and skimming, silent and aloud reading) to teach reading skill that we have mentioned in the previous chapters or not . We also choose it to know the degree of success or failure of those strategies and techniques in the classroom context.

Table 03.01: Classroom observation

School's name	Rhmane Boufledja
Teacher's name	Mrs. Dounane
Level	Fourth year
Learners' number	80
Time	04 hours
Date of observation	From 13/03/2017to 15/03/2017

3.4. Data Analyses

The answers of the participants of our study will be analyzed in the following section. To fulfill this aim we use tables and pie-charts. The purpose behind the use of tables is to give structured numeric information and present numbers in the form of percentage and also facilitates comparison (Sherington, J. 2000, p.08). Whereas, a pie chart is a diagram in the form of a circle with proportions clearly marked. It is a good method of representation to compare a part of a group with the whole group and it gives an immediate idea of the relative sizes of the shares (Gilmartin and Rex, 1999, p.14).

3.4.1. Teachers' questionnaire

1. How long have you been teaching English?

The objective of this question is to know the experience of the informant which we notice that it is between 25 and 01 year.

2. How do you find the fourth year middle school syllabus of English?

Table 03.02. Fourth Year Middle School English Syllabus

	Frequency	**Percentage**
Suitable	**06**	**54%**
Hard	**05**	**46%**
Total	**11**	**100%**

Figure 03.01: The Syllabus of English
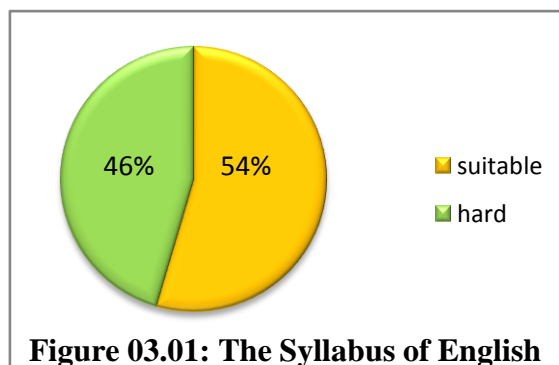
We notice that (54%) of teachers consider the syllabus of English as suitable since it is appropriate and they know how to manage it according to their pupils' level. However, the rest (46%) consider it as hard, they see that some parts of it are above the pupils capacities, it is so full (it is crowded and contains many subjects in comparison with time) and because of the new educational reform (CBA) which does not take in consideration the level of learners and their social backgrounds.

3. Do your pupils like English?

Table 03.03: Pupils' Attitudes Toward English

	frequency	**Percentage**
yes	7	**64%**
no	0	**00%**
To some extent	4	**36%**
Total	**11**	**100%**

Figure 03.02: Pupils' Attitudes Toward English
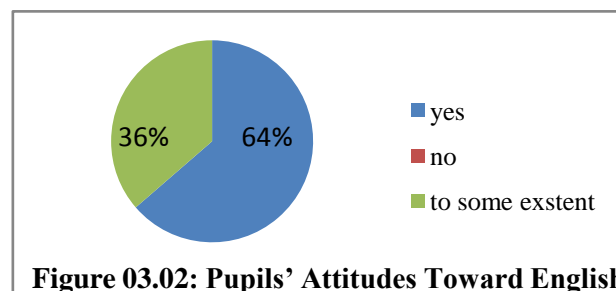
The figure shows that (64%) of teachers believe that their learners like English. This can be interpreted by the participation in class, their activeness, their attending, their attempt to speak in English and doing their best to learn this language. While, the rest (36%) say that pupils like English to some extent, i.e. not all of them show interest and attempt to read or write something in English. This may refer both to the teacher' treatments and behaviour and also to the pupils' bad attitudes towards foreign languages.

4. In which area of language you think your learners need to learn more?

Table03.04. Learners' Needs

	Frequency	Percentage
Grammar	0	00%
Listening	1	09%
Reading	7	64%
Vocabulary	1	09%
Speaking	1	09%
Writing	1	09%
Total	11	100%

Figure.03.03. Learners' Needs
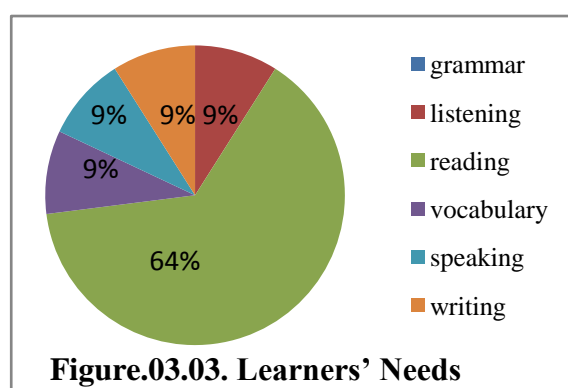
Although the skills are related to each other, (64%) of participants think that their pupils need reading more than the other skills. In the exam, the pupils will be tested only on their reading and writing abilities, so, they need more reading sessions in order to improve their reading skill and get more vocabularies to write better. On the contrary, the informants give the same percentage (9%) to the other areas of language. May be they know that their pupils are not weak in or they do not focus much on them.

5. How do you find the Competency – Based Approach?

Table 03.05.The CBA

	Frequency	Percentage
Useful	1	09%
Complicated	8	73%
Useless	2	18%
Total	11	100%

Figure 03.04. The CBA
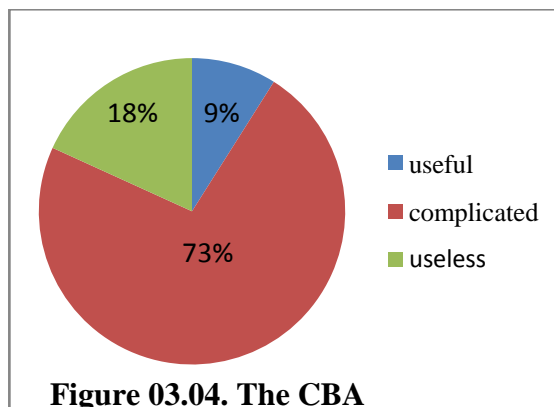
The figures show that (73%) of teachers consider CBA as a complicated approach. This is interpreted by the fact that it is not so helpful for the all the pupils especially those of low capacities and those who are dependent on teacher. Whereas, (18%) think that it is totally useless. This may be interpreted by the reason that the CBA does not care about the pupils' social contexts and abilities. Only (9%) see that it is useful for both teachers and pupils because it is helpful in achieving the goals of teaching and learning processes. It is also a problem solving approach and is a sign of technology and modernity.

6. Do you actually apply this approach in class?

Table 03.06.The Application of the CBA

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	3	28%
No	0	00%
Not always	8	72%
Total	11	100%

Figure 03.05. The Application of The CBA
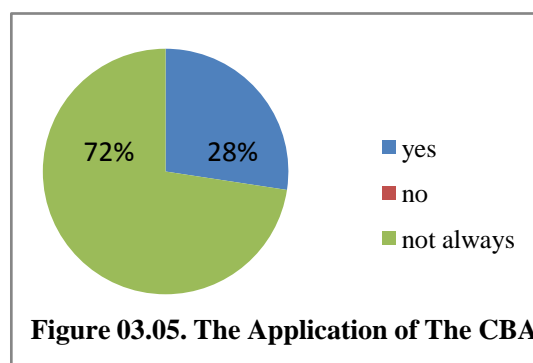
The figures above show that 72% of the participants said that they did not always apply the CBA in classes. The cause behind this may be related to the crowded classes,

pupils' limited abilities and the need of using L1 which is not allowed by this approach. Whereas, 28% stated that they had always applied it. Possibly because it is useful for the new generation and its principles are appropriate for the modern societies. It also serves the learners' needs and overcomes all their styles.

7. According to your experience, how would you describe the reading level of the fourth year pupils?

Table 03.07: The English Reading Level

	Frequency	Percentage
Average	7	64%
Above average	1	9%
Below average	3	27%
Total	11	100%

Figure 03.06.The English Reading Level
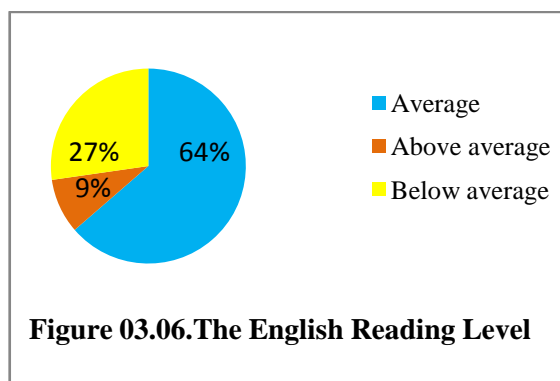
Both of the figures above show that 64% of the questioned teachers argue that the level of reading of their fourth year pupils is average. They can read small paragraph and text with only few mistakes, can recognize the meaning of an amount of familiar vocabularies, and can relate their prior knowledge to the new texts. While 27% declare that their pupils' level is below the average. Probably they are still at the simple sentence level, they cannot read and understand compound sentences, for example, and they lack vocabularies. 9% of participants argue that the level of their pupils is above average. They might be able to predict the idea of the text, guess the meaning of unknown words, and can summarize texts, for example.

8. In a typical week, how often do you have reading activities with students?

Table 03.08: Reading Time

	Frequency	Percentage
Everyday	2	18%
Three or four hours	1	9%
Less than	8	73%
Total	11	100%

Figure 03.07. Reading Time
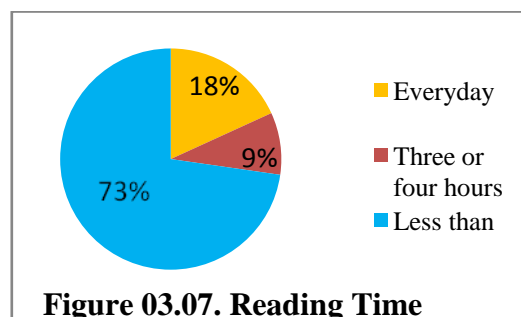
On the basis of figure 3.7, we notice that (73%) of teachers complain about the time devoted to reading. They teach reading less than three or four hours a week and need it to be expanded; for them time is not sufficient to achieve the goals of reading course and to make sure that the pupils read in the class. 18% of them say that they do it every day. In other words, they use reading as a key to the rest of language areas (grammar, vocabulary, writing, speaking and listening). To teach a grammar rule, for example, teachers start from reading the examples on the board first and then extract the rule. 9% follow the syllabus and teach it four to three hours a week. Perhaps teachers who suggest such method are experienced enough, creative, and know how to successfully manage their time, and focus only on the important elements. They may also think that if more time is distributed to reading, learners will get bored easily and lost their concentration.

9. Which reading strategy is helping your pupils more

Table 03.09 Reading Strategies

Figure03.08 Reading Strategies
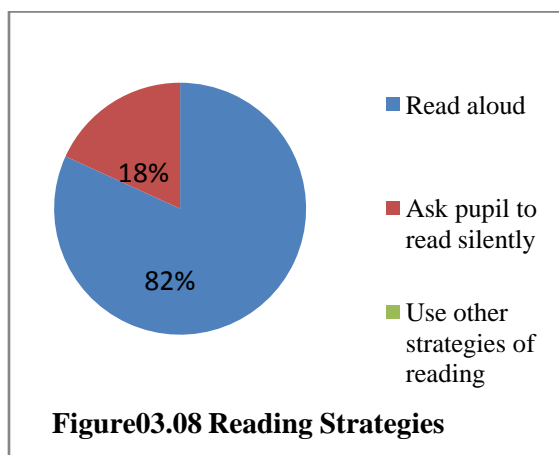
Concerning the learner's helpful strategy, 18% of the participants state that they guide pupils to read silently. The latter can be referred to the reason that silent reading is obliged by the fourth year syllabus designers. In addition, it is a chance for pupils to read by themselves in order not to do many mistakes later when they read loudly. Whereas, (82%) of teachers stated that they prefer reading aloud. On the reason that, it helps them to check pupils' understanding, correct their pronunciation, and keep their concentration.

	Frequency	Percentage
Read aloud	9	82%
Ask pupil to read silently	2	18%
Use other strategies of reading	0	00%
Total	11	100%

10. When you teach the reading skill, what strategies do you use?

Table 03.10. Strategies to Teach Reading

	Frequency	Percentage
Using L1	00	00%
Using L2	01	9%
Ask pupils to use dictionaries	00	00%
Using the reading passage as the focus for grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary	04	37%
Focusing on learners' comprehension	06	54%
Total	11	100%
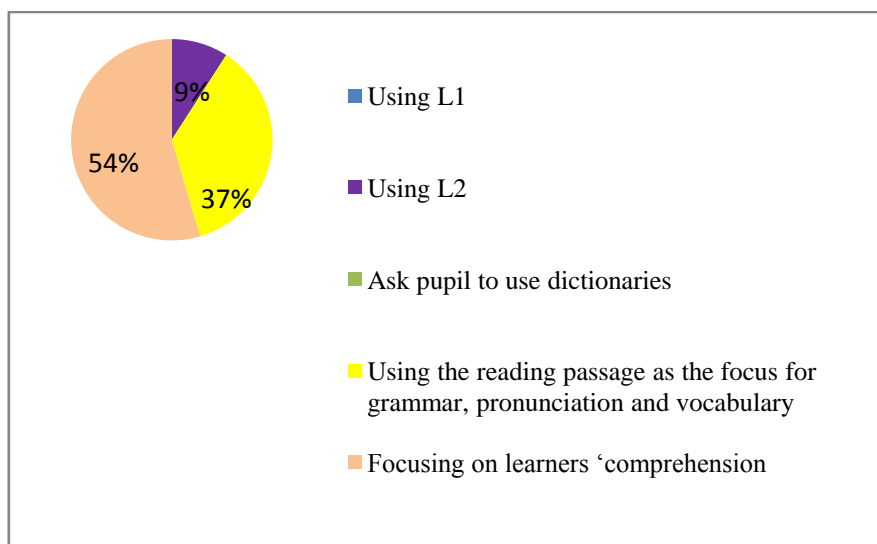
Figure 03.9. Strategies to Teach Reading

From the figures above, we notice that when teaching reading, 54% of the teachers focus on learners' comprehension. In other words, they focus on the pupils' prior knowledge taking into consideration the topic of the text, their amount of vocabularies and their comprehension of the text. While 37% of them noted that they use the reading passage as the focus for

grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary. In other words, the use of reading passages to teach the other language tasks. They explain grammar rules and make people extract those rules giving examples from the passage. The reading text is also used both to enrich pupils' vocabularies, and to correct their pronunciation and spelling.

11. What kind of assessment tools do you prefer?

Table 03.11. Reading Assessment Tool

	Frequency	Percentage
Tests	1	09%
Classroom activities	10	91%
Other tools	0	00%
Total	11	100%

Figure 03.10 Reading Assessment Tool
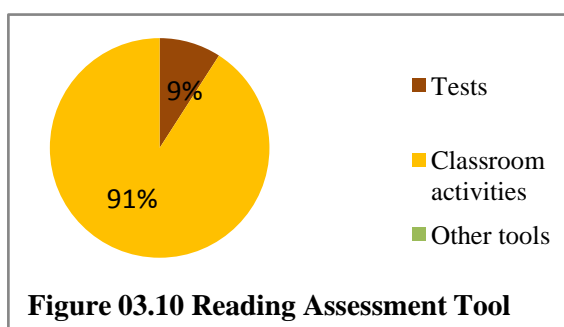
The figures show that 91% of the respondents prefer classroom activities as kind of assessment. This can be referred to the reason that these activities expose effectively the pupils' reading level since they are unpredictably made. The rest 9% prefer reading tests because they are the tools assigned in the programme. Pupils might get ready in advance and they obtain good marks.

12. What test techniques do you apply to assess reading comprehension?

Table 03.12 Techniques of Testing Reading Comprehension

	Frequency	Percentage
Choice questions	01	09%
Filling the gaps activities	03	27%
Asking learners to write summaries	00	00%
Focusing on the reading comprehension questions	07	64%
Total	11	100%

Figure 03.11 Techniques of Testing Reading Comprehension
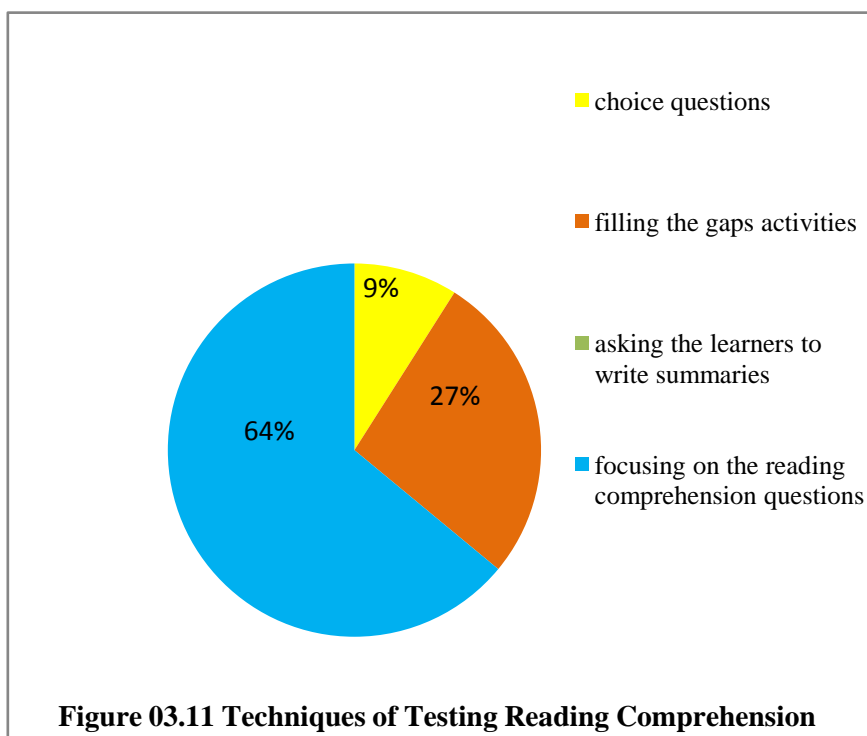
From the figure above we notice that (64%) of English teachers assess reading comprehension by focusing on reading comprehension questions. In other words, before reading they anticipate pupils' prior knowledge about the topic of the text, then, while reading they guide pupils to read intensively to check key words and their meaning, after reading they ask comprehension questions to check their understanding, comments, criticizing, etc. 27% of the informants use the technique of filling in the gaps activities. This may help them check their understanding of the reading text and their ability to manage their ideas and express them correctly. The rest 9% of them use multiple choice questions. This may reveal the pupils' understanding and their ability to choose the appropriate answer for the appropriate question, and also to check the degree of their intelligence and concentration.

13. Do you assign reading as a part of home work?

Table 03.13.Assigning Reading as a Home Work

	Frequency	percentage
Yes	03	27%
No	07	64%
Total	11	100%

Figure03.12.Assigning Reading as a Home Work
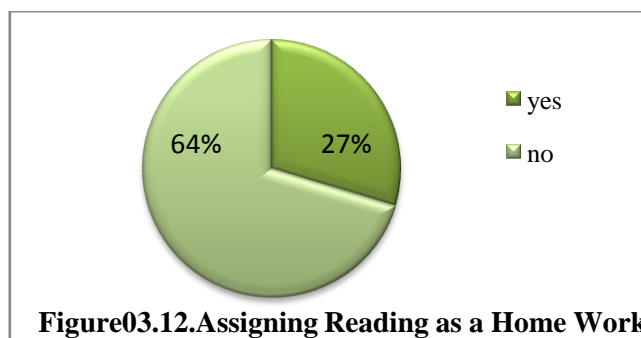
We notice that 64% of the participants state that they do not actually ask their pupils to read outside school. In fact, if they assign pupils to read at home they will follow the text with exercises. They have a belief that if they do not give their pupils exercises, they will not read at home. Whereas, 27% of teachers say that they do. They might be sure that the pupils will do it. They may also give marks to those who read at home in order to encourage the others.

14. Do you encourage your pupils to read in English?

Table03.14 Teachers' Encouragement to Read in English

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	06	54%
No	05	46%
Total	11%	100%

Figure03.13 Teachers' Encouragement to Read in English
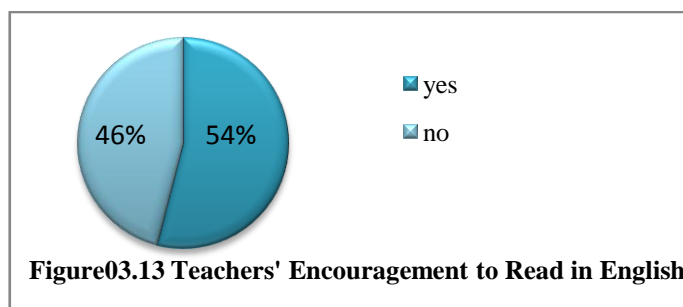
54% of teachers declare that they encourage their pupils to read in English as much as possible. They may ask them to read anything written in English they come across (a book, a short story, a newspaper guideline, instructions in machines or phones, etc) without necessarily understand what they read. Whereas, 46% say that do not do. The reason behind this is that they know that their pupils will not follow their advice because they are not interested in reading, and may feel that it is boring.

15. As a teacher of English, what techniques do you suggest for teaching the reading skill?

Table03.015. Suggested Techniques for Teaching the Reading Skill

	Frequency	Percentage
use materials that are suitable to their age and level	01	09%
pupils have to read at least two lines a day	03	27%
give more session to reading aloud	04	36%
apply before, while and after reading techniques	03	27%
Total	11	100%

Figure03.14 Suggested Techniques for Teaching the Reading Skill
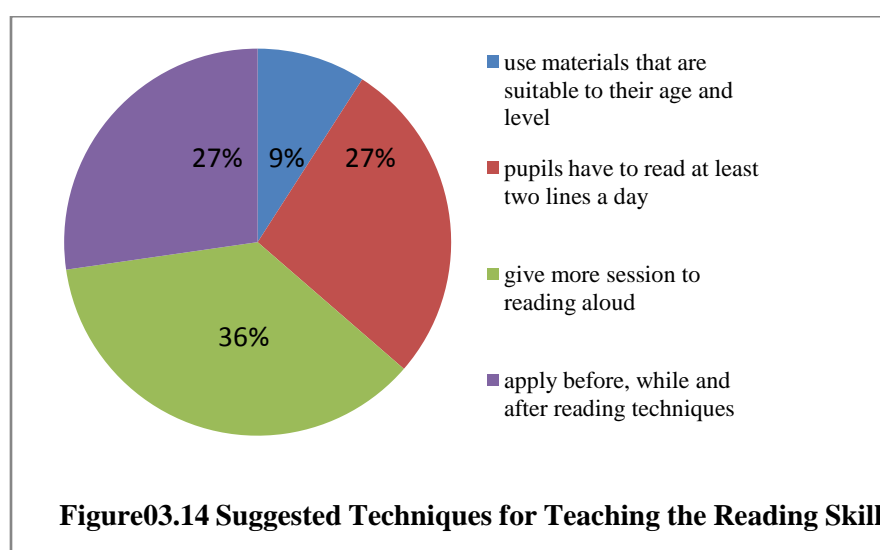
From figure 03.14, we notice that 9% of the informants recommend that syllabus designers should use materials that are suitable for the pupils' age and level. This can be interpreted by the fact that some texts in the textbooks are not related to their social context and are beyond their level. In addition, 27% of the teachers propose that pupils have to read at least two lines a day. For the reason that through this strategy they will improve their reading skill and their vocabularies. Moreover, 27% of the participants suggest applying: while, during and after reading techniques. The reasons behind this are: those techniques help at enhancing their prediction, improve their reading skills and reveal their understanding. Finally, 36% advice devoting more sessions to reading aloud. on the reasons that, reading

aloud shows their reading proficiency, improves their pronunciation, and helps at keeping their concentration and they will not to get bored.

16. Do you expect your pupils to be good English readers?

Table 03.16 Teachers' Expectation About Learners' Level

	Frequency	**Percentage**
Yes	**03**	**27%**
Not all of them	**03**	**27%**
No	**05**	**46%**
Total	**11**	**100%**

Figure03.15 Teachers' Expectation About Learners' Level
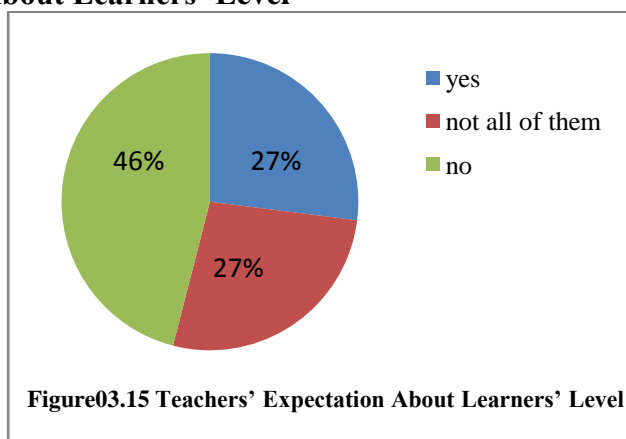
The figures show that 46% of the teachers believe that not all their pupils will be good English readers. In other words, only those of good level who like English and like reading so much will become so. 27% say that they will. May be because they are still young, and they need only encouragement. The other 27% say they will never be. The matter which can be related to the fact that their pupils' bad attitudes towards English and reading in general.

17. What do you propose to improve the teaching and the learning of English in Algeria?

Table03.17 Teachers' Proposals to Improve the Teaching and Learning of English in Algeria

	Frequency	Percentage
devote more hours to English	03	27%
pupils should practice English outside school also	02	18%
encourage pupils to read as much as possible	01	9%
using technology and simplify the textbook	02	18%
pupils need to be motivated to read, speak, listen and write in English	03	27%
Total	11	100%

Figure03.16 Teachers' Proposals to Improve the Teaching and Learning of English in Algeria
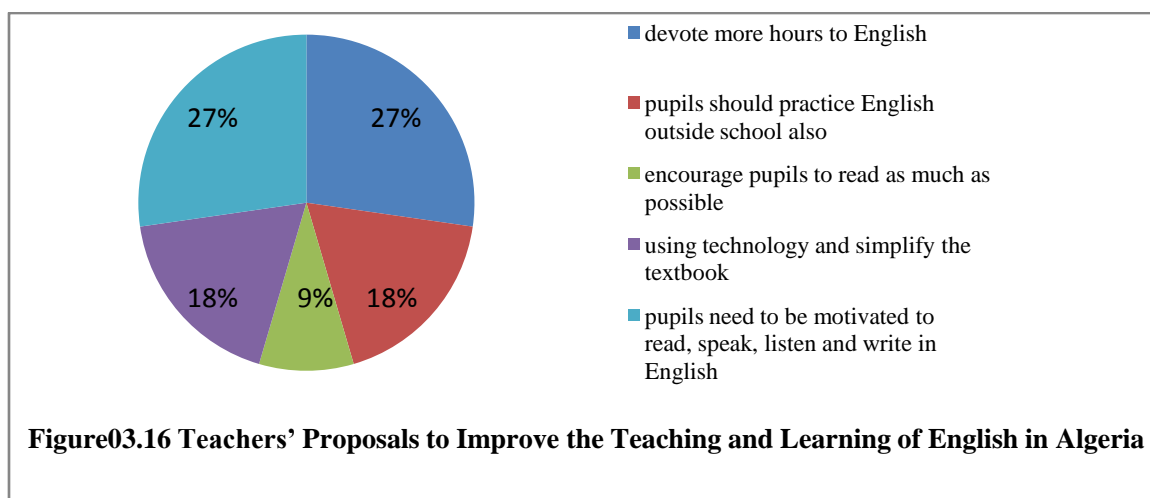
We note that 9% of the informants recommend encouraging pupils to read as much as possible so as to help them develop better attitudes and habits towards reading. In addition, 18% of the teachers suggest to use technology and to simplify the lessons in the fourth year middle school textbook. Technology will help for better teaching and learning. 18% of them propose that pupils should practise English outside school. This will help them to improve their English and reading level. Furthermore, 27% of the participants suggest devoting more hours to teaching English. In other words, the time devoted is not sufficient to teach all the language skills. Finally, 27% of the participants advise that pupils need to be motivated to read, speak, listen and write in English. This may be interpreted by the role of those skills in improving the English level of pupils and thus achieving the goals of teaching and learning of English in Algeria.

3.4.2. Analyses of Classroom Observation

Classroom observation is a method of data collection in which the researcher takes part in everyday activities and events related to classroom natural context in order to study an aspect in the observed classroom (TavakoIi, 2012, p.418). It is used to record behaviour and to provide an exact description of a situation as they naturally happening. It is also beneficial in determining what is actually occurring inside the classroom such as learners' reactions, the interaction between each other and with the teacher and the differences that exist among

group of learners. In addition, it is way to gain insights on the teacher's methods and techniques and assess them (Kawualich, 2005, p.08).

Because of all these advantages, we opt for this data collection instrument. It was made at Rahman Boufeledja middle school in Tsabit the sample observed is 80 pupils distributed into two classes with the same teacher. We noticed that the teacher divided the reading lesson into three main steps: pre-reading, while reading and post/after reading.

1. Pre-reading

After writing the file (four), the sequence (read and write), the teacher asked the pupils to open the book on page: 133. Then, she asked them 'what do you see? What does the picture show? They started expressing their ideas about the picture (using one word answers). Then, she asked them to read what is written on the picture. After they had read the expressions, she asked them: 'what is the relation between those expressions?' (see appendix 02). After the pupils hesitated and uttered many approximate or wrong answers, they had arrived to the answer that the girl (see appendix 02) is complaining. Then she asked them to whom? Again after a great effort, they answer: to aunt Hakima. Then the teacher asked: is she in front of her? Word from here and word from there, they finally answer: no, she send her a letter. The teacher again asked: 'through what does she send this letters?' they answered: 'in newspapers and magazines in the part of social problems'. Finally, she told the pupils that this kind of letters is called 'letter of agony' and had given them the difference between it and the other kinds of letters they have seen before (letter to a friend, an e-mail, etc). Then, she asked them to start reading loudly.

During this phase we observed that not all the pupils reacted with the teacher. Although the teacher motivated and encouraged the pupils to activate their prior knowledge, only 10% of them react with her and could relate the topic with what they read before and predict what

the topic of the text would be. This shows that the majority of pupils (90%) did not get an experience to read and connect ideas and rarely predict what come next.

2. While reading

In this step, the pupils with a better level in the class started reading first, one by one. Then the teacher said: 'the others' then the others read. After she had made sure that the majority of them (60%) read, she started carefully and slowly reading every sentence and ordered her pupils to underline the new and difficult words, and helped them guessing their meanings by using gestures (body language) and examples. In addition, she asked them questions such as: what are the key words of the text? Underline them, What is the meaning of each word?, Can you guess the meanings of these words? so as to measure their comprehension of the text.

We observed in this step that the teacher guided the learners to read loudly. This can be interpreted by the cause that it helps to improve her pupils listening comprehension, speaking skills, and keep their concentration. On the contrary, silent reading was rarely observed. We also notice that 10% of them are able to predict the meaning of unknown vocabularies from the context. We further observed that the teacher rarely allows pupils to use dictionaries; she rather wants them to rely on themselves to recognize and memorize the new words.

3. Post reading

After finishing reading all the text, the teacher started asking comprehension questions (WH questions: who is the author of the text?, Who is talking in the text?, To whom?, What are the main characters of the text?, What is the type of the text?, What are the characteristics of this type?, What are the objectives of the author? etc). We observed that 14% of the pupils could scan for specific information (for example, the essential ideas, name of a person in the text, synonym or antonym, etc) and can understand the relationship between ideas and skim for gist (They obtained the general idea). In addition, we noticed that 12% of the pupils were

able to summarize texts, evaluate what the author said, gave their opinions and then wrote pieces similar to the type of the text.

From the observation, we conclude that the lesson was (50%) successful. We observed that the pupils understood the topic of the text. The pupils were experienced enough in linking the topic with their background knowledge. Moreover, the majority of the pupils (60%) were good at reading the text loudly with few mistakes. In addition, (10%) of them were able to predict the meaning of unfamiliar vocabularies very well because they have enough vocabularies. Moreover, we observed that 10% of the pupils were good at scanning and skimming the text; they could read between the lines and reach the author's goal. Besides, 12% of the pupils were excellent at answering reading comprehension questions; they answered each question without difficulty. Whereas 75% of them were weak; they could not do anything by themselves. The teacher should give them more opportunities to reach the average level at least. Furthermore, 27% of fourth year pupils could get the general idea, set the principles ideas and analyze the text. Finally, 14% of pupils could comment and give their opinion about the topic of the text.

3.5. Results and Discussions

The working experience of the participants is between 1 to 25 years old. According to their answers in the questionnaire, 54% of them believe that the syllabus of English of 4th year middle school is suitable. This may be interpreted by the cause that they see that it fits their learners' needs, capacities, and levels. In addition, 64% of participants feel that their pupils like English because they participate in the classroom, show interest, do their bests and try to speak in English as much as possible. This excitement and interest can be related to the efforts of teachers and to the pupils' awareness of the importance of English in the world. Moreover, 73% teachers consider the CBA as a complicated approach and 72% of them do not always apply it in the classroom. They say that its application depends on the level of the difficulty of

the lesson they are dealing with. The matter which can be interpreted by the reason that its goals are not useful in the case of 4th year middle school pupils. First, they study in crowded classes. In addition, they have low competencies in English as a foreign language which they start learning it only in the middle school. Finally, pupils do not like to search, they rather depend on their teachers, so, the CBA application may make them pupils lost.

Moreover, the number of hours devoted to the teaching of English is not sufficient. One teacher notes that it is totally useless. For the question about the area of language pupil need to learn more, 64% of the teachers choose reading and writing. This is because of the lack of vocabulary and listening i.e. pupils are weak in reading and writing because they do not listen to native speakers to get more vocabularies and correct pronunciation. In addition, 27% of 4th year English teachers point out that their pupils face difficulties in reading, while the majority (64%) see that their learners are with an average level of reading as fourth year pupils. They can read many words and sentences which they are familiar with, but they face difficulties in pronouncing the new vocabularies. For them, the low level is related to the insufficient time allotted for reading. Though syllabus designers' propose only silent reading, 82% of the teachers choose reading aloud as the most practicable technique for their pupils. For the reason that, this technique helps them to determine the real level of their pupils and to correct their pronunciation mistakes. Furthermore, it enables them to check their pupils' understanding of key words and gives them the chance to develop their reading skills as well as their speaking and writing. Besides, when teaching reading, 54% of the participants focus on the pupils' comprehension i.e. they rely on the pupils' prior knowledge about the topic of the text, whereas, 37% go for the view of using the reading passage as focus for grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary. In other words, they apply the inductive way of teaching these subjects.

For the assessment of reading 91% participants prefer classroom activities. These latter reveal more the actual level of pupils because for the other tools (test, etc) pupils may be informed and, therefore, well prepared. Yet, in assessing reading comprehension 64% of the participants say that they apply a variety of strategies but they focus more on reading comprehension questions (before, as, and after reading). These techniques best enhance the pupils' prior knowledge and related this knowledge to the idea of the text they read and, therefore, result a good understanding of the meaning of the text they read. However, 64% of informants do not assign reading as a home work unless for preparing the text for the next session or they accompany it with an activity. They justify this decision by the argument that pupils will neglect it and will not give it any attention or interest. 54% say that they really encourage their pupils to read in English for this will enhance their vocabularies and, therefore, improve their writing skills. On the question of if they expected their pupils to be good readers, 36% of them believe that they will be. To fulfill this aim, they suggest for the pupils to read at least two lines a day, read short and fanny stories, etc. Finally, the participants give significant proposals to improve the teaching and the learning of English in Algeria; some of which: to devote extra time to English and for reading as well, using technology and simplify the courses in the textbook, taking into consideration the level of the learners and the social context while designing the syllabus, and making the reading aloud as part of the programme.

3.6. Recommendations and Suggestions

To improve the fourth year middle school pupils' reading skill in English, we suggest the following:

1. To the Educational Authority

. The number of students in the classroom should be reduced in order to apply the CBA effectively

. Designing reading aloud as a part of syllabus

. Devoting sufficient time to reading and to teaching English in general.

. Selecting topics and authentic materials that are closely related to the pupils' environment.

2. To Teachers

. Teachers should use a variety of strategies to teach reading

. Teachers should encourage learners to do extensive reading outside school, listen to native speakers, and make summaries about what has been read

. While planning courses, teachers should put in consideration the pupils' social backgrounds

. Develop the pupils' awareness about the importance of English in the world

. Train pupils to use dictionaries and notice book in the right way i.e. give them every day two or three words to look for in the dictionary and then memorize them, this will enhance their vocabularies

. Try not to speak in L1 in the class, teachers should use only English as much as possible (use only gestures to explain new terms) and also encourage pupils to speak in English

. From time to time, they should give pupils a short story or an article from a newspaper or a magazine, make them read it and summarize with devoting a mark on it.

. Teachers should be both creative and selective, they should not apply the syllabus blindly, they should select only the important and interested topics, however.

. Teacher ought to apply reading strategies: 'before, as, after reading' to enhance the pupils' prior knowledge and get an easy understanding during/at the reading session

. The way of behaving with pupils has a great role in making the pupils like or dislikes the materials, so, English teachers need to look for the suitable way of behaving (e.g be friendly with pupils).

. English teachers need to use technological tools such as video tapes, data show, etc.

. Teachers need to play a mediator or controller role; let pupils work in groups or in pairs in order to make them interact with each other.

. It is preferable for teachers to practise learning games with pupils from time to time.

. Teachers should often assess reading level of their pupils in order to make them read and they should also assign pupils to prepare read at home.

. Teachers should exchange ideas through cooperative teaching in order to improve reading skill of pupils.

3. To Pupils

. Pupils should be aware about in the important of reading not only in school but in all life domains.

. Pupils need to be aware of the importance of English both for their academic progress and in all domains of life (work, health, traveling, etc).

. Pupils must follow their teachers' pieces of advice and appreciate their encouragements.

3.7. **Chapter Summary**

This chapter is the frame work of the research paper. It has defined the population and the sample of the research and it has contained the description and the analyses of the two data collection instruments: questionnaire and classroom observation.

Generally, this practical part of the study has investigated the strategies and techniques used to teach reading skill. Thus, it has assessed to which degree theses strategies and techniques help to improve the fourth year middle school reading skill. Finally, this chapter has contained the analyses and discussions of the views and opinions expressed by teachers

about the topic of the research. It has also included their suggestions and proposals to improve not only reading skill but also the teaching and learning of English in the Algerian middle schools in general. It has ended with recommendations and suggestions to enhance reading skill in the Algerian fourth year middle schools.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

This study was conducted in the form of a case study. It sought to find the real causes behind the actual level of the reading skill in English at the fourth year middle school pupils in Adrar, choosing those of Tsabit middle schools as a sample and tried to find out solutions to improve this skill. Actually, reading is an important tool in teaching and learning processes of English, consequently, the education authority, EFL teachers and pupils have to give it much attention and interest.

In fact, the results of the analyses of the data collection tools confirmed our earlier stated hypothesis and affirm that teachers as well as curriculum and syllabus designers should give much attention to reading and they need to select techniques and strategies that are suitable for the fourth year pupils' level in order to improve their reading level and, therefore, get better results.

The work is ended with recommendations and suggestions for educational authority, for teacher and for pupils. They aim at helping to improve fourth year middle school reading skills. They also seek to improve the English level of pupils and lead to achieve the goals of teaching reading and English in general in Algeria.

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Appendices

Appendix 01

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,
You are kindly requested to answer the following questions related to the teaching of reading skill. You are also requested to give your proposals and suggestions about the approach and the strategies which are applied to the teaching of reading in English language.

1. How long have you been teaching English?
☐ Years

2. How do you find the syllabus of English?
Suitable ☐   Hard   ☐

3. Do your pupils like English?
Yes ☐   No ☐ To some extent   ☐
Please justify:
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………….

4. In which area of language you think your learners need to learn more?
Grammar ☐   Listening ☐   Reading ☐   Vocabulary ☐   Speaking ☐
Writing ☐

5. How do you find the Competency – Based Approach?
Useful ☐   Complicated ☐   Useless ☐

6. Do you actually apply this approach in class?
Yes ☐   Not always ☐   No ☐
Please justify:
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………

7.According to your experience ,how would you describe the reading level of the fourth year students ?

   a-Average   ☐

   b-Above average ☐

   c- Below average ☐

8. In a typical week, how often do you have reading activities with students ?

   a- Everyday   ☐

   b- Three or four hours   ☐

   c- Less than   ☐

9.Which reading strategy is helping your pupils more

   a- Read aloud   ☐

   b- Ask pupil to read silently   ☐

   d- Use other strategies of reading (skimming scanning extensive and intensive)   ☐

Why ?..

10. When you teach the reading skill, what strategies do you use?

a- Using L1 ☐

b- Using only L2 ☐

c- Asking pupils to use dictionaries ☐

d- Using the reading passage as the focus for grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary ☐

e- Focusing on learners' comprehension ☐

11. What kind of assessment tools do you prefer?

A-Tests ☐

B- Classroom activities ☐

C- Other tools ☐

12. What test techniques do you apply to assess reading comprehension?

A- Choice questions ☐

B-Filling the gaps activities ☐

C-Asking the learners to write summaries ☐

E-Focusing on the reading comprehension questions ☐

F-Focusing on words' meanings ☐

13. Do you assign reading as a part of homework?

14. Do you encourage your pupils to read in English?

15. As a teacher of English, what techniques do you suggest for teaching the reading skill?

………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………

16. Do you expect your pupils to be good readers

……………………………………………………………………………………………….

17. What do you propose to improve the teaching and the learning of English in Algeria?

………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………

Thank you so much for your cooperation.

📖 READING AND WRITING ✍️

① **Look at the illustration below and guess from which newspaper page it is taken from. Choose the best answer. Justify your answer.**

The illustration is taken from the...

    A. news page?
    B. advertisement page?
    C. problem page?
    D. sports page?

② **Read the introduction of the letter below and see if you were right. Then guess what the writer will say next.**

Dear Aunt Hakima,

    I'm writing to seek your kind advice. For years I have been trying to go abroad to complete my research work. And now that I have the opportunity to do so, I feel paralysed. I don't know whether it would be wise of me to leave home and country. §1

③ Read the second paragraph in exercise 5 below and check your answer to exercise 2 on the previous page.

④ The words in the box are used to join sentences and link ideas. Put them into the correct category below.

as a result, in addition , besides, therefore, moreover, furthermore

Words similar to **and**	Words similar to **so**

⑤ Now read the second paragraph of Nacera's letter again and fill in the blanks with appropriate link words.

To begin with, let me give you the facts. My name is Nacera. I am twenty-six, unmarried and hold a degree in Chemistry. I have been working with a pharmaceutical firm for the past three years. (1) _____, I have been doing some research in the field of pain-killers at the laboratory of the company. I do not have a very high salary, but I'm not a big spender. _____ (2), I still live with my widowed mother in her own flat, which lessens expenses. She suffers from a chronic disease. _____ (3) I have to stay at home with her whenever I'm not at work. I don't have any brother or sister. _____ (4), she doesn't want to have anyone else in the flat. But I have just received a letter of acceptance from San Diego University and won a research scholarship granted by UNESCO. §2

⑥ Guess what Nacera will say next in her letter. Choose the letter of the best answer. Then check your answer in reading the rest of the letter on the next page.

I think Nacera will

    a. conclude her letter because she has exposed her problem.
    b. continue her letter by giving positive and negative prospects.
    c. has finished her letter. She will only sign it.

⑦ Put the link words in the box into the right category.

to sum up, on the contrary, in conclusion, however, yet, on the whole, in contrast

Words similar to **but**	Words similar to " **I conclude**"

⑧ Use the link words in exercise 7 above to fill in the blanks in the rest of Nacera's letter on the next page.

Indeed if I went abroad, I would see all my professional dreams come true. I would work in a highly efficient research laboratory under the supervision of a Nobel Prize winner. If I achieved satisfactory results I could get a job at that university. _____ (1) my research may interest some international pain-killer drug manufacturer. I could become rich and famous. §3

_____ (2), if I went abroad, my mother would remain all by herself. There would be no one to take care of her, to love her. Her health would deteriorate. Indeed , solitude may break her heart. She might even die, with no one sitting at her bedside. _____ (3) to my professional career, my private would be a failure. _____ (4), I would feel guilty for the rest of my life. §4

_____ (5) I would lose as much as I would gain by going abroad. But If I stayed here wouldn't I be faced with stagnation and frustration? _____ (6). I am standing at a crossroads in my life and I don't know which way to go. What would you do if you were me? §5

                                                                    Best regards,
                                                                    Nacera

——————————— Coping.... ———————————

When you write you use a number of link words to organise your ideas and make it easier for your reader to understand you. Here are some words which you can use:

❑ **when listing points**: first, first of all, to start with, ,in addition, moreover, besides …
❑ **when giving examples**: for example, for instance, such as, like, e.g..
❑ **when presenting another side to an issue**: however, but, on the other hand, yet …
❑ **when presenting results**: as a result, so, therefore…
❑ **when summarising**: in conclusion, to sum up, to conclude, in short...

► Write it out

① **Match these headings to the five paragraphs of 'Nacera's agony letter':**
  a. Negative prospects b. introduction c. conclusion d. the reality of the situation e. positive prospects

② **Write a short letter to seek advice from the 'agony aunt' of a newspaper problem page using Nacera's letter as a model. Include as many link words as possible.**

Appendix 03

ASSESSING

TINERKOUK

KSAR KADDOUR

OULED AISSA

TIMIMOUN

OULED SAID

TALMINE

GHAROUINE

DELDOUL AOUGROUT

METARFA

TSABIT

SEBAA

BOUDA

TEMANTIT

OULED AHMED TIMMI ADRAR

FENOUGHIL TIMEKTEN

TAMEST

ZAOUIET KOUNTA

IN ZGHMIR

TIT

SALI

AOULEF

AKABLI

REGGANE

BORDJ BADJI MOKHTAR

BORDJ BADJI MOKHTAR

TIMIAOUINE