

**PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA MINISTRY OF HIGHER
EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH**

Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem

Faculty of Letters and Arts

Department of Foreign Languages



**Using Students' Schemata to Get Access to Effective Reading of
Literary Texts: The Case of Undergraduate Students
at Abd Al Hamid Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem**

Presented by: Ms. BELGHOUL Hadjer

**Dissertation submitted to the Department of English Language in
Candidacy for the Degree of Doctorate in Applied Linguistics**

Board of Examiners

1. Prof. BAHOUS Abbas	Chairman	University of Mostaganem
2. Prof. GUERROUDJ Nouredine	Supervisor	University of Sidi Bel Abbas
3. Prof. BENAÏSSI Fawzia	External examiner	University of Sidi Bel Abbas
4. Prof. HADJOUÏ Ghaouti	External examiner	University of Tlemcen
5. Dr. BENNEGHRUZI Fatima Zohra	Internal examiner	University of Mostaganem
6. Dr. DJAFRI Yasmina	Internal examiner	University of Mostaganem

2017-2018

To my dear Parents,

Meriem and Assia

Acknowledgements

I am happy to express my sincere gratitude to all those who encouraged me in the fulfilment of this thesis and those whose support enabled to achieve this work. I think that in order to celebrate the efforts made throughout my studies and along the realisation of the present research work, I do not need to forget all those who contributed to make it possible. At the very beginning, I should thank Prof. Neddar, peace be upon him, who supported me from my first registration in the English department at Mostaganem University. He was always encouraging me in the course of my life and my professional career.

I am very grateful to my supervisor Prof. N. Guerroudj. His continuous encouragements for this exploratory study were helpful. I have appreciated him for allowing me to wander where my data led me, for finding my work valuable even when I found it dull or not interesting. I am indebted to thank him for his understanding. I would also thank him for his patience while reading and correcting this dissertation.

I am honoured and very grateful to Prof. A. Bahous for having so kindly accepted to provide me with critical readings. I thank him for his continuous encouragement, support all along the fulfilment of this research work, useful advice and comments, even in difficult moments.

I am very glad to express my gratitude for attending classes and casual meetings with the master students of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University in order to discuss the various issues related to my research work. They were very helpful and keen on collaborating with me to fulfil the practical framework and to explore to how extent learners' background knowledge can be relevant in the reading comprehension of literary texts.

I am extremely grateful to my wonderful husband, Dr. Samir Djelti, who patiently encouraged me in the preparation of this thesis. I would like to thank him for his patience and useful pieces of advice which have been beneficial in moments of despair and worries. His enormous support, encouraging attitude and moral support prevented me from surrendering.

Abstract

Reading literary texts has always been acknowledged to be an important process in learning English as a foreign language. The purpose of the present work is to demonstrate the way Algerian master students can better read by shedding light on the impact of schemata that can be cultural, linguistic or/and literary. This study explores such parameters as important elements in identifying the non-native informants' reading comprehension skills in a controlled group. Moreover, the findings of such investigation have been collected from twenty under-graduate students at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem. This thesis is divided into five chapters; the first two chapters highlight the relevance of the empirical studies related to literary reading by reviewing the various approaches of reading theory as proposed by Widdowson (2000, 2007), McVee, Dunsmore & Gavelek (2005), and Bernhardt (2005). I also depict the schema theory in relation to reading with special reference to the reader's socio-cultural background, linguistic and literary competence. The third chapter discusses the pedagogical as well as the theoretical framework of the study. It tries to provide an explanation for the theoretical analysis with regard to the data collection instruments. In the fourth chapter, I present a methodological description of the procedures adopted in conducting the present empirical study. I also present the analysis of the contextual circumstances under which the students' and the teachers' questionnaires were conducted. Regarding the last chapter, it involves the analysis of the collected data from the experiment. At this stage, the data collection required a representation of some statistical and grading operations that are reported under bar graphs, pie charts and tables. As a result, the analysis demonstrates that the students' background knowledge in terms of cultural, linguistic and literary elements does not necessarily boost the students' reading comprehension of culturally unfamiliar short fiction. In addition, the analysis also shows that the teachers are necessarily obliged to take into account the students' profile in their selection of literary texts. In addition, they are EFL master students who are mature and able to deal with any foreign text. In fact, both teachers of literature and their students assert that extensive reading plays a significant role in enhancing the reader's linguistic and cultural competences. By reading extensively and discovering foreign cultures, the learner becomes more empathetic and tolerant vis-à-vis these literary texts just as s/he becomes skilful in understanding and using the target language. By doing so, the learner's schemata are in continuous change and therefore become dynamic. Consequently, they allow language learners to enrich and improve their linguistic competence as well as their openness in order to familiarise themselves with foreign cultures. Therefore, the results confirm Cook's idea about the activation of the mental processes in reading foreign texts. As a conclusion, this exploratory work demonstrates that schema theory is not always necessary in the reading of literary texts in the case of advanced learners in EFL context.

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a foreign language

ESL: English as a second language

L1: The First language or the mother tongue

MCQ: Multiple Choice Questions

ESP: English for specific purposes

BMD: Bachelor Master Doctorate

T: Teacher

List of Tables

Table 4.1 The Population Division	123
Table 4.2 The Literary Selection	124
Table 4.3 The Description of the Methodological Procedures	128
Table 5.1 The Students' Biographical Information	155
Table 5.2 The Learners' Reading Comprehension Dimensions (The Boarding House)..	164
Table 5.3 The Learners' Reading Comprehension Dimensions (The Lottery).....	169
Table 5.4 Comparative Results of Leila and Sami's Answers	174

List of Figures

Figure 3.1	Byram's (1997) Intercultural Communicative Competence Model.....	93
Figure 3.2	Nieke's (1995) Clarification of key concepts: Intercultural Education and Intercultural	96
Figure 4.1	The Methodological Procedures	127
Figure 5.1	Participants' Gender	156
Figure 5.2	The Learners' Social Origins.....	157
Figure 5.3	The Readers' Trips Abroad and their Contact with Foreign.....	158
Figure 5.4	The Difficulties in Reading Short Stories.....	160
Figure 5.5	The Learners' Strategies to Become Better Readers.....	161
Figure 5.6	The Readers' Grading Scale of Comprehension.....	162
Figure 5.7	The Readers' Level of Tolerance in Reading Foreign Texts.....	163
Figure 5.8	The Learners' Reading Comprehension Dimensions (<i>The Boarding House</i>).	165
Figure 5.9	The Learners' Reading Comprehension Dimensions (<i>The Lottery</i>).....	170

Dedications	I
Acknowledgements	II
Abstract	III
List of Abbreviations	IV
List of Tables	V
List of Figures	VI
Contents	VII
General Introduction	14
Chapter I: Context in the Reading Comprehension Process in EFL	
1. Introduction	22
1.1. Reading Conception in EFL Context.....	22
1.1.1 Reading Theory.....	23
1.1.2 Difference in Meaning Derivation.....	26
1.2 Different Approaches in Reading Comprehension.....	27
1.2.1 Identifying the Socio-Cultural Aspects Related to Reading Comprehension Issues..	30
1.2.2 The Different Types of Reading.....	33
1.2.2.1 Aesthetic Reading.....	34
1.2.2.2 Efferent vs. Aesthetic Reading.....	34
1.3 The Relationship between the Reader and the Society in Reading.....	36
1.4 The Evolution of Literary Theories in Relation to Reading in EFL.....	38
1.5 The Cultural Theories in EFL Reading	42

Contents

1.6 Culture Definition	43
1.7 Tolerance vis-a-vis Cultural Aspects	45
1.8 Literature and Emotional Intelligence.....	46
1.9 Comprehending Cultural Dimensions in EFL Reading.....	47
1.10 Literature and Cultural Understanding.....	49
1.11 The Impact of Cultural Background Knowledge in EFL Reading Comprehension....	50
1.12 Conclusion	53

Chapter II: The Relevance of Schema Theory in Reading Literary Texts

2. Introduction.....	55
2.1 Exploring Schema Theory in EFL Reading.....	55
2.2 An Overview of Schema Theory.....	56
2.3 The Techniques Used in the Application of Schema Theory in Reading Texts in EFL Context	60
2.3.1 The Relevance of Pre-Reading Tasks Technique.....	61
2.3.2 The Previewing Technique	62
2.3.3 The Questioning Technique	63
2.3.4 The Semantic Planning Technique	64
2.4 The Relevance of Descriptive Texts for the Development of Sociocultural Competence.....	65
2.4.1 Descriptive Materials of Schema Theory in EFL.....	66
2.4.2 The Relation between Descriptive Materials and Sociocultural Schemata	67
2.5 The Relevance Cultural Schemata in EFL Reading Comprehension.....	68

Contents

2.6 Investigating Reading Comprehension Process in Relation to Background Knowledge.....	73
2.6.1 The Dimensions of Schema Theory	75
2.6.2 Goodman’s View of Schema Theory in Reading Comprehension	76
2.7 The Linguistic Relevance in Reading Comprehension	81
2.8 The Relevance of Extensive Reading in EFL Curriculum	84
2.9 The Selection of Texts for Reading in EFL.....	87
2.10 Readers’ Classification in EFL Context	88
2. 11 Identifying Possible Reading Deficiencies in EFL	89
2.12 Conclusion.....	90

Chapter III: Theoretical and Pedagogical Framework of the Study

3. Introduction.....	92
3.1 The Relevance of Intercultural Competence in EFL Teaching	92
3.2 Intercultural Education Requirements.....	94
3.3 Culture and EFL Teaching.....	100
3.4 The Pedagogical Framework.....	101
3.5 Theory and Methodology	102
3.6 The Relevance of schema theory in the Pre- reading Stage	106
3.7 The Selection of Short Stories	111
3.8 Teaching Short Stories in EFL classes.....	107
3.8.1 Pre-Reading Phase.....	112
3.8.2 While-Reading Phase.....	113
3.8.3 Post-Reading Phase.....	113

Contents

3.9 The Importance of Teaching Literature.....	115
3.10 Tolerance Relevance in Teaching Literature.....	117
3.11 Conclusion.....	119

Chapter IV: Methodology Design and Instrumentation

4. Introduction.....	121
4.1 Context of the Study.....	121
4.2 The Participants.....	122
4.2.1 Students.....	122
4.2.2 Teachers.....	124
4.3 Instrumentation.....	124
4.3.1 Data Collection and Instruments	125
4.3.1.1 Observational Description	128
4.3.1.2 Questionnaire Description.....	130
4.3.1.3 Reading Tests.....	132
4.4.1.3 Teachers' Questionnaire Description.....	140
4.5 Qualitative Vs. Quantitative Analysis of the Study.....	146
4.6 Conclusion.....	149

Chapter V: Data Analysis and Discussion of the Findings

5. Introduction	151
5.1 An Overview of the Study.....	152
5.2 Manipulating the Research Questions.....	152
5.3 The Learners' Questionnaires Analysis.....	153

Contents

5.3.1 Biographical Information.....	153
5.3.2 The Readers' Motivation in Reading Short Stories.....	158
5.3.3 The Difficulties in Reading Short Stories.....	159
5.3.4 The Learners' Strategies to Improve Reading.....	160
5.4 Evaluating the Learner's Reading Comprehension of Short Fiction.....	162
5.4.1 The Analysis of the Learners' Reading Comprehension of <i>The Boarding House</i>	163
5.4.2 The Analysis of the Learners' Reading Comprehension of <i>The Lottery</i>	168
5.5 Analysis of the Case Study Sample	173
5.5.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Results	174
5.5.1.1 Analysis and Interpretation of Leila's Questionnaires.....	175
5.5.1.2 Analysis and Interpretation of Sami's Questionnaires.....	178
5.6 Conclusion	188
General Conclusion	191
Bibliography	200
Appendices	220
Appendix 1: Students' Biographical Information.....	221
Appendix 2: Difficulties Experienced in Reading English Literary Texts.....	222
Appendix 3: Strategies to Become a Better Reader.....	223
Appendix 4: Purposes of Reading in English.....	224
Appendix 5: The Student's Questionnaire of Reading <i>The Boarding House</i>	225
Appendix 6: The Student's Questionnaire of Reading <i>The Lottery</i>	227
Appendix 7: Teachers' Questionnaire.....	229
Appendix 8: The Boarding House Short Story	233
Appendix 9: The Lottery Short Story.....	238

Contents

Appendix 10: A Sample Leila's Questionnaires	246
Appendix 11: A Sample Sami's Questionnaires	250
Abstract in Arabic	254
Abstract in French	255

General Introduction

The current exploratory work tackles the students' sociocultural background in the reading comprehension of literary texts. It tries to investigate the relevance of their schemata in the comprehension and interpretation of short stories. The latter are from different cultural origins. *The Boarding House* story represents the Irish culture and *The Lottery* represents an American cultural habit in the early twentieth century. In this study, the population targets Master 1 students of Mostaganem University and teachers of literature from different universities in Algeria. The findings obtained from this investigation either validate or invalidate the hypotheses made for this study.

Reading, the prime ingredient in learning EFL, is the basic requirement for the teaching and learning of literature. In respect to this scenario, reading literary texts in English plays an important role in acquiring its culture. In other terms, literature is considered as a vehicle of the language culture. Therefore, reading literary texts enables students to acquire more about foreign cultures, and then, may affect their thinking and vision about the others' life. The concern of this study is to highlight this process which brings together reading and understanding literary texts by relying on the students' sociocultural background. Moreover, it tries to check to what extent the latter can be relevant or not in the comprehension of literary texts.

According to the observations and discussions I had with students and teachers of literature and later informants of this investigation, I could notice that reading literary texts is jeopardised in academic EFL contexts. Under the present circumstances, the informants of this research were asked to demonstrate the impact that their sociocultural background may have on their reading comprehension of literature. As for Byram (1978), Alderson and Urquhart (1988) and Cook (1989), they consider that the learners' background knowledge effect their understanding of the literary texts to be read. In other words, they believe that the familiarity between the textual elements and the learners' background enable them to better comprehend the text. Therefore, many scholars assume that the consideration of the students' background knowledge is relevant in teaching literature. By relying on this claim, this study aims to check if this theory is valid for advanced learners.

It is important to notice that the point of departure of this thesis is based on many scholars' points of view. Among them Steffensen (1979), Wallace (1992), Byram (2003), Berg (2003) and others posit that the student's or reader's personal experiences, knowledge

General Introduction

about the world, identity, religious belief, etc. contribute in the comprehension of literary texts. This was later recognised as schema theory, originated from the work of philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Bartlett and Piaget. Overall, it refers to a mental representation of one's background knowledge which helps him/her in well understanding the textual elements. In this light, close attention is given to Cook's (1989) view, according to him; reading does not necessarily require conscious processes, but rather automatic cognitive responses which are activated by the external stimuli. In this respect, the present exploratory work tends to relate this theoretical assumption to reading literary texts; more specifically, with short stories. To put it otherwise, I attempt to see if this theory is valid for Algerian Muslim master 1 students of literature. Then, how can we identify and evaluate their comprehension if this theory is valid or not? On what basis shall I choose short fictions for this investigation?

With respect to this scope of interest, very few studies have attempted to examine the relevance of background knowledge on advanced learners in EFL context. As a result, instead of proving its significance in reading literary texts, as most teachers consider it as being pertinent, a close analysis of such learners and their involvement with culturally different literary texts in a foreign language context needs to be explored thoroughly. More precisely, by relying on Bao Deyuan & Gao Yufen's (2006) teaching a short story model, two distinct foreign short fictions are introduced to Master 1 students of literature. Both of them were written in the early twentieth century; the first one describes the Irish society and its conceptualisation of marriage, whereas, the second depicts an American attitude in celebrating the lottery in the past. In that, they are asked to answer the questionnaires related to both fictions. It is through the analysis of this process that we can guess whether they have well comprehended and interpreted them or not.

My focus will fall on the analysis of university students' interpretation of reading literary texts in English. The present work is based on a voluntary participation of master students of teaching literature who aim at experiencing my assumptions highlighted in this thesis. In this view of things, I propose that schema theory which includes all of the cultural, literary and linguistic competence affect the students' reading comprehension of literary texts. To put it differently, I assume that an effective reading of such texts requires all these competences as claimed by McVee, Dunsmore and Gavelek (2005). In addition, I consider that the teacher is responsible for providing his/her learners with the necessary

General Introduction

tools that correspond to their needs and those of the text. Hitherto, one may ask: How can a teacher of literature teach all these competences in his class? Is it feasible to teach such elements for master 1 students? In order to answer such questions, I will design specific questionnaires to verify if this is done in Mostaganem University and how it is done if so.

Furthermore, as it has been recognised by different investigations in the past, learners' reading of literary texts was primarily presumed to be not well elaborate and motivated. In this light, this work tries to bridge this gap by finding out some strategies that might be efficient in teaching literature. In other words, the present study attempts to ask students as well as teachers of literature about their suggestions concerning the possible ways that lead to an effective comprehension of literary texts. By doing so, and in addition to the consideration of the learners' background knowledge, such an investigation may contribute positively to the teaching of literature. Consequently, the following questions need to be answered in the course of such a scope of interest:

1. Does the teachers' taking into account of the students' background help achieve better understanding of literary texts?
2. Do students' linguistic, cultural and literary competences enable them to better read the literary texts?
3. Will the fact of being empathetic and tolerant help students reach an "appropriate" comprehension of literary texts?
4. Does extensive reading help students to better comprehend and empathise with foreign texts in EFL context?

As an answer to the previous research questions, this exploratory work will be conducted with respect to some hypotheses or assumptions that have been formulated. The latter will be tested in the course of this thesis. More particularly, I assume that the linguistic, the cultural and the literary competences facilitate the learners' access to the reading comprehension of literary texts in EFL context. To put it differently, the teachers' selection of literary texts to be read requires taking into account the learners' level of mastery of the foreign language, their ability to identify the literary elements and their

General Introduction

cultural relationship with the text. The latter is either manifested by their familiarity or their unfamiliarity or distance with the target culture. Here, I presume that all these elements are necessary to well comprehend foreign literary fiction.

As a second assumption, I assume that unfamiliar or alien texts necessitate empathy and tolerance for an appropriate reading comprehension. In other words, students need to be provided with foreign literary texts that deal with topics that are acceptable for them. By being empathetic and tolerant towards foreign cultures, this may facilitate their comprehension and bridges the distance that exists between them. Such a process urges teachers of literature to implement tolerance in their students.

Additionally, regarding schema theory which is the core of this study, I also presume that teachers are required to select fictions that are culturally and socially close to the students' schemata. Such a process may lead to an effective reading comprehension of literary texts. Otherwise, providing students with culturally and socially distant texts may lead to their rejection or probably their hatred of literature as a whole. In this light, this research will attempt to present a thorough analysis of this fact by experiencing it on master students.

As a last assumption, I assume that extensive reading is an important strategy for a successful comprehension of literary texts. Thus, with respect to the informants' experiences of this study, which includes both teachers and students, they will be asked to highlight whether extensive reading can be relevant in comprehending foreign literary fiction. According to the collected results, we can deduce whether this is an appropriate strategy for a better reading comprehension or not. In addition, they will be asked to suggest other ways that may be efficient for the students' reading. Therefore, by relying on the collected data, we will be able to draw some implications in the general conclusion.

Overall, this exploratory work includes five chapters that are designed to provide a close description and analysis to this issue. The first part including two chapters is designed to provide a description of the theoretical background that I find important for my work. The reader is unaware of the empirical procedures I advocate in this investigation. This may render him/her eager to guess the reasons behind my theoretical choices to shape this thought from my own point of view. The second part comprises the last three chapters

General Introduction

which examine the empirical practice of this work with regard to the theoretical concepts I consider in the Algerian university context.

The first chapter “Reading Comprehension in EFL Context” does not merely aim at reviewing the various theoretical contributions related to the role schema theory in the reading comprehension of literary texts, but it rather aims at pointing out the limitations of such theory regardless of its emphasis on the reader.

I begin by arguing that students’ reading is not simply based on a process of decoding, it rather requires expecting, deducing, etc. Therefore, I indicate that the relevance of the students’ schemata and reading strategies which allow him/her to read literary texts correctly need to be explored. However, in this exploratory work, I try to narrow this claim which does not seem to be satisfactory in understanding literary texts according to some critics. In this light, a detailed description of the reading theory will be presented by relying on several scholarly works.

Then, in the next part of the same chapter, I point to the relevance of the students’ socio-cultural background knowledge. As it has been claimed by many scholars, the consideration of the latter is paramount in teaching literature. In this path, I will stress culturally different texts on the account of learning experiences. Finally, I pave the way for schema theory by shedding light on the relevance of cultural background knowledge. This issue is of a significant interest to my research since it is considered as one of the most complex inquiries in such a field of investigation that I raise, here, and on which I will conduct this empirical study.

In the next chapter, “The Relevance of Cultural Schemata in Reading Literary Texts”, I notice to some extent the problem of comprehension and interpretation of foreign literary texts. First of all, I start by presenting a detailed definition of schema theory by relying on the research of several scholars on the one hand, and investigators on the other. Then, I try to offer an explanation of the process of reading comprehension with regard to the students’ cultural schemata through highlighting the different processes of reading. In this case, I give as an example Goodman’s (1979) model of schema theory in reading comprehension through which he highlights the importance of cultural background. Furthermore, I also shed light on the linguistic competence which I think is very important

General Introduction

for this thesis since it facilitates the comprehension of foreign literary texts. At the end, I conclude this chapter by mentioning that the relevance of extensive reading in EFL curriculum is paramount according to the research of many scholars.

The third chapter tries to highlight the theoretical and pedagogical framework of this study. Actually, it attempts to offer some epistemological background that deals with the informants' cultural, linguistic and literary competence regarding the provided texts. Here, I present Byram's (1997) model of Intercultural Communicative Competence through which he includes and describes five factors. I see that the latter are relevant for my scope of interest since it includes the student's knowledge or schemata, attitude, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction and critical and cultural awareness. Therefore, I explain the reason behind my adoption of such a model and its relevance to this thesis. Moreover, I point out the intercultural needs that I think are important for both teaching and learning foreign cultures, and then literature by referring to many scholars. I also offer a model of reading which comprises the three stages of teaching a short story as it refers to the way I conduct the experiment of the current study. Additionally, I provide an explanation of the purpose for choosing such literary fictions among all the literary genres. In this light, I present a summary of the given short stories in order to facilitate the comprehension about the main topics, characters and events for the reader. As a conclusion, I end up this chapter by stressing the importance of teaching literature and its requirement for tolerance in EFL classes.

Regarding the fourth chapter "Methodology Design and Instrumentation", it represents the methodology design and instrumentation. This chapter aims to provide an explanation of the observations noticed as well as the questionnaires of both teachers and students about the two culturally different short fictions. However, it is important to claim that as a sample for this study, all of master 1 students of literature in Mostaganem University were supposed to respond to the questionnaires. I have selected only 20 students at random for the sake of controlling the data collection process. Thus, the present chapter tries to describe all the methodological procedures followed in this empirical investigation. In other terms, at this stage, I explain the reason behind each question and the expected answer for each question. I further this description by providing a scale for scoring and evaluating the students' answers in terms of language use, literary and cultural elements identification as well as their tolerance towards the short stories. Therefore, this chapter

General Introduction

attempts to depict all the methodological procedures and measures that are adopted to realise this exploratory work.

Regarding the last chapter which is entitled “Data Analysis and Discussion of the Findings”, it attempts to analyse both the students and the teachers’ answers by relying on the scale of scoring and evaluating. The results of this analysis are represented through pie charts, line graphs and bar graphs. In this chapter, I try provide an analysis for each answer by highlighting the informants’ mistakes in their interpretation of the short fictions. The latter can be manifested in terms of language, the identification of literary elements or cultural understanding or misunderstanding. Therefore, it is by evaluating each of the informant’s answers and their sociocultural background that I can identify the obstacles they faced in their reading comprehension and interpretation processes. Furthermore, I report the teachers’ answers to their questionnaires and I try to analyse them. As a result, I can draw a conclusion by either confirming or denying the formulated hypotheses. In this light, I can check, on the one hand, the effectiveness and relevance of schema theory in reading literary fiction, and verify the importance of extensive reading and its impact on the students’ reading comprehension of literary short stories on the other.

Finally, this current research work ends up by drawing a general conclusion. In this latter, I will sum up this investigation by presenting the findings of and the generalisations deduced from this investigation. To say it otherwise, regarding the results obtained from this empirical study, the latter attempts to prove the reliability or the unreliability of the students’ background knowledge. Moreover, I will try to draw some implications that might be beneficial for both teachers and students in EFL reading. Then, I will rely on the questionnaires’ results to highlight some of the contributions that extensive reading might have on students’ cultural schemata.

Chapter I

Context in the Reading Comprehension

Process in EFL

1. Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical framework that paves the way for this research. This thesis focuses on the impact of cultural aspects in the reading process. Within current understanding of reading, I highlight aspects such as the extraction of meaning, the different cultural interpretations of literary texts which lead to the competing drives of familiarity and unfamiliarity. After this exploration of the socio-cultural aspects involved in comprehension, I then move to the individual dimension by discussing some issues related to reading comprehension of two chosen short stories as they constitute the practical side of this dissertation. This discussion concludes with an examination of the tension between the student and the cultural understanding, and an explanation of how this research work takes account of both dimensions.

My aim, at this stage, is to highlight the bridge which relates between the reading process with the different characteristics of this research that are tightly related with current calls of the participants involved in such relationship. To put it otherwise, I try to shed light on the role of the learner in such process and describe the different approaches raised on the reading theory. Therefore, I try to make relevant connections between these theoretical views in order to stress the most powerful justification for this investigatory research. This fact leads both the teaching and learning of literature be culturally-specific in different contexts.

1.1 Reading Conception in EFL Context

Generally speaking, in this thesis study learning and teaching: conceived as a situated, culturally-contextualised activity (Jarvis and Robinson, 1997). Scholars presuppose that learners grow into the cognitive life of those around them. The knowledge that the participants possess in this study about reading was to some extent gathered through interactions with group members of the University. As they and I collaboratively set up the environment in which they performed, that is; the natural context of reading comprehension process, they constructed learning practices.

Research conducted in the last decades witnessed a new view of reading as a mere process of decoding. Widdowson (1979) claims that actual research studies on

reading has considered it as a reasoning activity in which the reader creates meaning by relying on the textual elements. Carrel and Eisterhold (1983) claim that EFL/ESL reading theory has been affected in the last decades by Goodman (from the mid- to late 1970s) who views reading as a “guessing game” in which the “*reader reconstructs, the best as he can, a message which has been encoded by a writer.*”. In this light, Grabe responded to Goodman’s vision of reading which is considered as a: “..... *an active process of comprehending [where] students need to be taught strategies to read more efficiently, e.g. guess from context, define expectations, make inferences about the text, skim ahead to fill in the context, etc.*” (1991: 377). Thus, the effectiveness of reading lies on learning the different contextual elements that are related to a particular text such as, expecting, deducing, skimming, etc. According to him, all these elements contribute in the reading process by relying on the context that is related to a particular text to be read.

1.1.1 Reading Theory

Reading theory has been formulated by different disciplines; on the one hand, the educational psychologists, psychologists and reading researchers and on the other, the philosophers, literary critics and rhetoricians. In spite of the fact that these views of thought focus on one another, there are different important points in common within their works. In respect to the scope of the present investigation, the following discussion tends to highlight more the former disciplines of thought rather than the latter.

Reading includes many stages that have been significant to psychological scholars and researchers for a long period. Reading was before regarded as the fact of processing letters to form words and then the combination of these words results in sentences. Yet, after the foundation of experimental psychology, the processing of letters approach was refuted to support the processing of words approach. After this period, it was acknowledged that reading process may include other processes than the fact of decoding a word. However, to what concerns a large number of researchers, they stopped their investigations on the reading process with the rise of behaviourism. By this fact, Bartlett (1932) tried to shed light on the significance of contextual factors in reading and remembering processes. However, this work was neglected for many years (Spiro, 1980).

Recently, psychologists and reading scholars have shifted their interest from a purely behaviourist's view to a purely cognitive one. Many efforts have been made for the sake of giving an appropriate description to the reading comprehension process, and they are present in the processing of information which is important on cognitive psychology.

In this light, according to Bernhardt (2005), reading is at the present time considered as a multidimensional and multivalent process. In other words, it is conceived as being a complex process since it involves [*textual meaning*] which refers to a set of mutual modifying relations (Widdowson, 2000: 16). The readers' responses differ in accordance to textual content and this is related to many complex and interrelated factors. In that, answers do vary from one learner to another during the reading process, depending on the idiosyncratic and personal characteristics, and aims for reading, among other aspects. On this particular point, Widdowson(2007) claims that the reader reconverts the textual product into a process and thus, this facilitates discourse from the text. However, this discourse, which is considered as an end itself to this reduction, does not generate underlying macro-structure of the writer's authentic formulation of whatever conceptual content. It rather matches with the reader's knowledge and the objectives behind his/her reading.

Regarding this claim, the learner or the reader makes use of the textual elements in the formulation of meaning. However, the latter does not correspond to the author's original structural formulation. In other words, the reader's interpretation of meaning can deviate from the author's message. Regardless of the reader's conceptualisation of the textual elements of a given text, reading depends on his/her knowledge and objective behind this process. And this latter differs from one reader to another, then, this what ends in differences in understanding.

By considering another point of view on the definition of reading, Paran (1996) sees reading as an activity that depends on guesses that are either accepted or refuted. This implies that reading differs from one reader to another; in that, s/he relies on the textual elements of the text: words or cues to generate a guess about the sentence explanation to be after. Therefore, these textual operations are not shared by all readers; each one uses his/her own way to generate meaning in the reading.

Additionally, there are contextual factors both at a mental level (prior knowledge and knowledge about the world) and a situational level (specific limitations of the context in which the text is read). With regard to Bernhardt (2003), the context contains information about the text that precede the immediate one, cultural knowledge and common sense knowledge. It also includes social, cultural economic, political, geographical, religious, historical and ideological aspects (Berg & Longhurst, 2003). Thus, we can deduce that it is impossible to dissociate reading from the context in which it exists, and this leads it to become a typically social and communicative practice. In this light, I will describe how this research study takes into account this conception all along this chapter.

Such psychologists review three models of reading. They are named as follows: *Bottom-up* process which focuses on the text itself, *Top-down* process which emphasises the contribution of the reader, and the *Interactive process* which considers the involvement of both previous processes in the reading comprehension. With respect to these features, it might be significant to consider top-down process which in its turn emphasises the reader, and the bottom-up which emphasises mainly the text. The basic opposition that lies in these approaches concerns the manipulation of the reading process, this leads us to ask this question: Is it the text, the reader or both which control the reading? These three elements of the reading approach are considered as a strategy to the analysis of the comprehension process. The latter undergoes four research factors that are: readability research, cloze procedure, factor analytic studies and Psycholinguistics.

By taking into account of the views raised on the psycholinguistic research, Goodman (1970) claims that reading is a meaning-driven, and according to Spiro, Bruce and Brewer (1980) it is a multilayered and interactive hypothesis- generating process. From another point of view, Rumelhart (1977) sees reading as being interactive in nature since it is based on the content and the structural level of the text and the reader's prior knowledge.

During the reading process, readers provide the text with a wide range of experiences related to words and to discourse which they use in interpreting the read text appropriately. Their prior knowledge, organised in topical clusters (Schemata),

paves the way for the creation of a context for comprehension (Anderson, 1977). In order to tackle the main issues of the present research work about the importance of prior knowledge in the reading comprehension, many researchers have investigated the effect of familiarity or more specially the familiarity with the content of the reading text. In fact, they have demonstrated that reading texts which are based on familiar subjects is better understood than texts based on unfamiliar subjects, this is due to the fact that readers have relevant background knowledge about familiar subjects (Taylor, 1979).

Moreover, studies on reading comprehension have shown among readers different textual understanding abilities. This requires the readers' linguistic knowledge, their general knowledge of the world and the extent of its activation which contribute in a better mental processing of information during the reading process. To put it differently, the more they activate their background knowledge about the textual content or the structural format of the text, the more they will be able to comprehend, to memorise in long term memory and to recall the text (Kintsch & Van Dijk, 1975).

1.1.2 Differences in Meaning Derivation

The conception of reading interpretation of literary texts as a process, particularly short stories in the case of this work, is the main focus at this stage. A reader may derive different meanings from the same text if this is read at different periods of time and with different intentions. As an observer researcher, I believe that readers/learners have different perspectives, different points of interests, and the involvement with the characters and the events in a story which they can use in every act of reading (Kramsh, 2003).

Accordingly, by referring to the empirical studies on learners, Byram and Grundy (2002) state: '*The reading of literature is determined by the learners' response as social actors with specific cultural identities. Thus, each learner individualises the learning experience and comes to vary different conclusions about the meaning of a common text.*' (ibid:194). In this light, any act of reading is then necessarily idiosyncratic. In that, the reader or the learner adopts his or her assessment about the importance of textual content, this differentiates their interpretation of the reading of a

particular text. At this juncture, Widdowson (1992: 24) claims: “*there can never be any definitive interpretation.*” Therefore, this implies that understanding a literary text is not absolute since it differs according to several parameters as it going to be presented in the following discussion.

Many scholars in this field of interest have shown that texts’ abilities to comprehend are based on the context that is provided to the readers. In other words, they demonstrated that the topic tackled in a particular text tended to make it easy to be comprehended. In that, this could happen if the readers have already received a prior knowledge or a description of the context related to it before its reading and assessing the text as being less comprehensible with either the presence or the absence of the contextual condition after reading. Furthermore, Goetz, Schallert, and Reynolds’ (1983) research on English students have shown that prior knowledge of the reader does not only influence the type of background knowledge to be activated in the interpretation and comprehension of complex texts, but it also influences significantly the story comprehension.

1.2 Different Approaches of Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is one of the paramount issues of EFL teaching and learning. It is approached from two main views. The first one is product oriented approach to reading which holds that meaning is in the text itself, and it is text- based elements that determine meaning. Whereas for the second, it is a process-oriented approach to reading, in this stage, meaning is shaped through a successful interaction between the reader and the text and outside-text elements or the mental elements play an important role in comprehension.

In this regard, Widdowson (1979) states that present investigations on reading consider it as a reasoning activity whereby the reader creates meaning by relying on the textual elements. Moreover, this is what Goodman describes as a general discourse processing strategy in which reading is viewed merely as a particular actualisation. In this light, reading is an act of involvement in a discourse between interlocutors.

Therefore, reading efficiency cannot be measured against the amount of information contained in a given text. This cannot be reliable since it depends on how

much knowledge the reader brings to the text and how much s/he wishes to extract from it. Rather, reading efficiency depends on the effectiveness of discourse that the reader can deduce from it, either in relation to the writer or his aim in engaging in the discourse firstly. Thus, in this respect, reading is not considered as a reaction to a text but as an interaction between writer and reader mediated through the text.

With regard to Alderson and Urquhart (1984), they confirm that there is a possibility to consider reading both as a product and as a process. Most studies have the tendency to favour the product rather than the process. But, this vision may be unreliable since it cannot be a predictable variable in the product, and since knowing a product does not reveal what takes place during the interaction between the reader and the text. The product depends on the process since it varies from one reader to another, from one purpose to another, from one time to another and so on.

The fact of favouring reading as a process, in conducting research and in teaching, lies on the fact that they may produce elements that are general across different texts. In addition, readers can learn in order to improve their reading skills. Therefore, the basic aim behind the attempts to describe a process is that comprehension should allow the possibility to the effectiveness of the learners' reading. This vision is dynamic rather than static; i.e. it focuses on the reader's evolution through a text rather than as a product.

In the same path, Alderson and Urquhart (ibid) argue that a product view is related only to what the reader has got out of the text while a process aims at investigating how the reader may arrive at a particular comprehension and interpretation. In this light, Wallace (1992) points out that investigators in EFL reading have argued against the view that texts are self-contained objects, i.e. the meaning of which it is merely the reader's job to pick it out and construct it. Texts do not carry meaning; they rather have potential for meaning. Then, the latter is actualised only in the interaction between the text and the reader. To put it differently, this meaning is produced during reading as the reader relies on both existing linguistic and schematic knowledge and input provided by the provided texts.

By considering other perspectives on this issue, some philosophers and sociologists have also claimed that it is hard to get from a text more than the reader's

desire or his ability to know. This can be explained, according to Derrida (1994), by the fact that what is not understood is said to be lost in the interpretative process. In other words, the ambiguous segments of any text, where the ambiguity is in part the function of what the reader brings to the text, can still be unclear and misunderstood because they require an extreme perception to be accessed. Moreover, these segments do not generally pave the way to the activation of the reader's prior knowledge, and thus create enough gaps in understanding (Gadamer, 1992). This clash between familiarity and unfamiliarity is manifested through the double structure of interpretation (Moreiras, 1991). On the one hand, it renders what is strange familiar and understandable for the reader. In other words, any reader is able to recognise what is different for him by relying on the knowledge he already possess. And on the other, it renders what is familiar to the reader looks different and strange, i.e. it creates a clash between reader's knowledge and the textual one. Hence, in the light of the double structure of interpretation, what is unfamiliar or strange represents a potentially threatening obstruction.

To what concerns literary criticism, Jefferies (2001) focuses on the need for '*a model of meaning*' which incorporates a range from the most general shared understandings of texts to the most individual experience- based meanings. Most importantly, this model needs to incorporate meanings that can be derived from multiple group identities that any individual reader may read from a number of contradicting viewpoints at any time. Furthermore, it is important to stress that the interpretation between the individual and the social dimensions of identity in reading, something that will be explained in more details in this chapter.

Particularly, it is paramount to take into account Cook's (1994) idea on the reading of literary texts since it represents an important element in the current thesis. In that, he describes the activation of the mental processes in the reading process (See chapter 2). Therefore, I have also to follow the identification of issues as they are related to this thesis throughout the present and the following chapters.

In respect to these scholars' line of thought, any act of comprehension is tentative because no matter who the reader is, he is supposed to be prepared to know precisely certain things and not others because of sociocultural background. In this light, the American cultural anthropologist Rosaldo (1993) tells his own experience to

shed light on the strong side that a simple emotion can have in a certain culture and the inability of a foreigner to understand it, regardless of the amount of efforts invested to this aim. This scholar portrays his own incapability to understand the strength of the fury experienced by the Ilongots¹ in the Philippines when confronted to the death of a beloved. He describes his inability to explain the Ilongots' desire to cut human heads under particular circumstances. This is because Rosaldo's life experiences had not allowed him to conceive the rage and the anger that can be related to such a loss. For the Ilongots, this act of cutting human heads referred to one way of lessening their grief and suffering.

It is important to note that even a knowledgeable anthropologist like Rosaldo, who had the chance to cross the world's different cultures easily, experienced limitations in approaching the cultural aspect in the Ilongots' community. He could only conceptualise the points of strength of their emotional side through his own losses of a young brother and later of his wife. These persons' experiences enabled him to understand the Ilongots weeping as one kind of rage. To what concerns those who have not gone through the same experiences, it is a tale about their decapitation which tends to strengthen stereotyped visions by foreigners as savages in need of blood, a point which will be discussed in chapter three.

Furthermore, the participants in his research met in textual forms an issue through which they may face difficulties in comprehending it. In that, he referred to them as '*incomprehensible*' phenomena. This point of view has guided each step of his research study, especially the data analysis stage. Obviously the philosophical view of such a cultural understanding implies the existence of a background which contains knowledge that remains always incomprehensible and may become an issue to be investigated under a frame of study like this one. The latter issue may be overcome; in that me as researcher, data- collection and data analyst particularly should be fully conscious of the former views and perspectives.

¹ Ilongots : are a tribe who inhabit in southern Sierra Madre and Caraballo Mountains, on the east side of Luzon Island in the Philippines, primarily in the provinces of Nueva Vizcaya and Neuva Ecija and along the mountain border between the provinces Quirino and Aurora. The Ilongots inhabit areas close to rivers, as they provide food source and a means for transportation. Their languages are the Ilogot and the Ilocano languages.

1.2.1 Identifying the Socio-Cultural Aspects Related To Reading Comprehension Issues

Among the socio-cultural issues related to reading that are relevant to this thesis represent the factors which influence the way readers view themselves and others. In this respect, language plays a significant role in a social behaviour. In other words, it is governed by the assumptions of reciprocity which necessitate meaning that is not a matter of the readers' privilege, but a matter of mutual agreement to be met through the use of language in a behavioural discourse. In this light, Stecick (1976: 160) defines meaning as being '*what happens inside and between people*'. To put it differently, readers' comprehension of themselves and others are important in EFL cultural reading since they deal with the way learners adopt or reject particular ways of reading, i.e. it affects their way of reading. Moreover, once the reader succeeds to comprehend himself by relying on some ways as a result of reading experience, each reading experience paves the way for her/his identification in his own community (Tsui, 2007).

Another socio-cultural vision of reading that is based on the reader's information about different areas such as society, work, home, university, school, clubs, etc. These reflect the readers' identity, belief vis-a-vis EFL reading, engagement in the reading process, and the community and educational environments which influence their way of reading (Norton and Toohey, 2001). According to Chien-Hui Kuo (2003), the identity of readers as individuals is represented in terms of race, gender, social class, educational, historical and cultural backgrounds, religion, sexual orientation, and many other factors that may contribute in their conception of reading. However, it is important to note that these multiple identities may witness a change because of a new reading material in a specific context, especially an authentic material that challenges some of the principles or beliefs based on religious or cultural identity.

Generally, the issues of identity are crystal for the intercultural competence and many investigations have been conducted on such facts. Particularly, one aspect of the current investigation required asking participants them the relevance of their identity in the act of reading comprehension of the literary texts. Identity is, then, important in conceptualising their personal experiences in such a process (Kramsch, 2003).

Moreover, because of the fact that identities are multiple, hybrid, complex, fluid, and contradictory, as Chen (2005) asserts, it is plausible to generate more than one meaning of such identities in every act of reading, or different types in different readings; it depends on the link that relates between them. In this fact, Byram et al, argue that:

these multiple identifications are never all activated simultaneously. Instead, the subjective salience of any particular identification fluctuates and changes in a dynamic and fluid manner as the individual moves from context to context, according to the specific contrasts which are present within the situation and according to the individual's own personal expectations, motivations and needs in that situation.

(ibid, 2009: 13)

This claim contributes in identifying different meaning interpretations of one text reading. In other words, the reader relies on the textual elements, context, his personal understandings, and his motivation towards his interpretation of a particular topic.

Clearly, personal life experiences have a paramount importance in reading (Berg, 2003). In the individual's life, experiences such as meeting new people, new interests, travelling abroad, and discoveries affect and change the reader's comprehension or what is called '*the reader's literacy identity*' (ibid). In this study, the relevance of personal experiences paved the way for the participants to understand reading in a particular setting.

This thesis tries to take into consideration the various theories, as it is developed in this chapter and explained in the methodology chapter. As a researcher and an observer in this study, my aim is to try to discover the impact of personal life experiences of the learners' behaviours. Additionally, I also try to see the extent to which the selection of a particular reading behaviour can reflect some aspects of the reader's life. In this research, the questionnaires designed about reading in English, the questionnaires with personal information, and the interviews represent reliable sources for this analysis.

The concept of identity can be viewed as a way of including the different elements, which I have already discussed, and how they can influence the texts that the participants read in this thesis. These elements refer to life experiences, i.e. the readers' cultural background knowledge and previous experiences with the text, their knowledge of the text, and their social status vis- a- vis the text, etc. The study by Steffensen et. al (1979) tends to support strongly the hypothesis which holds that familiarity with the text contents affect positively its interpretation. Consequently, cross- cultural studies represent a fruitful source of information about readers' comprehension of texts by relying on their prior knowledge of cultural experiences.

Eventually, reading a foreign language allows the acquisition of experiences, and the reader is given the chance to perceive things in different ways (Dlaska, 2003). In this study, any act of reading may imply a reader's identity change through self-analysis. Coetzee- Van Rooy, (2002) holds that: "*The cultural identity profiles of second language learners could be regarded as resource or a hazard in the second language learning process*" (ibid: 63). In case the readers' new experiences with a foreign language threaten their background knowledge, their self-analysis, this may be a source of identity that is based on anxiety, and psychological and behavioural problems (Tong, Huang, and McIntyre, 2006). And in case the readers consider new experiences as being related to that language reading positively, their self-analysis may contribute to new insights into their identities, a "new sense of self" (ibid). In other words, their identity becomes stronger, and as a result, this leads to their self-confidence and security. Accordingly, reading is considered as a means of either reflecting or performing some specific identities (McCarthy and Moje, 2002). Thus, we can say that the concept of identity allows all types of reading experiences.

1.2.2 The Different Types of Reading

According to Rosenblatt's Transactional Theory², the reader has to be an active participant in the reading process. The educational value of this theory lies on the fact that teachers must note that learners spend the majority of the time in the class careful

² Transactional Theory, as it applies to literary criticism and the teaching of literature, suggests a "reciprocal, mutually defining relationship" (Rosenblatt, 1986) between the reader and the literary text. Rosenblatt argues that the term "interaction" refers to a picture of separate objects encountering one another but remaining essentially unchanged, like billiard balls bouncing off one another, and thus is an inadequate and misleading label for the mutually shaping exchange between reader and text.

because, in spite this, tests usually evaluate learners' knowledge of the text, and teachers will be assessed by relying on the tests' results. This leads to create a message a message between learners and teachers, i.e. such an act has to adopt an efferent attitude since it is considered as a guide to what is tested. Consequently, students are asked to answer some specific questions, but an over focus on skills and understanding can result in overlooking the aesthetic experience of reading.

1.2.2.1 Aesthetic Reading

Regarding aesthetic reading, it is generally considered as being a process through which readers and writers try to exchange, to collaborate in meaning construction. In this fact, it aims at encouraging learners/readers to use some research techniques that allow them to go beyond the degree of measurement to which they understand texts. Particularly, the readers' textual transactions are always placed in specific social contexts that are embedded by motives and tasks. Hence, it is obligatory to study variability in readers in reading foreign texts and in different situations, using a set of tasks and measures.

1.2.2.2 Efferent vs. Aesthetic Reading

Louise Rosenblatt (1985), one of the advocates of aesthetic reading, claims that readers deal with the text in a way that can be regarded either as being aesthetic or efferent. She holds that efferent reading is type which strives for information; i.e. it refers to the reader's emphasis on what will be left after the reading process or the post reading phase. The latter includes the data to be learnt, the credible resolution to the issue and the activities to be done. Unlike this type, aesthetic reading is text based process; in other words, the reader's focus is centred mainly on what s/he experiences during their relationship with a particular text.

The issue lays on the reason why the reader is reading for and the reasons behind her/his a particular reading. Here, one may ask this question: is the text provided mainly to help readers acquire information with a superficial reading, or is the context meant to produce an aesthetic experience? The following discussion tries to provide an answer to this issue.

As to efferent reading, it puts aside some specific information. In this case, the reader does not take into account the language rhythms or the prose style but is emphasised in deriving particular information. In this light, Rosenblatt(1985) claims that the reader's main interest depends on the post-reading phase. As an example, a deep sea fishing guide who decides where to go fishing, or a textbook to be learnt about the economic causes of the Great Depression. In respect to such type of reading, what counts most, here, is the impact left for the after reading stage; i.e. the data to be derived and the deduction of the solutions.

Regarding aesthetic reading, it investigates both the text and the reader. In this light, Rosenblatt (ibid) claims that the reader's main focus is on what s/he is experiencing during her/his relationship with a particular text. An example could be reading Hemingway's "The Old Man and the Sea" to live through a deep sea for fishing, or the "Grapes of Wrath" to explore the emotional depths of living through the Great Depression. These examples are similar to such type of reading in the sense that one would neither reads "The Old Man and The Sea" to learn how to fish, nor "The Grapes of Wrath" to investigate the economic factors that caused the Great Depression (ibid). What is important for such type of reading is the fact that the reader explores a new work or data while reading. Thus, aesthetic reading focuses on the reader's experiences during his/her reading process.

According to Rosenblatt, she explains that reading can be regarded either as being efferent or aesthetic. She defines aesthetic reading in which the reader put more emphasis in order to 'savours' or taste the feelings qualities, ideas, context, personalities and emotions that required in the conflicts and their solutions (Rosenblatt, 2004). In this type of reading, the reader is supposed to be absorbed in a text world of imagination and feelings in which the focus is put on the experience s/he experiences during the while reading phase (Rosenblatt, 1985).

In addition, Rosenblatt (2004) asserts that two readings can never be identical even if they performed by the same reader. However, in reading a particular text, a reader emphasises the way of experiencing a specific event, paying attention to his/her own response to the work. Such an emphasis is making an aesthetic attitude towards the given text. Throughout reading, the reader's attitude transforms the text which, then, results in changing the interpretation of the text. Therefore, reading becomes a cyclic

process. Moreover, aesthetic reading challenges all learner fields holistically. In this light, Rogers (1969) explained his basic philosophy:

It has a quality of personal involvement – the whole person in both his feeling and cognitive aspects being in the learning event. It is self-initiated. Even when the impetus or stimulus comes from the outside, the case of discovery, of reaching out, of grasping and comprehending, comes from within. It is pervasive. It makes a difference in the behaviour, the attitudes, perhaps even the personality of the learners.

(ibid: 5)

However, both aesthetic and efferent ways of reading are not two separate modes; they are not contradictory, they may be complementary. In other words, during the reading process, the reader may change his or her attention at times from experiential interpretation to efferent analysis, or form a general investigation to be reinforced by an aesthetical explanation (Rosenblatt, 2004).

1. 3 The Relationship Between the Reader and the Society in Reading

Discovering the identities that I have already discussed in this stage correspond with the socio-cultural notion of reading that is the major issue of this research. In fact, EFL interests emphasised the necessity for classroom-based research and studies that deal with readers from different parts in the world experience of reading English or in any other language. Indeed, the socio-cultural background is tightly related to the reader's identity (Kramsh, 2003). In this light, Atkinson (1999) holds that the fact of knowing the student per se implies inevitably knowing his/her culture. To put differently, being aware of the student's knowledge and way of thinking depicts the readers' identity which reflects their cultural background. As a result to this fact, the dichotomies of the notion of the native and the foreign, the personal and the social have been formulated by the ethnographer Malinowski (1923) with reference to his situational and cultural contexts, processed by Firth.

The latter view was later developed by the anthropologist Hymes (1964) who claims that: "*the ethnographic study of communication makes closest contact with the social, political, and moral concerns with communication conceived as value and a determinant in society and in personal lives*" (ibid: 41). As a result, this witness is prevalent nowadays; it constitutes a strong justification for such a research; it is dubbed an exploratory interpretative study. By following the same path, Lantolf (1999) claims

from a theoretical point of view that the value of comprehending processes of culture learning is derived from the learners' own point of view in informal learning contexts. The tight relationship between the already cited dichotomies has also been expressed by Kramsch (1995) who relates the notion of the individual- social to language education. She claims that:

The theoretical framework I suppose here for teaching culture through language suspends the traditional dichotomy between the universal and the particular in language teaching. It embraces for dialogue and as a common struggle to realign differences.

(ibid: 83)

These differences, according to her, lie under the concepts of *Interculturalism* and *Multiculturalism*. By interculturalism, Byram (1997) refers to the cultural comprehension in different parts in the world, and this is mainly restricted to the European context. While for multiculturalism, he argues that it encourages diversity within the same country. In addition, Risager's (2006) use of the metaphor which holds that languages and the global cultural spread has been significant to the issue. It implies that languages flow across cultures in the same way that cultures spread across languages. In this fact, the selection of the short stories for the present study includes some metaphors that carry some cultural background, an aspect which is relevant for such work.

Accordingly, in this study, with regard to the intercultural dimension of language education, the participants are supposed to read foreign literary texts that belong to different cultural background or contexts. Therefore, the link with foreign cultures is made possible thanks to literature. Whereas, to what concerns the multicultural dimension of language education, there is more emphasis on the different parameters that reflect the participants' identities with reference to particular sociocultural contexts.

With regard to the works conducted on cultural studies in EFL such as Atkinson (2000) in TESOL, Byram, Kramsch et al. (1996) and McVee, Dunsmore and Govelek (2005), etc. they all stress classroom-based research and investigating the learner's use of his/her own socio-cultural background as this dissertation does. This can, then, be classified into two folds: a work that aims to emphasise the readers' comprehension

foreign culturally-based texts in EFL and the influence of his/her experiences in reading such texts.

In this study, the questionnaires include personal information, tasks that focus on the readers' prior knowledge of the content of particular texts, and the questionnaires conducted with teachers were beneficial research tools for the exploration of the sociocultural dimensions of the reader as an active individual in this process. These data collection instruments contribute in the exploration of the socio-cultural background as well as other elements that influence the readers in this setting.

Moreover, some analytical measures were designed to describe the different aspects of cultural understanding. In that, they try to explain the various ways that EFL learners adopt in their EFL reading of foreign cultural context. One significant aspect, among these measures, is the fact that readers can use both prior and present knowledge at any point during the reading process. In addition, the measure of analysis that depicts the readers' behaviours such as simplifying, distorting, and generalising cultural information aims to use more or less complex processes in the comprehension of the cultural aspect in reading. These measures of analysis take into account the product and the process. To put it otherwise, this research does not stress only the product of reading that uses specific information in the text to end up with either an effective comprehension or not. It, rather, focuses on the process of reading that is used for the description in the index of readers' behaviours in this study.

1. 4 The Evolution of Literary Theories in Relation to Reading in EFL

In respect to this study, literary theories play an important role in identifying the reader's understanding of texts. The history of literary criticism can be classified under three stages. First, Romanticism, it was assumed that meaning depends on the author. Thus, the author is the main focus of any literary interpretation, and the latter is what distinguishes between different authors' intentions.

Regarding New Criticism, it holds that meaning is a text- based. For Holland (1998), et al, the "text-active" stage, where the text is dominating, refers to the reading response since the author does no more interfere in the text interpretation. And to what concerns New Criticism, it considers the text as being dependent on itself, written for its

own purpose, and not dependent on its relation to the author's life. Therefore, in the case of the selected short stories, the authors' biographies are not relevant. It stresses more the formal properties of literary work. Thus, this stage denotes much postmodern discussions about text control by the individual, discourse replacing the subject, and meaning subversions by its own text.

Holland (1998), an antagonist of New Criticism, claims that it emphasises only the similarities and ignores the differences among the reader's response. In the same vein, Lillegard, et al, (1997) also views New Criticism as ignoring the identity, as ignoring opposed forces within Western tradition, and as ignoring the relationship between the different cultures. New criticism has contributed to literature instruction since the late 1940s. Teachers recognise that text is important, they are supposed to make students appreciate its intricacy and thus to teach them the skills to analyse the literary text (Beach, 1993).

The third stage is noticed by its shift of interest to the reader; this is the literary theory that has come to be dubbed Reader-Response Criticism. It focuses on a set of literary criticism about where meaning is derived from the relationship between the reader and the text; what is so called "reader-response" theory. Contrary to New criticism, Reader-Response criticism lies on the assumption that the reader's interaction with the text is relevant for its interpretation. It is assumed that literary texts include gaps, and it is up to the reader to bridge it by relying on their own experiences and knowledge. The text cannot be comprehended nor examined in isolation. As a result, it requires the reader's attribution of 'meaning' to a text that depends on the readers' different responses to it.

In the same vein, Lillegard, et al, (1997) hold that the Reader-Response criticism sees the reader as a meaning constructor and not as a meaning consumer. As a consequence, a reader is supposed to make expectations and to set norms and deductions that can be derived during the interaction with the text. Because expectations cannot be achieved and reading is a temporal process which involves memory, perception, and anticipation, the reader-response may be difficult to be constructed, accepted or reviewed.

Among the different literary critics, Beach (1993) holds that the Reader-Response criticism includes different visions on the reader's role, the text, and the sociocultural context that relates between them. This implies that the Reader-Response does not refer to a unified critical view. Yet, there are many theories which have been raised to investigate into the reader's construction of meaning by relying on their own experiences with the text and by holding that the latter does not have existence until it is read. According to Lye (1996), many theories of Reader-Response have different opinions about the reasons behind reading a particular text, the way of identifying this process by being either subjective or objective vis-à-vis the text. Furthermore, it concerns the importance of the text or its representation of cultural background. In other words, it seeks to explore the impact socio-cultural differences on the reader and the writer's aim in the reading comprehension.

Accordingly, Beach (1993) has classified the literary theories that are related to Reader-Response into five categories: textual, experiential, psychological, social and cultural. Textual theories of response stress the reader's knowledge and the way it responds to the text. And thus, meaning depends on the reader's competence in responding to the structures and the complexity of the text.

Experiential theories of response emphasise the reader's involvement with the text and the way he/she identifies with it (Beach, 1993). Louis Rosenblatt is a key figure for the experiential theories as well as transactional theories which will be developed in the following description.

Psychological theories defend the fact that readers rely on their personal ways to respond to the text. Their responses depend on their cognitive progress, cognitive abilities, and subconscious factors. To put it otherwise, the prior knowledge is relevant for psychological theorists in the sense that it is regarded as a helpful guide to draw readers' attention to certain textual elements and points. Holland, et al (1998), who is central to psychological theories of response, have a psychoanalytic vision in which they consider the ways the readers' subconscious imagination shapes the meaning of the text.

Moreover, this raises a discussion about some issues such as the reading differences among readers. He also assumes that Reader-Response criticism is a solution to such issues by highlighting similarities and differences among such factors and participants. In this light, these similarities lie on the readers' sociocultural background that is represented as gender, class, education, race, age, etc. Regarding the differences, they are represented, according to him, as being personal or idiosyncratic such as his/ her personal beliefs, opinions, values, and identity.

The last approach refers to the cultural theories of response Beach (1993). It comprises an important variety of literary theories as Post-modernism, Post-structuralism, Feminism, Marxism, Anthropological, etc. All of them acknowledge that the text includes ideological beliefs and attitudes that allow the reader to be guided in his/ her reading. Furthermore, they stress the influence of the gender, attitudes, and social classes in their response to literature. Particularly, the cultural values and attitudes, which characterise a particular community, are represented in the reader's response to a specific literary text since different disciplines include some reading instructions to integrate him/her. In this light, Beach holds that a community's response is a culturally acquired act through which its participants' responses are loyal to the values of such community (ibid: 132). However, it is important to stress, at this stage, that readers do not merely acquire reading instructions, but also cultural values.

Among the major scholars who contributed in cultural theories of reading response is Fish (1970). He was interested in the way readers respond to literature from a post- structuralist's vision. For him, any reader is part of an interpretative community, which refers to a reading that shares a technique or a method of interpretations. In other words, this interpretative community teaches the reader to review specific forms and subjects. Thus, this implies that the reader's cultural background is reflected through his response to literary readings. In that, the interpretative reading community attributes meaning to the text to be read. In this light, Lang (1996) claims:

For Fish the very thoughts one thinks are made possible by presuppositions of the community in which one lives and furthermore the socially conditioned individual, which all individuals are, cannot think beyond the limits made possible made the culture.

(ibid: 3)

With respect Lang's claim, the reviewed literary theories play a significant role in the teaching of literature. Accordingly, the cultural response theory may influence more strongly this research work. The following section tries to present a detailed explanation about the cultural theory.

1.5 The Cultural Theories in EFL Reading

This study attempts to shed light on the significance of investigating the cultural factors in the process of EFL reading (Carrell and Eisterhold, 1983). In this light, the cultural aspect of foreign or second language education started to gain importance at the beginning of the 20th century in Germany with the concepts of *Landeskunde* which means the study of culture and civilisation, and *Kulturkunde* which means the study of culture and civilisation (Byram, 2002b). The aims behind its rise were fundamentally political; for instance, it is more efficient to highlight the Spanish national identity rather than the educational one in order to know more about the culture of its community.

During the second half of the 20th century, Europe witnessed more political and military events that contributed to discussions about the nature of *Landeskunde* (aims, context, content, characteristics, etc.). Within this period of time, social, political, and cultural factors such as migration, communication beyond national borders, etc. contributed to the rise of awareness concerning the importance of cultural aspects in EFL. In this fact, during the 1990s, Britain conceptualised this need for cultural studies; which stressed the cultural aspect of foreign language learning and teaching with the aim of improving students' intercultural abilities in EFL context (Mountford and Wadham-Smith, 2000). Since then, this cultural dimension has been considered the main focus of research for many scholars in this field of investigation such as Michael Byram, Carrel, Eisterhold, Widdowson, Kramsh, etc. Such studies have considered English as a foreign and second language. As a result, these investigations have yielded an important framework that consists within its theoretical and pedagogic support to EFL related issues.

1.6 Culture Definition

Despite the various studies conducted on culture in foreign language learning and teaching, the fact of defining culture is not neutral since all the contracted definitions are derived from studies which involve disciplines such as history, ethnography, sociology, sociolinguistics, literature and cultural studies, among others. Accordingly, culture is viewed as a complex aspect both theoretically and methodologically (Berry, 2009) and there exist few reliable models to facilitate its description.

Many anthropologists such as Hugh Frederic, Bartlett and Evans-Pritchard attributed various meanings to the term ‘culture’. During the 19th and the 20th centuries, some German philosophers as Richter reflected on the difference that lies between culture and civilisation. In this light, Richter assimilates the term ‘culture’, as being an aspect which naturalises distinction between the body and the mind, to the concrete and abstract of the world. As a result, he concludes this comparison as being “*the division of work between classes and social groups that engage in one or another dimension*” (Canclini, 2006: 31). To put it differently, this vision of culture is mainly intricate; it is essentially regarded with a philosophical point of view. Consequently, it might be proven to be inadequate when facing the other world views that strive to integrate the mind and the body.

Among other meanings that contribute to the everyday use, Stern (1992) emphasises the cognitive aspect of teaching. Thus, he claims that the fact of recognising the characteristics as well as the differences of the relationship between the learner’s own culture and the target one influences the aims of culture teaching. This influence is, then, manifested through the learning objectives, the learners’ intellectual curiosity, and the empathy towards the taught texts.

According to Bourdieu’s social-semiotic point of view about the distinction between culture and society, “*Culture embraces all social processes of production, circulation and consumption of signification in social life*” (Canclini, 2005: 34). In fact, this view of culture can be explained as an object that can be changed through social beliefs and customs and how the relationship with another society and other objects renders us intercultural human beings. This perspective emphasises the intercultural

dimension that is significant for this thesis as well as the notion of identity that I have already explored at the beginning. In this case, the notion of identity is considered as social identifications that are the result of both individual and social factors.

By relying on this point of view, culture can encompass the way in which people conceive their lives and give importance to human life experiences by selecting and organising the culture that is always present in the human behaviour. In this path, Geertz (1974) views culture as a set of social behaviour such as habits, customs, uses and traditions in the classic meaning. The mechanisms of control are necessary in the realisation of plans, rules and instructions in order to organise their behaviour. This is simply because the human nature is tightly related to culture.

Actually, these differences are culturally bound practices for the observers. In this light, as Genetsch (2007) claimed, if it is borne out that identity is not a necessary element, it has also to be referred to different aspects. The difference is not in terms of quality or an objective in the social relation, but rather the definition of such a relation. Therefore, identifying an individual as being different depends on his/her sociocultural interpretation of the text. This is related to the explanation about how the difference lies in prejudice that will be presented with more details later.

The link that relates key vocabulary and culture is an end in itself (Kramsch, 2007). In that, it is important to say at this stage that this link comprises two levels of analysis since there are key words which carry meanings that are related to the society, as Byram (2008) claims: “*The acquisition of these words and their connotations is not simply a cognitive process but one which can threaten the affective attachment to the world one knows*” (ibid: 136). Accordingly, the importance of vocabulary in the conception, storing, remembering and comprehension of information is significant in reading (Clarke et al, 1984).

As a result, some models have been designed to investigate, analyse and describe EFL reader’s processes of cultural understanding in a specific context. Such models used in a cultural understanding are based on the notion of comprehension that comprises levels of understanding rather than a recall of textual content. Hence, they

mainly focus on the cultural understanding as a process in terms of cultural familiarity and unfamiliarity within a particular conception of culture in reading literary texts.

Generally, there is a convention in the anthropological literature and EFL/ESL learning not to conceive culture as being objective, stable and homogeneous entities but as social construction. To put it otherwise, the result of this conception of learners in the context of a multifaceted reality represents gender, age, religion, education, etc. In this view, Rosaldo (1993) holds that culture can inevitably be viewed as being more flexible or a porous array of cross cultural matters which can be local or foreign. For him, these types of cultural intersections can be due to the differences in age, gender, class, race, etc. (ibid). In the same light, Genetsch (2007) associates the concept of “culture” as an essence in itself and identifies it as being based on negotiation since it is subject to change and potentially diverse. In this juncture, the present research embodies this conception in a way that it considers different aspects in analysing students’ interpretations of their reading of culturally foreign texts.

1.7 Tolerance Vis-à-vis Cultural Aspects in EFL

With regard to the external elements involved in the various definitions attributed to culture, one aspect that bounds this concept is that it seems to be simple with the influence of ‘*the tolerance of ideas*’. The latter does not denote the readers’ avoidance of prejudice. According to the readers’ points of view, the tendency towards certain important cultural aspects requires the ability for abstraction and analysis (Alred, Byram, and Fleüing, 2003). According to these researchers’ points of view, the notion of culture seems to be unfamiliar (Kramsch et al, 1996). In fact, there is a gap in the educators’ knowledge about foreign cultures. This knowledge is being intuitive and unsystematic (Byram, 2000a). By supposing that educators (teachers and researchers) follow the same process as the readers do in the understanding of a different culture, they also have automatically an inadequate basis for comprehension. Particularly, the inappropriate assignment for meanings to the behaviours, motivations, and beliefs of people of other cultures - as those depicted in the chosen texts for this study- is always subject to happen.

Another issue of the textual representations of a particular culture in this study is that the texts are selected under the previous basis. In that, though there are no ideal ways of reflecting cultures, representation may reflect as well as hide some social realities. Therefore, it is better not to rely on the reader's description of a foreign culture and also the way to learn from others' descriptions of our cultural identification (Rosaldo, 1993). On that account, this analytical study confirms that culture is multi-faceted and has to be studied from different angles. In this light, I tend to consider many different parameters in the selection of the short stories to be studied in this thesis such as the extent of familiarity with the students' culture and the vocabulary difficulty.

1.8 Literature and Emotional Intelligence

In reality, language becomes alive when it deals with emotion. Emotional Intelligence is a means that recalls consciousness of the learnt language; it enables the learner or the reader to comprehend, to clarify, and to communicate ideas. It is rooted from the notion of 'Social Intelligence' and was basically formulated by Thorndike in 1920. Moreover, Mayer and Salovey (1993) classify Emotional Intelligence as a type of social intelligence that evokes the capacity to guide the individuals' emotions. Particularly, this is for differentiating between them and exploiting the information to guide the individuals' thinking and actions. Since literature depicts different contexts within different cultures, it paves the way to emotional development and to the emotional growth. Yet, it is important to stress that the relationship that links literature to emotional intelligence leads students to become readers as they grow into maturity. In this light, as one key element to be investigated in this thesis is the learners' openness towards foreign culture through extensive reading. Chapter five will present more details about the results of the investigation conducted on master students in reading foreign literary texts this issue.

Hence, it can be said that emotional intelligence ameliorates language learning. In that, it stimulates the imagination, emotions, and creativity in the learner and aims to develop his/her better understanding of the reading process. Moreover, it helps teachers handle the teaching of language efficiently. According the conducted investigations and observations of learners, Algeria, for instance, witnesses many learners of English who are not able to transfer their formal knowledge to effective use. Therefore, this raises the

interests of many scholars on this issue, then, this necessitates the use of emotional intelligence in order to bridge the students' deficiencies in reading foreign literary texts.

1.9 Comprehending Cultural Dimensions in EFL Reading

In order to eliminate the prejudice with regard to other people's thinking and behaviours, there should be a focus on identifying the cultural aspects, attitudes of curiosity and openness (Byram, 1997). In fact, there should also exist a readiness to approach foreign and unfamiliar cultures, a value to the comprehension of the representation of a foreign culture in the context in which they are embodied (Shah, 2004). In this light, Atkinson (1999) argues that readers urge to categorise those cultural representations in ways that are different from theirs.

Therefore, with the objective of defining one's self and others in order to proceed, the participants should firstly categorise others by comparing and contrasting, i.e. as different from or similar to know, and socially predicted objects such as oneself (Byram, 2001). The two selected texts comprise various instances in which the selected population would be able to distinguish themselves in this way. In other words, the informants of this study are supposed to draw comparison between their own cultural acts and the target ones which are expressed in both short fictions. (See the analysis of each text in chapter 3 and 5)

It is important to stress two significant aspects in this study. Firstly, the fact that people tend to be prejudiced against other cultures, as Allport (1979) claims on this point. In other words, this is linked to the notion of cultural misunderstanding that I have already discussed in this study. As we will notice in reporting the findings of this investigation in chapter 5, the process of understanding becomes clear in the reading response of the participants. Secondly, the author values the importance of the emotional aspect in this process. To put it differently, the latter can be regarded as an optional element that supports data collection instrument in this study which allows readers to reflect their imaginative dimension of comprehension. Theoretically, as it is already mentioned, the notion of imagination and culture was highly valued by scholars in the field of language teaching (Kramsch, 2003).

Actually, this research work was designed to shed light on the various cultures and societies in relation to this study by making connections and comparisons between different cultures (Starkey, 2007). In this light, the chosen short stories used in the thesis paved the way for the observation of the literary aspects, languages and cultures that are present in them by contrasting and comparing with the learners' culture. Therefore, this relation with the notion of difference, through reading that was present to change of the perspective which would pave the way for the participants to get out of their cultural boundaries. At this stage, they adopt an intercultural view (Byram, 1984) in the writing of prior knowledge tasks, the reflection process and the reading comprehension response. This is the most wanted response, in the cultural perspective, and one that I have taken into account in the selection of the texts.

A relevant importance in EFL reading comprehension which is manifested through cultural and disciplinary studies has conducted by, for instance, Alderson & Urquhart (1988). In this light, research seems to present a strong support for the hypothesis which holds that prior knowledge, in terms of cultural familiarity for the interpretation of literary short stories, offers a fruitful source of data on which readers rely for text comprehension with reference to their prior cultural experiences (Steffenson et. al). Therefore, this doctoral research tries to test this hypothesis to see such impact.

In fact, a study conducted by Alderson and Urquhart (1988) confirmed that students who belong to a particular discipline would comprehend better in tests which are based on subjects that are already familiar to them and that they would also do with other texts. Consequently, the students under scrutiny seemed to start having a positive reaction towards the text in a familiar field of study. It should be stressed that, though this study is based on socio-cultural schemata and their relevance in the comprehension process, the research methods used, the results and the implications derived from it are equally feasible to disciplinary- specific studies. In this respect, the practical side of the present research work will investigate into this claim.

1.10 Literature and Cultural Understanding

EFL teaching has witnessed many contributions in different disciplines. As regards to our field of interest - teaching of literature - it is the cultural aspect which allows students to be open to other cultures in learning. In this fact, Carter and Long (1991) claim that:

Teaching literature within a cultural model enables students to understand and appreciate cultures and ideologies different from their own in time and space, and to come to perceive traditions of thought, feeling and artistic from within the heritage the literature of such cultures endows.

(ibid: 2).

Since literature is a vehicle of culture par excellence, it paves the way for the learners to better comprehend and appreciate cultures that are different from their own. In this light, McRae (1991) suggests that the judgments to the student's cultural assumptions may be brought into question in the target language learning context and render the learner more aware of the evaluation, the recognition, acceptance and rejection of aspects of the foreign society. Therefore, English is considered as a global language which provides literary texts written by authors from different cultures, which reflect '*rich and fascinating*' diversities (Lazar, 1993).

In contrast to the position that literature, as being culturally bound; it is either complex or remote from the learner's experiences for regular use. In fact, Kramsch(1993) claims that culture is a crucial element in language teaching since the latter is regarded as a social practice. In reality, literature represents culture and presents culturally authentic texts. On the one hand, Collier and Slater (1987) consider literature as an origin of cultural enrichment. On the other, Lazar(1993) proposes to encourage the learners to deal with any description critically so that the ideological assumptions of the texts cannot be easily accepted and supported. She rather assumed that they are, instead, questioned, assessed, and rejected if it is required to be so.

From the perspective of Carter (1987), he considers that '*words contain and conceal ideology*'; this view is close to Halliday's (1978) perspective on language as social semiotic. As evidence to this social view, Kress (1988) argues that texts are

always social-bound; it is this characteristic which leads to be dynamic. Hence, he refers to this as a style of language. He, then, asserts that it is the dynamicity of the texts or styles of the language as being inevitably part of social life as it mentioned in Birch and O'Toole (1988).

1.11 The impact of Cultural Background Knowledge in EFL Reading Comprehension

With regard to the discussion of difference and prejudice, this thesis is mainly related to the notion of '*schema theory*' (Yarlas & Gelman, 1998) which holds that new knowledge must be related to the already existing one. In this light, this leads to improving schemata by adapting detailed prior knowledge to the new knowledge which makes readers change or ameliorate their thoughts. In fact, the significance of '*schema theory*' is mainly linked to the comprehension that can be supported by the content schemata that are present in the text. However, it is very important to stress the intricate relationship between schema theory and the cultural dimension of comprehension, not for the simple reason that schemata are concealed and culturally derived structures, but also for the reason that readers regularly involve their reading habits, behaviours, willingness and performance to textual and socio-cultural surroundings (Sarroub, 2002).

In this respect, Sarroub (2002) initiates the notion of '*in between*', with regard to different world contexts, denotes the fact of relating two different cultures. To put it otherwise, in order to value the context and to make sense of written texts, people who belong to a particular culture rely on different resources, experiences, knowledge of discourses. For instance, the case of Arab Muslim students who study in American schools; here, they adopt the notion of '*in between*' since they participate in an institution that is controlled by American who represent the larger group. Particularly, the fact of being in-between multiple resources, knowledge and discourses has an impact on one's socio-cultural practices, among them the learner's confrontation with reading.

In a similar vein, Alred and Byram (2002) claim that "... , *it is not that one set of beliefs and schemata are held side by others but that new beliefs and schemata are held side with existing ones, the individual being ready to operate with whichever is relevant*

in a given context". This claim denotes that the reader's prior existing knowledge is taken into account in striving for meaning. According to Sarroub's (2002) interpretation, readers are in-between different contextual worlds and shift interpretation or understandings according to their needs.

With regard to the socio-cultural aspect of reading, this study aims to consider the social and cultural parameters of schemata. These parameters are not an end to themselves. In other words, they do not limit the reading process to the individuals' minds but rather focus on interrelation between schemata, learners' mental processes and the external world. Historically speaking, as will be explained in the next chapter, these parameters are related to schemata in the studies conducted by Plato, Aristotle, and Kant in philosophy and Bartlett and Piaget in psychology (McVee, Dunsmore and Gavelek, 2005).

It is significant to stress, from the historical overview (see chapter 2), that the social and cultural aspects play an important role in the notion of memory schema (Rice, 1980). In that, the hidden message, here, is that "*schemas were necessary to explain the constitutive role of culturally organised experience in individual sense making*" (McVee, Dunsmore and Gavelek, 2005). In this light, this thesis will pave the way for checking the functioning of the "marriage schema" in *The Boarding House* and *The Lottery* schema as indicators of how prior knowledge with these two literary texts holds more data about EFL reading in relation to this specific sociocultural context (Algerian University students).

Accordingly, the sociocultural views of schemata are originated from the works of Kant, Piaget and Bartlett in the 1970s. They are fundamentally due to early cognitive scientists' researches that were conducted by relying on artificial intelligence (Schank & Abelson, 1977). By relying on such points of view, this study takes into account the sociocultural dimension that is manifested in a class based research. In other words, regarding the nature of this research study which conceptualises reading as being social and a contextualised practice, the application of schema theory from a sociocultural view (McVee, Dunsmore and Gavelek, 2005) emphasises reviews both their nature and use of schemata.

Furthermore, they claim that schemas were, primarily, conceived as being related reading as head categories. They were after dissociated from materiality to be connected to cultural contexts and processes (ibid). In that, they also state: *'If we think of schema as embodied and not just in the head, then it becomes clear that patterns of enactment, ways of engaging the world, both shape our interpretation engaging the world, both shape our interpretation of cultural activity and are shaped by cultural activity.'* (ibid: 546). Thus, this research study highlights the sociocultural aspect of schema as a model of investigation conducted in a classroom- based setting with specific tasks and materials (the selected texts and the data collection instruments). Particularly, they are considered as elements which operate as cultural mediators of this specific group of students with such tasks and materials. Therefore, the aim, at this stage, is to identify the features' targets of EFL reading in this specific social cultural context by having a *sense of the classroom* (Canagarajah, 1995) and by focusing simultaneously on the learners' thinking or comprehension.

The following chapter provides a detailed analysis of the contention that meaning is the core of schema theory. In fact, a fundamental claim of schematic approaches to language comprehension is that texts do not carry meaning in themselves. To put it otherwise, a text rather guides the readers in achieving or constructing the intended meaning from the previously acquired knowledge. Particularly, the formal textual elements trigger the reader's related concepts, their prior relationships and their potential interrelationships. Hence, the aim of schema theory is to highlight the link between the reader and the text, the way readers' knowledge contributes and shapes the information on the text, and how that knowledge must be structured to facilitate the understanding of the text.

Moreover, the claim which defends that language, socially speaking, is controlled by assumptions of reciprocity holds that meaning is not the reader's role but the role of the mutual agreement to achieve a full comprehension of the text. As a conclusion, people are responsible for attributing meaning that exists in a given text; as Stevick (1976) claims *'meaning is what happens inside and between people'*. This implies that the reader or the learner derives meaning by relying on both his sociocultural knowledge and his own schemata.

1.12 Conclusion

This chapter presents the theoretical tenets that guide this research. The aim of this thesis is mainly sociocultural for both the learning and reading processes. In this conception of reading, I have mainly focused on the importance of meaning and the notion of understanding in the process of reading by discussing some aspects of identity. I have then shifted my interest to investigate the cultural dimension in EFL reading. Particularly, I have introduced an overview of reading and tackling briefly some cultural aspects related to this research study. This has included a discussion of different cultural perspectives, and its relevance in literature reading comprehension. This section ends up by shedding light on schema theory since it plays a significant role in the realisation of this study in a classroom-based research.

It is important to note that throughout this section I have shed light on the link between the rationale of this thesis and the design of the entire research study. Besides, I have stressed some properties of the significant relationships that link appropriately the data collection to their analysis. Finally, the chapter focuses on the congruence with ESL and EFL scholars by taking into account the learner and his/her social environment to analyse the reading comprehension of foreign texts. The latter portray reading literature in English as experienced or lived in the University of Mostaganem, which is an example for this case study. Such requirements necessitate evidence for this investigatory study and help to highlight the link between the Algerian and foreign cultural contexts. The previous theoretical background provided here has paved the way for the literature review that follows in the next one about the role of schema theory with reference to the cultural aspect in EFL reading.

Chapter II

The Relevance of Schema Theory in Reading Literary Texts

2. Introduction

The various views of comprehension led to multi-faceted definitions of it by the different disciplines that are related to. This chapter reviews the schema theory as it is relevant to this thesis. In this light, I begin by depicting the different theories and researches related to the reading comprehension process and narrowing the emphasis to schema theory. I, then, present a historical background of this theory which is relevant in framing the present study. Particularly, I stress studies which support the use of schema theory, perspectives which take into account both the cultural and the linguistic aspects, and the investigation of the background knowledge. After such explanation of the literature review, I demonstrate the underlying dichotomy product-process in the reading comprehension which is present in previous researches and offers an alternative view based on another vision of comprehension. Finally, I end up by stating distinguishing elements of this research study which conform the literature review of this chapter.

2.1 Exploring Schema Theory in EFL Reading

Reading comprehension in EFL context has been the research focus of different disciplines such as psychology, linguistics, applied linguistics, cultural studies and literary studies. The multiple disciplines imply the presence of different variables in foreign language reading comprehension processes. In this path, there are studies which investigate specific linguistic elements as cohesion in retrieving native and foreign texts (Steffensen, 1988), vocabulary (Cohen et al., 1988) and contextual sentence. In addition, others emphasise the miscues (Rigg, 1988); cognitive elements of reading which require processing information, language comprehension tasks and socio-linguistic elements - which are cognitively processed by particular societies. Furthermore, such misuses require other aspects which influence the decoding skills and vocabulary background as in EFL reading contexts. Accordingly, different studies are based on particular features of schemata as: Carrell & Eisterhold (1983); Robins and Mayer (1993) and Byram (2007, 2009).

Generally, this thesis is mainly related to schema theory and specifically based on cultural¹ and content schemata². In the next discussion, I try to explore define in details this theory. In fact, it is important to highlight that the present schema theories do describe only part of the textual information and other models are supposed to offer a full explanation of the human mind (Van der Veer, 2001).

2.2 An Overview of Schema Theory

Schemata refer to the stored abstract knowledge that embodies different concepts i.e. the memory (Anderson & Pearson, 1984). It has been named differently by different scholars; fame (Minsky, 1975), script (Schank and Abelson, 1977), plan (Schank, 1982) and macrostructure (Kintsch & Van Dijk, 1978). With regard to history, the concept of schema denotes the structural human knowledge that is represented in memory as stated in the philosophy of Plato, Aristotle and Kant, and the psychology of Bartlett and Piaget (McVee, Dunsmore & Govelek, 2005). Kant, Bartlett, and Piaget's views are paramount for this thesis since they do not only emphasise the mental process that operates in the human mind, but they also emphasise the sociocultural aspect of schemata.

Basing on Piaget's (1952) theory, he stresses the developmental cognitive capacities which portray the way people learn how to accommodate and assimilate new experiences to the already present schemata. Regarding Kant (1929), he identifies schemata as structural means which are related to one's mental structures with the external world.

¹ Cultural schemata refer to the role of cultural relationship that is required to comprehend the integrated meaning of the author's conception in nature; cultural schema aids a person to reformulate the story line through referring to more personally and culturally appropriate scripts (Offer, 1995 cited in Erten and Razi, 2009).

² Content Schemata refer to the background knowledge of content area of a text, or the subject a text talks about, such as knowledge about people, the world and culture (Brown, 2001 revised in Etern and Razi, 2009). This type of schemata can be divided into two distinct types: background knowledge and subject matter knowledge. The former refers to the knowledge that may or may not be relevant to the content of a particular text, and the latter is straight forwardly related to the text (Alderson, 2000 cited in Erten and Razi, 2009). Such type of schema is cultural- oriented, and since culture influences many aspects of life, it has certainly a considerable impact on all the elements of the learning process (Al- Issa, 2006).

As to Bartlett (1932), he uses the term ‘*pattern*’, as well as he sheds light on functional schemata³ since they are adopted by both the individual and the environment. In this light, Van der Veer (2001) explains Bartlett’s vision concerning the readers’ accommodation to succeed to comprehend culturally foreign stories. He holds that:

The young Bartlett’s main interest was to study how individuals and groups borrow, modify and adapt foreign materials. To this end, he studied, among other things, how people adopt stories from different cultures in a process of assimilation and accommodation.

(Van der Veer, 2001: 226).

With regard to this claim, Bartlett’s inspiration by anthropologists of his era led to the rise of: “*the concept of a memory schema has a strong or cultural component very early in its history*” (Rice, 1980: 153). Therefore, the idea beyond this view implies that prior acquired knowledge is important in highlighting the role of individual cultural experiences in the attribution meaning while reading.

Accordingly, in the light of cognitive anthropology, Rice claims that schema theory is two folds: structural and processing aspects of knowledge, it functions in perception, memory, and recall. She identifies it as a theory of comprehension process (Rice, 1980). In addition, she sets up three different types in this process: universal; as Piaget’s cognitive schemata, idiosyncratic; it varies in accordance to the personal experiences, and culturally-driven schemata, which are related to what anthropologists classify as “world view”. In this thesis, the focus is mainly on two points, as we will shed light on: the process in contrast to the product of comprehension, and the concept of process with regard to the availability and unavailability of schemata.

From the perspectives of Brown, et. al. (1985), the main concept of coherence does not exist only in the language, but rather in individuals. Particularly, the individuals are responsible for assigning meaning in accordance to what they read and hear. In other words, they seek to find an interpretation which corresponds to their prior experiences of

³ Functional Schemata or textual ones relate the organisational forms and rhetorical structures of written texts (Jun, Xioa and Wei- hua, 2007). They consist of knowledge of different types of texts organisation, language formation, vocabulary, sentence structure and level of formality (Jun et al.2007).

the way the world is. In fact, human capacity to generate meaning from the read text represents perhaps a small portion of the whole human capacities to derive meaning from the perceived concepts or the lived experiences in the world.

According to Cook (1989), the mental capacity is stimulated either by textual elements or by the context which activates the prior knowledge. In this light, he argues that it is not obligatory to follow particular stages in the process of reading comprehension. It is rather preferable to shed light instead on some automatic cognitive responses which depend on external factors. Thus, this claim implies that schemata can be activated in one of the two following cases. Firstly, new external data can be mentally perceived in relation to already known and existing data that is stored in memory through remembering. Therefore, new knowledge is built by depending on the prior schemata which can be added or developed. Secondly, new knowledge can be constructed by relying on new mental processes. In this case, the absence of already existing knowledge, a new one contributes in building new schemata.

Furthermore, Floyd and Carrell (1987) hold that the teacher is supposed to equip his/her students with relevant schemata which s/he needs, and s/he is also supposed to teach them the ways of relating their prior knowledge with the new one. For this reason, building bridges between learners' prior knowledge and new one is significant for the comprehension of a given text. Many strategies and approaches have been presented for the sake of facilitating the reading comprehension through stimulating one's background knowledge.

With regard to Plastina (1997), both cases: process and product of reading are considered as constructing parts of knowledge in order to obtain a meaningful block of knowledge. Furthermore, this process requires the main characteristics of schemata which are: flexibility and creativity. To put it otherwise, schemata are flexible in the sense that they follow a circular processing which witnesses changes, the information stored in the mind are retrieved or used when necessary depending on one's motivation. In addition, they are creative in the sense that they may be used to reflect different types of experiences and knowledge appropriately; i.e. it is retrieved in accordance to the need of reading.

As an overview to this study, McVee, Dunsmore and Gavelek (2005) claim that the sociocultural aspects of schemata as argued by Kant, Piaget and Bartlett are concepts that overpass the readers' capacities and include the social and cultural aspects which are lost in recent views of schema as it is claimed in early cognitive psychology. Previously, cognitivists used artificial intelligence in their research on knowledge construction; they relied on computers (Schank & Abelson, 1977). In addition, other researchers explored the research field of reading during the late 1970s and 1980s by contributing in the development of cognitive aspect of schema theory in reading investigation (Rumelhart, 1980). The fact of neglecting the sociocultural dimension and stressing the cognitive aspect in the schemata that dominated the area of research at that time does not imply that the sociocultural features were not being investigated.

In fact, Steffenson, Joag-Dev and Anderson (1979), among the different scholars, explored the impact of knowledge and cultural backgrounds by highlighting the strength of the social and the cultural aspects in reading comprehension. Yet, McVee, Dunsmore and Gavelek (2005) claim, in such investigations, cultural variables were considered as being separated in reading and not as being internal elements of schemata. In the light of these views, I will consider many of these scholars' ideas to discuss the next stage of this thesis.

The impact of schema theory on reading is potentially remarkable, by the mid 1980s, it became the tipping stone of reading models, experimental studies on reading, and related educational issues (Pearson & Stephens, 1994). Schema theory neglected the models that are based on bottom-up methods of reading and shed light on the reader's role as well as his/her background knowledge in setting up meaning during the comprehension process. Its permanent and strong presence during the early 1990s to advocate the sociocultural theories (Vygotsky, 1978) limits literacy studies by the end of 1990s. In fact, many investigations have witnessed the same potential influence as the early cognitive researchers. Such evidence implies a drop in using the term "schema" or "schema theory" in academic journals (Gaffney & Anderson, 2000), and increasingly replaced by both researchers as topic knowledge, content knowledge, background knowledge and previous knowledge. In spite of this evidence, McVee, Dunsmore and Gavelek (2005) view the original aspect of schema theory in current textbooks that are designed for teachers and educators as evidence for its impact on this discipline.

In fact, there are substantial theories, in this light, that have been developed with a slight impact on the educational discipline. However, these theories have not been considered as being serious in spite of the fact that each one of these can represent a potential result of empirical research in their favour. As a consequence, a relevant example for this thesis is Dual Coding Theory that is proposed by Sadoski & Paivio (2001). It focuses on cognition such as Schema Theory which is supposed to take into account the learners' imagery aspect in the comprehension process. In spite of this fact, Sadoski, Paivio and Goetz (1991: 472) claim that though the origins of schema theory are approximately close to those of Dual Coding Theory, the latter is like imagery which has been marginalised by many reading researchers. In my perspective, I will also put aside this latter theory in supporting the data collection of this research since thus neglected part of the student's understanding, the imagery aspect, is unnecessary or not required for the participants' reading of literary texts of this study (a detailed analysis is provided in chapter 3, 4 and 5).

2.3 The Techniques Used in the Application of Schema Theory in Reading Texts in EFL Context

According to Chia (2001), some learners announce that students do not face problems in understanding neither words nor sentence structures of a passage, but rather they are not able to reach an adequate interpretation of a text. Indeed, the majority of university students depend too much on bottom-up processing of single words as well as analysing sentence structures. But, they do not use top-down processing for the whole text analysis. This may be due to a lack of relevant instructions and practice in applying the reading strategies. Consequently, it is recognised that in spite of the fact of providing learners with pre-reading activities such as vocabulary definition and some structure explanations, tends to be questionable.

Ringler and Weber (1984) dub pre-reading activities enabling or helpful activities, since they equip the reader with necessary schemata to organise, and facilitate their comprehension of the reading material. Particularly, these experiences require understanding the aims of reading and constructing a knowledge that is important for dealing with and content as the structure of the material. They hold that pre-reading activities evoke prior knowledge, building new knowledge, and focus attention.

2.3.1 The Relevance of Pre-Reading Tasks Technique

Pre-reading activities try to emphasise mainly the preparation of the reader for facing linguistic obstacles in reading the text. In fact, the focus has been shed on cultural or ideational difficulties. In spite of the fact that pre-reading tasks may not only bridge the gap in the target language in terms of linguistic and socio-cultural deficiencies, they may also recall the reader of what s/he is supposed to do. In fact, the reader already knows and thinks since s/he is aware that it is important to activate existing schematic knowledge.

The Experience-Text-Relationship (ETR) method of Au (1979) focuses on the students' expression of their own experiences of knowledge about the topic prior to reading. After the students have appropriately expressed their schemata, the light then is shed on the text in the class. At this time, the teacher asks the learner to read short passages of the text and then checks his/her understanding of the content. The teacher, then, has to take into account all the textual parameters that can lead to misunderstandings and be ready to face any difficulty that the learner may encounter.

Langer's (1981) pre-reading plan is a three-step instructional procedure, that Au's ETR method uses a discussion-based activity in the assessment stage. To put differently, it allows both the teacher and the student to identify the amount of data that is required and the appropriate vocabulary to be taught or emphasised in order to facilitate the reading comprehension of the text.

The pre-reading procedure requires the teacher to introduce key words, concepts or pictures to activate a discussion. Thus, the learners say anything that comes to their minds, the collected information are, then, recorded on the board, and the participants are ready to make associations. By asking the learners questions such as, "What made you think of...?" they become conscious about the complexity of the associations. As mentioned in Au's ETR method (*ibid*), the learners have the chance to listen to other interpretations and create an interactive discussion with other students.

In addition, the interactive process also paves the way for students to accept, rejects or changes their own primary associations and to include them into a more accurate vision of the target concept. As a final step, the knowledge should be

reformulated; it allows the learners to modify or to change any of their associations that may have happened during the discussion stage. Therefore, the aim behind helping students to relate their background knowledge with concepts from the text is to draw appropriate suppositions about the language and the content of the passage.

Consequently, Auerbach and Paxton (1997) suggest that the following pre-reading strategies in which some can be considered as relevant elements for the application of schema-theory that are based on pre-reading tasks and more important in this study.

- To access prior knowledge
- To write about one's experience that is related to the topic
- To ask questions in relation to the title
- To use a semantic planning
- To make deductions based on previewing
- To identify the text structure
- To skim the text to have a general idea
- To read the introduction and the conclusion
- To summarise the given discourse by relying on previewing

2.3.2 The Previewing Technique

It has been held by Swaffar et al (1991) that previewing strategies allows learners to draw hypotheses about the text. By taking into account the contextual elements such as titles, headings, pictures, learners are encouraged to make deductions before reading. Moreover, Swaffar (ibid) regards that it is relevant to identify text genre: article, poems, nonfiction, short stories, as being important preview activities. In the case of this thesis, the focus is on short stories as a text genre. In this light, she proposes that applying such types of analysis allow learners to identify the possible rhetorical grammar, stylistic elements and possible limitations on the evolution of thoughts.

To what regards Chia (2001), the objective behind previewing lies in the help of the reader to infer or to construct some hypotheses about the text definition. Hence, to activate relevant top-down processing for reading comprehension. Different motives in a text, such as the title, pictures, graphs, explanations, or subtitles, are often related to the author's thought and content. Thus, by relying on one of these, the learners can predict

the content of a given text. In order for the learner to make deductions, s/he clearly needs more assistance and guide. The following questions can help him/her in such process:

1. Asking students to read the title of a given discourse. (Do they know anything about this subject?)
2. Asking students to read the first few paragraphs, which are considered as an introduction for the main topic of the text. Are they able to determine the main themes of the text?
3. Then, asking them to read the first sentences of each paragraph; i.e. the topic sentence that represents the general idea of the paragraph. Can they identify the major discussed points of the text?
4. Finally, reading the last paragraph which, generally, implies the author's own conclusion. Encouraging the learners to discuss how the author arranges the data in his presentation of his point of view.

2.3.3 The Questioning Technique

There are other types of pre-reading activities which merely comprise questions that the reader needs to generate answers from the text. Generally, such kind of question preceded the text and was made to check the comprehension, however in actual teaching questions usually follow the text and operate as investigative activities.

Questioning can be considered as another representation of top-down activity processing. In other words, questions can be inferred by either the teacher or the student and has to be applied during the pre-reading phase rather than during the post-reading one. Reutzel (1985) has suggested the Reconciled Reading course to facilitate the design of pre-reading questions. Teachers who use such a method in designing reading questions rely on textbook comprehension questions, in the teachers' manuals or in the syllabi. The issue drawn from this point lies in the fact that not all the questions meant for pre-reading tasks can be used as such.

In this light, in order to help learners to form text-based questions before reading a particular text, Williams (1987) suggests an approach of reading which consists of three stages. According to him, there are three stages which should be included in reading that

are: pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading by emphasising the pre-reading stage. Particularly, this approach introduces, first, the main topic of the text to be read by the students. Once the topic is introduced, the learners are, then, supposed to work collaboratively to end up with an appropriate reading interpretation.

Moreover, he claims that every member of the group should participate actively, so that no one is neglected. Then, the teacher asks the representative of each group to write the main items from their lists on the board for the sake of sharing the main relevant thoughts with all the learners. Thus, it is through the students' collaboration to perform these procedures that reading comprehension can happen effectively.

2.3.4 The Semantic Planning Technique

Many teaching methods, according to Chia (2001), have been evolved in order to activate the learner's background knowledge for top-down processing to facilitate reading comprehension. Many of them have been experienced and said to be effective, but others have not. Yet, in spite of the widespread use of pre-reading vocabulary activities, they do not lead to an effective reading comprehension (Hudson, 1982). In fact, Johnson (1982) claims that vocabulary research may result in word-by-word, i.e. this implies a bottom-up approach which depends on comprehension. However, instructing vocabulary directly does not imply teaching particular terms; rather, it implies teaching learners the strategies to enhance their vocabulary.

Moreover, it is claimed that the vocabulary is mainly derived from the context, but the understanding from the context methods is relevant for acquiring learning skills rather than teaching vocabulary directly (Oxford and Scarcella, 1994). Accordingly, Williams (1987) proposes that pre-reading vocabulary may need the terms to be taught in semantic and topic-related elements to enhance both the background knowledge and word meaning. Zimmerman (1997), on his part, holds that teaching vocabulary directly by emphasising the semantic planning as a learning technique is more relevant than vocabulary activities that are based on teaching terms rather than strategies of acquiring new words. With regard to these claims, I do agree with such scholars, it would more efficient to familiarise the students with the vocabulary items that are related to the text.

However, I think that doing so can render the students teacher-dependent. For instance, in the case of the informants of the present thesis, they are master students of literature who are supposed to depend on themselves when reading. The teacher is presumed to act only as a guide in his/her class.

For his part, Wallace (1992) claims that the most useful type of pre-reading tasks is 'Brainstorming'. This may result in providing the learners with key words or key concepts. The learners, after that, are supposed to use all the words and concepts they already know with the key terms introduced by the teacher. Brainstorming is a beneficial technique in the classroom teaching. It does not require the teacher's preparation, but creates a certain freedom for the learners to use their own background knowledge and points of view to reflect on a specific topic and it can also call for all the students' participation. There is no students' fear to contribute to the framework, any intervention is accepted.

For instance, such types of alliances may be dubbed by the key term marriage: 'husband', 'wedding', 'bride', 'wife', 'family', etc. These propositions refer to various classifications and levels of generalisation. But, the first alliance can be categorised either by the teacher or the learner, and other interferences by the classroom learners to expend the prior knowledge. Consequently, such a kind of activity is similar to what is called 'semantic planning' since it aims at dealing with words which are related to the topic of the text to be read. As for the texts chosen in for this exploratory study, 'The Boarding House' which deals with marriage, the informants, then, are asked to mention all the words which are related to the main topic of this fiction.

2.4 The Relevance of Descriptive Texts for the Development of Sociocultural Competence

According to Cook (1994), for one to reach a full understanding of a particular culture, it is important to adapt her/his prior knowledge. Using the target culture is not enough for realising this adaptation (Roberts, 1998), and classroom teaching has proven to help pragmatic development (Kasper and Rose, 2001). The present part will hold that descriptive material is, inevitably, schema- challenging, and that well-selected representational texts are suitable for the task of enhancing sociocultural schematic knowledge.

2.4.1 Descriptive Materials of Schema Theory in EFL

Literary or descriptive texts need more attentive processing and referential texts (McRae, 1991). A computer, for instance, can read and process a particular text's information that are involved, e.g. the appropriate time to be on work or the rules for playing chess. However, computers are unable to process data which are metaphorically-based, and the current focus of schema theory is partially on the fact that computers' inability is due to lack of schematic knowledge as it is mentioned in Handford (2002). Therefore, investigations which are based on Artificial Intelligence have, thus, been interested in meaning construction by relying on textual elements and the way background knowledge can be relevant for interpreting the text (Cook, 1994). In this light, learners may also face comprehension problems that are related to how to retrieve appropriate background knowledge that concerns a particular topic or meaning interpretation. Since they need appropriate schematic knowledge to be used in the target language, the provided textual knowledge is not well elaborated to facilitate his/her understanding (Widdowson, 1990).

The key question is, then, can representational texts help develop schematic knowledge? According to Cook (1994: 10), the answer is yes: literary texts are... representative of a type of text which may perform the important function of breaking down existing schemata, reorganising them, and building new ones... Schemata play a well-documented role in processing text, but certain texts may also play a role in building and adjusting schemata.

(Dornyei and Cziser, 1998) as mentioned in Handford (2002)

Discourse is said to have the ability to support or readjust the prior knowledge (Cook, 1994), and the latter is the focus of interest in this study. In other words, background knowledge readjustment types of text may diverge from one's understanding that exists in her/his existing schemata. Furthermore, the clichés we hold are not absolute; they imply either the formation of new schemata, or those that are still being modified to include new data. The way the sociocultural knowledge is related to the previous processes will be discussed in the following section.

2.4.2 The Relation between Descriptive Materials and Sociocultural Schemata

In analysing the sociocultural schemata components, Celce-Murcia et al (1995) and Widdowson (1990) agree that the cultural parameters of their model are appropriate to the schematic knowledge. Therefore, it is assumed that background knowledge of the target society, the variability among the dialect and cross-cultural awareness could be regarded as a sociocultural competence constructing a successful language student's knowledge. Accordingly, it could be, then, deduced that the other sociocultural elements are also included in our learners' schematic knowledge, for example the way touching can imply many messages and the society's religion can influence one's behaviour and then, the interpretation.

In case all these parameters are accepted, part of the learners' background knowledge about language and books are not relevant for providing the necessary knowledge, and then another kind of material is required. To put it otherwise, no matter the type of material is used, the main objective lies in the fact that learners can note the way such factors take place in different cultures and countries (Bardovi-Harlig and Dornyei, 1998), and the way they influence communication. Therefore, these representational texts are supposed to develop knowledge for holding both sociocultural aspects and cognitive skills that aim to comprehend and interact with the texts. In fact, both reasons seem to be complementary, i.e. the first one causes the second.

The cognitive aspect requires different processing operations such as observing, interpreting, analysing, inferring and reacting. According to Widdowson (1983), it is claimed that it is via communication that we deduce meaning, and literature can help students to learn and use language appropriately. For example, he claims that "*in drama and in normal conversation the meaning is created by the interaction. It's not there in the language*" (ibid: 34). Indeed, learning literature plays an important role in enhancing the students' communication by inciting them to interpret meaning (ibid). The aim behind reading representational texts⁴ that Widdowson (2004, 2007) introduced is to derive

⁴ Representational texts: the fact of depicting the textual discourse (Widdowson, 2004, 2007). Hasan (1996) classifies such type of meaning as 'the second- level' of meaning and refers to it as 'symbolic articulation'. The latter, according to Widdowson 's representational meaning, describes what happens within literary

meaning through the process of interpreting one's requirements, comprehending and depicting the read text as mentioned in DeCoursey (2012). In the same light, McCarthy (1996) claims, concerning the same process, that deconstruction takes place through the learner's experiences first, then his analyses and understanding of a particular text. It is due to pragmatic experiences with a text that learners can understand some literary aspects as tension, conflict and irony.

With regard to Cook (1998), curricular and textbooks lack cultural aspects, whereas representational texts are considered as evidence of authentic language which is '*a site in which beliefs, values and points of view are produced, encoded and contested*' (Carter and McCarthy, 1994: 155). This is applicable for literature, since the selection of textual examples to be taught with regard to the learners' sociocultural background may lead to better comprehension of the latter (Cook, 1998). In fact, it is important to stress that not all representational texts are accessible in pedagogical terms.

2.5 The Relevance Cultural Schemata in EFL Reading Comprehension

With regard to the present research study, a study that focuses on the sociocultural parameter which is context based, it would be relevant to account for the reformulation and the reuse of schema theory by Mc Vee, Dunsmore and Gavelek (2005). The scholars adopt the original version of sociocultural parameter of schemata in the primary views of the concept by all of Kant, Bartlett and Piaget to claim that the sociocultural aspect of reading requires a close attention to schema. It is important to posit that they argue that background knowledge, as traditionally conceived vis-à-vis reading, was limited in itself. Then, this vision has known an evolution since it has included the consideration of the cultural context.

Moreover, they also point out that: "*If we think of schema as embodied and not just in the head, then it becomes clear that patterns of enactment, ways of engaging the world, both shape our interpretation of cultural activity and are shaped by cultural activity*" (ibid). Here, they state that the sociocultural aspects contribute in shaping the interpretation of the learners' reading comprehension of foreign texts. Accordingly, the period of 70s and 80s witnessed the most experimental researches conducted by cognitive

texts discourse and exchange from the text/ writer to the reader. In other words, it refers to the reader's understanding and interpretation larger issues that go beyond of the authentic text itself.

scholars, where both the cultural and the social parameters of the external world were completely dissociated from them. In spite of this, there were some schema researchers who took into consideration the sociocultural parameters; the cultural aspect becomes a mentally represented variable that is investigated in laboratories and not as an independent variable.

Therefore, the studies which comprise such elements present in a confined description of culture, in contradiction with the different visions that rose in the 80s from anthropological, cultural and educational disciplines (McVee, Dunsmore and Gavelek (2005). In fact, this vision of culture shows that these investigations are culturally-bound to one's "integrated cultural identities" (Maloof, Runbin, and Neville Miller, 2006), which refer to ethnical and religious values without taking into account educational, gender, social class, and cultural backgrounds among many other factors.

Regarding the previous view, many theorists stressed the effectiveness and the flexibility of schemata. Among them are Van Hell, Bosman, Wiggers and Stoit (2003), they point out that:

Cultural schemata tend to be conceived of static entities, encapsulating cultural background knowledge (...) we propose that cultural background knowledge is not a static entity shared in memory. Rather, we propose that cultural background knowledge reflects a dynamic and flexible constellation of concepts retrieved from memory, which is sensitive to cultural variations.....

(ibid: 298)

This shows that these scholars tend to simplify the concept of culture as I have already mentioned it. Furthermore, they hold that the cultural aspect is an independent variable in one's social identifications like religion.

Other researchers, such as Sharifian (2006) and Malcom & Sharifian (2002), who have based their research on anthropological disciplines, liken schemata to the previous claim made by McVee, Dunsmore and Gavelek (2005). In this light, they hold that 'cultural schema theory is a variation of schema theory that regards schemas as largely dwelling in cultural experience' (Sharifian, Rocheconste and Malcom, 2004). In other words, they posit that cultural schema theory includes mainly cultural experiences. In the

same vein, Palmer (1996) uses this theory in a cultural context by proposing that “*it is likely that all native knowledge of language and culture belongs to cultural schemas and the living of culture and the speaking of language consist of schemas in action*”. These claims imply that personal experiences and prior cultural knowledge are, consequently, applied in understanding future interactions.

However, it is important to state that Bartlett is not recognised as the one who first started considering the sociocultural parameters to future schema discussions, though he is recognised as the founder of schema theory. In other words, he initiated this process of the relevance of prior knowledge in without formulating this theory of schemata.

As for Sharifian, Rocheouste and Malcom (2004), they investigated Aboriginal as well as non-aboriginal educators’ cultural schemata in understanding oral passages made by Australian children. The oral passages were extracted from aboriginal English at Edith Cowan University. In this study, participants made two oral recalls, where everything was recorded, of each one of the eight passages just after listening. At the end, participators were supposed to read a transcript and to expose their comments on the passages for checking their recall ability. In this light, research in this issue lacks support and evidence, a fact that pushes me to use literary texts to check the students’ recall and comprehension after reading.

The educators’ recall operations were investigated as idea units or elements retrieved from the mind to analyse content schemata and the adopted strategies that take place during these operations (ibid). Thus, scholars ended up with the fact that there are different levels of familiarity with the cultural background knowledge in oral passages as they have noticed. As claimed by many scholars, this is referred to as the reader’s behaviour, and it can be graded as follows: effective recall, partial recall, addition and exclusion.

The analysis adopted in Sharifian (2001) of the aboriginal people using traditionally English words to their culturally influenced schemas to them. To put it otherwise, this procedure was exemplified with the word *family* beforehand. Thus, in this case, cultural schema theory provides and describes the relationship between culture, cognition, and language of a particular society. Yet, even though his analysis seems to be affective, it lacks schema theory dimensions (M. Porto, 2013). For instance, cultural

background knowledge aspects are vaguely depicted and not well presented and identified. Sharifian's (2003) model of cultural conceptualisations assumes that cultural background knowledge is not equally distributed. In addition, the way schema theory aspects are identified is not well explained.

Among the various researchers on the cultural aspect and schema theory is Abu-Rabia (1998). Furthermore, he studied Arab students' behaviours in Israel and their reading comprehension of texts derived from both Arab and Jewish cultures. There were seventy four Arab students from Israel aged between fourteen and fifteen, their second language was Hebrew. They were asked to respond to MCQ in Arabic (L1) about texts from the two cultures, done by writers from each culture. In addition, they were asked to answer questionnaire that are meant to check their behaviours in learning Hebrew. Yet, it is important to stress that Arabic was the language used at home as well as at school. The local Arabic educators translated Arab texts into Hebrew and vice versa. Thus, learners were under the following cases: Arab stories in Arabic, Arab stories in Hebrew, Jewish stories in Hebrew, and Jewish stories in Arabic. As a consequence, students tended to be in the sense that showed a positive behaviour in reading comprehension tasks with stories which are part from the culture, regardless of the texts' language. Despite the fact that the research's structure was mainly cultural, it holds some translation problems. Yet in this study, I am not concerned with translation, it is considered as a vehicle that links culture to meaning interpretation.

Abu-Rabia (1996) explored the influence of cultural background knowledge on L2 and L3 readers of fifteen years old. The study participants were mainly classified into three groups: seventy four Israeli Arabs, with few learning Hebrew as L2 in Israel, eighty three Israeli Jews who learn Arabic as L3 where most of them were Israeli, and fifty Arab Canadian learners of English as L2 in Canada. The investigation required eighty cultural texts of the same length and difficulty. The students were asked to answer ten questions for each story, one each day in successive days. In this research, the Israeli readers in Israel read three Jewish stories both in Hebrew and in Arabic (translated), the Arab learners in Israel read three Arab stories in Arabic and in Hebrew (translated), and the Canadian Arab students in Canada read three Arab texts in Arabic and English (translated). Yet the translation, as it has been stressed, is irrelevant for this thesis.

As a result, Israeli circumstances are relevant for schema theory, i.e. the appropriate background knowledge paved the way to textual comprehension of both languages. In other words, students were less active towards texts which do not deal with their culture, in spite of the fact that both Israeli and Arabs co-existed for more than forty years. Foreign background knowledge carried in L1 did not provide an easy impact. Unlike the Arab- Israeli case, the Arab- Canadian students showed positive attitudes towards texts in English regardless of their background knowledge. This result has interpreted, as a consequence, multicultural system in Canada, a condition which favoured students' openness to learn about other cultures, though their period of stay in Canada is very short. To my perspective, Abu-Rabia's research highlights the influence of the socio-cultural parameter on the reading comprehension process. This finding is significant to my study where it is held, in the same way, that *marriage* ideology or perception is similar for both the Algerian and the Irish cultures in *The Boarding House* short story.

There exist other parameters that I consider as being effective for this research study with regard to this cultural model of analysis. On the one hand, the consideration of *image* and *emotion* background knowledge, two aspects which are taken into account while reading, is a view which opposes schema theory principles (Sadoski, Pavio, and Goetz, 1991). And on the other, cultural background knowledge is not a constant feature of one's mental representation but is instead shared by people of a particular community. Moreover, it is in continuous negotiations through time and generations, and is manifested in cultural realisations such as literary narration.

Hammadou (1991) explored the French and Italian languages' schemata in America. In order to investigate the link between background knowledge, understanding, and language mastery, newspaper articles were used. This research is relevant to this since it tries to describe degrees of familiarity of schemata which he described as follows: most, mid, and least. These most, mid and least degrees refer to the notion of presence and absence of knowledge. The students involved in this study argued their familiarity with the texts they have read and remembered. In other words, the investigator did not recognise beforehand which topic was more or less appropriate.

In fact, Hammadou's research study can be significant to this thesis in the reader's recall of textual elements and the familiarity with the topic. According to this research finding, the most skilful readers showed positive behaviour towards textual content against less skilful ones, though there was no equality between familiar and unfamiliar texts. The latter affirms my hypothesis on the linguistic competence, yet this does not have a great potential to this study since the population consists of Master1 English University students who are supposed to be advanced or proficient learners. She also stressed the fact of calling the reader's schemata according to his familiarity with the topic of the text, i.e. the capacity to recognise the topic of the text with regard to his background knowledge. In her investigation, she mentioned the readers' familiarity with AIDS as being high, yet she never considers it in the reading process. To summarise, I do share Hammadou's opinion on many restrictions concerning the reading process research. Her experiment is relevant to my thesis, the choice of the two short stories are examples of the level of familiarity.

One perspective where it may be possible to consider the cultural aspect as part of the background knowledge is McVee, Dunsmore and Gavelek's (2005). They suggest that schemata is presented through cultural tasks in different contexts to encourage studies conducted on specific settings such as classroom-based tasks, activities, and techniques as a cultural means of such interactions. In this regard, as will be explained later, is an effective evidence for realising this research study in this particular context regardless of its non generalisation to other contexts.

2.6 Investigating Reading Comprehension Process in Relation to Background Knowledge

Many studies have been conducted for the sake of investigating the relevance of schemata in reading comprehension in English as a foreign language. This involves taking into consideration the top-down and bottom-up models of reading and combines them into one unit.

Many assumptions have been raised on this issue. Adams and Collins (1977) hold that these processes have a simultaneous role at different levels of inquiry, they unified to put the separated elements of knowledge into a coherent unit. To put it otherwise, the relationship that lies between the content to be read and the already acquired knowledge

is of an importance to the process of comprehension. In this light, Beck (1981: 79) holds that:

“The notion that the meaning of a text is constructed as opposed to being extracted from the textual materials serves to point out that comprehension is an interactive process between previously acquired knowledge and the content of what is read”. (ibid: 79)

In respect to this issue, both the reader and the knowledge of the world are significant participants. Particularly, the reader participates positively through the text vis-a-vis the knowledge of his world that tends in a way to construct a complex scenario by processing gradually.

Among the different investigators of schema theory, Rumelhart (1980) acknowledges that top-down proceeds from whole to the smallest units and bottom-up operates from smallest parts to the whole by using both models during reading in two directional ways. He further argues that if an event takes place at the level of the sensory system⁵, it stimulates some particular knowledge elements, which on their own may stimulate higher elements of knowledge process. The latter paves the way to a mental process which calls back prior knowledge to verify its validity. In this essence, the activated portion of knowledge in this process passes via a system with inclusive levels of analysis. The top levels start activating from top-down and vice versa to either get use from the stimulated data that is derived from bottom-up model or to investigate the expected input.

According to Rumelhart’s vision, reading is a multi-level interactive process; i.e. it is manifested through different stages (Kintsch & Miller, 1984). Data processing can impact other similar operations at different stages and even though the bottom-up and the top-down models have to operate simultaneously. Thus, one has to combine between formal features and his own knowledge to the reading action (Just & Carpenter, 1980).

Many studies acknowledge that reading stresses processing ability. It has been argued that the human mind is limited in its data processing (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974).

⁵ The sensory system: A sensory system is a part of the nervous system responsible for processing sensory information. It consists of sensory receptors, neural pathways, and parts of the brain involved in sensory perception.

The latter paves the way to the fact that the reader is able to shed light on specific sub-processes through highlighting the focus from deep analytical levels of analysis. In addition, the focused level of analysis is supposed to be kept the longest.

2.6.1 The Dimensions of Schema Theory

The reading comprehension process requires schema theory principles that are detailed as follows. To begin with, schema theory is a valid representation of reading comprehension. This comprehension uses textual information to bridge the gap in the schemata. Hitherto, it corresponds to the comprehension definition in respect to schema theory. It does not necessarily imply that we act on our prior knowledge to new experiences. Thus, discourse comprehension tends to activate and bridge the appropriate schemata and accommodate it to any level of analysis depending on one's requirement.

Schema theory can also explain the points of differences and similarities in the comprehension which takes place during textual data processing (Spiro & Tirre, 1979). Reading is not considered as being a passive action but rather active that is stimulated by the reader's willingness and expectations. Hence, the reader and his/her own background knowledge with various gaps and with acknowledging its appropriateness, imply its differences. The similarities among schemata are responsible for the similarities in comprehension; they are originated from one's experiences which are mainly social and similar. In other words, the reader plays an important role in reading comprehension and therefore the latter does differ according to the reader's knowledge. So, the reader's comprehension of textual information relies on his/her aims and needs. In this light, Brown (a 1980) claims: "*understanding is not an all or nothing phenomenon, it must be judged against the criteria set by the reader as a goal of activity*" (ibid: 454). Hence, the reader is supposed to set aims before reading.

Furthermore, schema theory takes into account both models bottom-up and top-down in the comprehension process (Collins, Brown, and Larkin, 1980). This theory needs accumulated experimental evidence in reading investigations. Thus, these common experiences tend to require simultaneous occurrence of both models in reading. In fact, they point out that progressive refinement that is part of the initial model to more and more refined models of texts. The aim behind this model is to facilitate the building process to well-form classes, goal structures for analysing procedures, etc. Overall, the

objective of such models is to meet the readers' understanding by setting some procedures or goals which tend to ease the reading comprehension and interpretation.

Accordingly, Rumelhart (1980) holds that there exist three different processes in learning. First of all, it is *accretion* or learning; it refers to calling back the stored data about a discourse. Secondly, *tuning*; the prior knowledge develops to be adjusted to the new experience. Thirdly, *restructuring*; an operation through which new knowledge is created. In general, there are two main ways in which new schemas can be shaped in this theory. Particularly, it is through analogy that new knowledge is replaced by an old one with few differences (ibid). Therefore, new knowledge may also be deduced from repetitive experiences of some events in the world.

Overall, the act of comprehension by relying on schemata refers to understanding the textual subject and to some extent controlling the process of reading. Therefore, this control is not supreme due to the fact that the presented prior knowledge to the subject with the impact to the experience is in its turn influenced by sociocultural aspects and natural variables. Despite the fact that there is a high influence of schemata, the subject is responsible of how appropriate it can be to the text and through the learning process. This is a valid aspect of schema theory which will be discussed in the third chapter.

2.6.2 Goodman's View of Schema Theory in Reading Comprehension

Among the significant contributions the reading research has witnessed is Goodman's work (1981). He posits that reading's purpose is to build up meaning according to the text, and this necessitates the use of graphic, grammatical and semantic cues to achieve meaning, considering print 'image' as an input and a meaning as the output 'result'. Goodman's view lies on the fact that language learning has to be viewed in reference to their contextual use without being dissociated from it to preserve its reliability. Consequently, Goodman contradicts the claim which holds that reading includes specified, progressive understanding, and identifying language segments starting from smaller units to the largest ones. For him, the reading process refers to a complex process that the reader rebuilds, to some extent, a meaning that is embodied in the writer's graphic language (Goodman, 1976). Hence, this theory on reading can be

Chapter II: The Relevance of Schema Theory in the Reading Literary Texts

summarised and described under these characteristics: interactive, psycholinguistic, active constructive, and tentative (Goodman, 1979).

The Interactive feature of Goodman's theory is explained by the reader's contribution in a particular text. He holds that the reader's prior knowledge is as relevant as the textual input, i.e. what the reader possesses and adds it to the text is important as the author's intention in constructing a particular meaning to be understood by the reader.

The psycholinguistic feature is a process through which comprehension has two facets: *Psycho* and *Linguistics* or textual elements. In this light, he views reading as '*Linking together of optical, perceptual, syntactic and semantic cycles, all of which are utilised by the reader in the service of constructing meaning*' (1979: 658). In other words, he considers reading as a mixture of visual, mental, structural and vocabulary cues that are used by the reader to build up meaning. Therefore, active aspect tries to depict the reader's involvement in reading by using some techniques such as sampling, predicting, confirming and correcting by relying on the linguistic textual elements (ibid). In this view, the reader calls back all sorts of language experiences in reading in order to comprehend texts that deal with foreign cultures in the EFL context.

And as to what concerns the Constructive feature of reading, it is important in the sense that it attributes meaning to any segment in the language; this meaning is cognitive, and thus it is up to the reader to understand the text (Goodman, 1976). Moreover, the meaning is constructed progressively. It is significant, according to Goodman (1979), to the fact that what we know is partial with regard to meaning attributed to the whole. As a sum up, we can say that the constructed knowledge is originated from the reader's contribution to the parts of textual elements which is relevant to an appropriate knowledge processing. In this light, he argues:

'Reading involves the partial use of available minimal language selected from perceptual input on the basis of the reader's expectation. As partial information is processed tentative decisions are made to be confirmed, rejected or refined as reading progresses. Hence reading is a psycholinguistic guessing game.'

(1976:498)

Chapter II: The Relevance of Schema Theory in the Reading Literary Texts

As to the tentative feature of reading, this implies the selection and the guessing of elements which are related to a given topic. In general, reading is considered as a quick collection of expectations manifested through meaning construction. Thus, modifying and confirming the predictions are generally tentative procedures (ibid).

If we are to highlight the main steps elaborated in the model of Goodman on reading, we would assume that the reader is supposed to:

1. Read the text's lines from right to left 'scanning'.
2. Focus on the essential elements of the text 'eye-focus'.
3. Select relevant elements in accordance to the mental control made by prior language skills and the already learnt techniques.
4. Make an own mental perception by relying on prior acquired cues and textual ones, i.e. he makes a link between what he partly knows and what he wants to see.
5. Call for his mental phonological, semantic and syntactic language skills which help him to improve the mental conceptualisation.
6. Verify and test the reliability of his understanding by relying on his prior and textual knowledge.
7. Refute the irrelevant elements to the acquired language skills. If it is not the case, the reader starts deciphering the text, attributing meaning and accommodating it according to the prior knowledge.

The reading process requires these steps that are based on the input choices and the resulted meaning. It is important to stress Goodman's assertion (1976) which holds that these reading procedures are not supposed to follow a consecutive order, though it is to some extent complex. In spite of this fact, it can explain the present reader's behaviour.

In elaborating these steps in reading, Goodman (ibid) posits that the reader has to make cognitive choices retrieved from his memory in the reading process. He proposed that the cognitive perception of textual cues was made and saved in short term memory in which they were linked to language phonology, syntax, and semantics. The latter are compared to the cognitive perception drawn from the text in the short term memory. If these elements are met, the comprehension will be fulfilled.

Chapter II: The Relevance of Schema Theory in the Reading Literary Texts

Therefore, Goodman's view on reading comprehension can only be applied on native readers. In this regard, he asserts that only proficient readers, those who master the language skills, can apply the previous steps, foresee the formal structures, and deduce the underlined ones. Though these steps are set for reading comprehension analysis, its application to foreign language reading comprehension remains ambiguous.

In essence, there is no importance, in these principles, to schema acquisition and how textual elements are considered as being part of schema (Harker, et. al., 1982). As a result, it is important to argue that schema theory is essential in reading comprehension. It is considered as a complex and a favourable theory presented by researchers in reading to describe the different processes involved in it. In this light, schema theory will be better elaborated in the following chapters. In addition, its drawbacks are explained in the following explanation in order to improve it.

In fact, Meyer points out that reading comprehension is considered as being a process of selecting and checking schemata related to the text to be read (ibid, 1981). However, in spite of such claim, the fact of verifying and selecting background knowledge is being neglected without any expository evidence (ibid). In other words, these processes, according to him, are not taken into account because they are considered as mental processes that are not important to be mentioned.

Accordingly, Rumelhart also acknowledges that there are problems in the deduction of new knowledge for schema theory:

Schema induction does cause some difficulty for the notion of schemata. In order for schema induction to work properly, we must posit some aspects of the system sensitive to the recurrence of configurations of schemata that do not, at the time they occur, match any existing schemata. Such a system is not a natural part of a schema-based system.

(ibid, 1980: 54)

Here, the problem that Rumelhart raises lies in the fact that schema theory is regarded as the fact of meeting prior schemata. Consequently, this leads to the question that if already existing schemata is unavailable to stimulate other cases, how can recurrence of such knowledge be acknowledged reused again? In respect to schema theory principles, there is no consideration for this process by the comprehensive learning theory.

Chapter II: The Relevance of Schema Theory in the Reading Literary Texts

Yet, another point Rumelhart (ibid) disregards is the way that textual comprehension can be achieved if there is no prior knowledge that fits it? In this light, this question will be explored in the analysis of the presented literary texts that are supposed to be culturally different to the informants. Particularly, The Lottery short fiction carries a cultural background which is supposed to be foreign or distant from the informants' schemata. Therefore, this investigation will allow us to explain the extent of its significance.

Another significant drawback of schema theory that light should be shed on it is the fact that schema deduction or comprehension is linked to the misunderstanding of new knowledge. More precisely, this misunderstanding is due to the lack of language mastery and its non-literal use. In this light, Ortony (1980: 359) states: '*any theory that claims to account for the nature of human language comprehension has to be able to account for non-literal as well as literal uses of language*'. Thus, according to his point of view, linguistic competence plays an important role in the comprehension of the literary reading process.

Among the non-literal uses of language is metaphor that is manifested through the misuse of the language. Accordingly, Ortony (1980: 361) posits that '*metaphor is more than a linguistic and psychological curiosity; it is closely linked with learning of the new*'. According to him, metaphor is only a means which necessitates new information to lead to a new comprehension. It is broadly used, in different scientific fields, classrooms, and many other disciplines. Metaphors play an important role in learning and comprehending (Ortony, 1980). Thus, they tend to pave the way for the creation of new schemata. Many schema theory scholars acknowledge the fact that it is unnecessary to consider the influence of comprehension based on metaphors and on schema theory.

In addition to Ortony's (1980) assertion, Spiro argues that '*We know next to nothing about the process of conceptual change....perhaps metaphor, with its capability of describing something new in terms of what is already known, plays an important role*' (ibid, 1980: 271). Thus, metaphor does really hinder schema theory occurrence, but it helps it with its ability to describe the already acquired knowledge and to comprehend a new one.

Accordingly, among the most significant points of reading comprehension is knowledge of the world and its impact on the reader's activity. In other words, the

relation that links the reader to the external world tends to construct a complex scenario. It is based on the comprehension aspect which is, in its turn, seen as a text meeting against the world of the reader in a complete coherent way (Anderson, 1977). Another significant point to be stressed is the fact that reader contributes actively in reading; this is what is so called *construction* of meaning (ibid) or *creation* of meaning (Adams & Bruce, 1980).

As a summary, we can say that, for reading comprehension effectiveness, there are three main disciplines that should be considered: top-down, bottom-up and the link that relates between them. Different perspectives have been raised on reading comprehension issue, among them Smith and Goodman. More precisely, top-down researchers emphasise the reader's role, while for bottom-up researchers' focus is the text. And to what concerns the relationship that exists between both processes, it is the interactive theorists' concern. Moreover, each theory plays a crystal role in the reading comprehension process; there is no preference of one model over another. Thus, Goodman's interactive model aims to combine the strong aspects of both models (top-down and bottom-up).

2.7 The Linguistic Relevance in Reading Comprehension

In EFL context, many studies acknowledge the relevance of the linguistic competence to prior knowledge and reading. Among the different researchers who investigated this issue is Hudson (1982). Particularly, he investigates the pre-reading activities' significance and effectiveness for the language skills deficiency in reading comprehension. In fact, there were ninety three participant students of higher educational degree who were confronted to three analyses. For the first case, they were required to examine some visual materials which describe the topic of a text before reading it. Concerning the second case, some key linguistic elements were explained before the reading process. Finally, in the third case, reading the text was required for fifteen minutes in addition to ten minutes for examining the reading comprehension. By the end of this timing, the same operation was presented to another group. Consequently, this investigation implies that the comprehension process which is based on the background knowledge is manifested via visual materials.

According to the result of this investigation, the provided prior knowledge seems to pave the way for comprehension effectiveness. Therefore, the linguistic competence can be considered only as one aspect of reading comprehension. In this light, Hudson (1982) holds that - in spite of the fact that the linguistic competence can be ignored- it does not necessarily imply that it is stable, yet it refers to '*selective proficiency*' (ibid). As a conclusion to his research, he highlighted the fact that the difference in language skills leads to schemata difference.

In the same path, Johnson (1981) investigates the impact of the language difficulty and cultural background of the text. This research seeks to examine Iranian students' reading comprehension in English. Thus, they had a positive behaviour towards simple and complex texts which deal with English traditions. Johnson (ibid), in his investigation, relied on two ways for reading comprehension: *Reader-based* technique where background knowledge is used for familiar topics and *Text-based technique* unfamiliar topics which rely on the reader's linguistic background knowledge to decipher and comprehend the text because of his unfamiliarity with the topic. The results hold that background knowledge and linguistic elements are two different aspects. Yet, it remains uncertain to claim that background schemata are reinforced by the linguistic competence. Hudson's research (1982) has proven the opposite result. Therefore, though the latter is advocated by research studies, it does not correspond with schema theory and linguistic competence.

Among the different studies in this field, Doctorow et.al (1978) analyses the impact of texts' titles on instruction sentences of a text. The link which relates prior knowledge to the read text increases the comprehension and the recalls of the experiences that are related to the topic. In this light, the fact of practicing prior schemata that fits the passage knowledge enhances its reading comprehension (Kintsch & Miller, 1984).

Regarding another perspective, the fact of presenting ambiguous texts with titles for reading, as Reynolds, Schallert & Goetz (1977) conducted the experiment on students with specific experiment background. In this investigation, there were thirty students from physical education and thirty other music college education students who were supposed to read two texts which can be understood differently. After the reading phase, the students involved in the study were supposed to accomplish recall test and MCQ of

ten questions. In the latter, each question was accomplished by five possible answers. There was no one absolute answer; there could be two correct answers. In the first group, participants interpreted the first text as a wrestling match, apparently better than the music education participants. In the same vein, in the second group, the participants comprehended the text as being a musical practice apparently better than the first group.

Accordingly, most readers relied on one interpretation in their reading and ignored other possible interpretations. Thus, many scholars assumed that schemata which are based on prior knowledge experiences affect the readers' understanding of the text. In addition to the fact that schemata paves the way for context making, which is in its turn considered as an important element for comprehension, it also incites readers to make use of these elements in interpreting the text and putting aside other interpretations.

Other investigators furthered their studies on schemata that are related to particular disciplines. In Alderson and Urquhart's (1988) investigation, which is meant for ESP competence experimental tests, they hold that learners would behave more positively in tests related to their own discipline than learners from other fields. Furthermore, this research result proposes that it would be of a great advantage for learners towards tests that are based on familiar textual content.

By highlighting the background knowledge principles, Carrell (1983) also explores both native and non-native students' impact on reading comprehension. Among the different elements that are taken into account in this process, context refers to the title and the picture of the text to be read. In addition, *Transparency* refers to the availability of key lexical elements in the text. Unlike transparency, *Opaqueness* refers to the abstract elements which are not present in the text; i.e. the meaning that is substituted behind the textual elements. Finally, *Familiarity* implies the reader's textual content. Each member of this experimental research was supposed to read two different texts; the first one was familiar to them in terms of context, transparency, and familiarity with the topic unlike the second text. As a result, this experimental investigation highlights the fact that the three elements of background knowledge are employed only by natives and by EFL or ESL readers. Furthermore, it points out that these students were supposed to be linguistically restricted vis-à-vis the text without relating passages to their appropriate

background knowledge. Yet, this result remains questionable and open to criticism (as it is shown in the research findings in chapter 5).

Despite the fact that the results of EFL research are not absolute in determining the link which relates prior knowledge to the linguistic one, the linguistic as well as the cultural studies as it is discussed before, they are instead considered to be important for text processing. Therefore, both of the linguistic and the cultural knowledge are important for reading comprehension.

2.8 The Relevance of Extensive Reading in EFL Curriculum

It is argued that the importance of extensive reading lies on all the levels of the foreign language reading curriculum (Hsui, 2000, etc.). In addition, for instance, Bamford & Day (1998) posit that:

Foreign language reading teachers may accept a bleak, wintery classroom as inevitable, given the reality of the task to be accomplished. Nevertheless, out of sight is a garden where it is always spring. If students can enter that garden, then the whole undertaking of learning to read is transformed. Extensive reading can be the key to the secret garden.

(ibid: 31)

It is paramount to know the different ways to include extensive reading into the curriculum, so that its objective will be in conformity with the educational targets. In fact, the appropriate purposes of extensive reading have to focus on the desired results and the reading amount that have to be read. Since there is no particular form that extensive reading has to take, neither is there an accurate way to set up a programme, it is only “*the particular circumstances for a school or institution [that] will in part determine how extensive reading is integrated into the curriculum*” (ibid: 43). According to them, it is the curriculum which has to identify and create the circumstances under which the extensive reading should be introduced.

As a result, extensive reading may, eventually, be involved in any curriculum, without taking into account its methodology. Accordingly, Hedge (1985) claims: “*There are many ways how to connect extensive reading with the general English language programme, for example to relate topics of the course book to a reader, to use a reader*

for listening work or intensive reading” (ibid: 79). It is, then, largely assumed that there is no direct relationship between the use of extensive reading approach and other methods of EFL teaching of the reading skill. Consequently, extensive reading can be included in the foreign language curriculum starting to be part of autonomous courses to additional or optional activities that the learner applies. In fact, we present a brief summary of the possible different ways of extensive reading forms and the different outcomes from the different contexts. Four various ways of comprising extensive reading in foreign language curricular are:

1. As stand-alone course
2. As a part of a prior reading course
3. As non-relevant to a prior reading course
4. As an extracurricular task

A/ As an individual course: This includes other courses’ establishments by a teacher, a syllabus, a classroom, materials, and other elements. And just like with other courses, the time that is devoted for extensive reading courses have to be considered with regard to the objectives of the whole foreign language curriculum. For example, it may vary from a single 45 minutes a week to 45min in each meeting.

B/ As part of prior existing course: It consists on building into a prior course an extensive reading, for instance, reading some books per week or semester, both in class and as a homework. Moreover, reading inside the class reading, time is not respected for extensive reading related to activities such as students’ oral book reports. In this study, we considered the written report to carry in the empirical stage.

C/ As non-additional to the existing reading- course: The learners are supposed to read according to their interests and desires. It is not an obligatory assignment but an optional part of the course. The attention that is given to extensive reading as being optional depends on the teacher’s attitude. If a teacher is strongly committed to extensive reading and encourages it actively, then the learners generally are inspired by the teacher’s eagerness to do it.

D/ As extracurricular activity: Optional extensive reading may also be embedded in extracurricular reading group, not related to required courses in the curriculum. Such an

extensive reading can be suitable for any learner in the language programme, without taking into account their levels and all may be promoted to join. Just like the other extracurricular activities, the extensive reading groups match after studies' period. And the teacher who is responsible of it considers it as "an after-school" (university) task.

(Adapted from Day & Bamford, 1998: 40-42)

By relying on this point of view, Waring (1997) holds that teachers can witness guided Silent Reading groups in their classrooms where members of a class read self-selected material. As a result, this implies that all the learners read on their own simultaneously, and offers the teacher time to reflect with students about their reading, and to apply the programme. It is important to stress that, occasionally, the teacher also reads to produce a model for the students in the same time. The students are not reading naively, they are improving their fluency, acquiring new vocabulary, collocations, metaphors, etc.

It is important to highlight, at this stage, that the variability of investigations which is related to the extensive reading has a positive influence on the learners' language acquisition. To put otherwise, its use has been confined to a required and extracurricular activity. However, recently, many advocates of extensive reading have defended its utilisation as a relevant part of the curricular revealing its positive influence in the students' learning process.

By including extensive reading in the curriculum is demanding and requires prior planning in what concerns time, objectives and materials. In other words; it is important to know "*how to connect extensive reading to the main course, how to use graded readers and how much time to devote to extensive reading*" (Hedge, 1985: 75). With respect to the time devoted in the class for extensive reading in order to enhance effective reading habits, Hedge (ibid) considers the whole time in an English course and the potential of the course as being the main criteria. Moreover, Schell (1991) claims that "*The amount of time spent in actual reading may be the most important factor in reading growth*" (ibid: 115). Regarding his claim, this highlights the time devotion for the effectiveness of reading, i.e. this time devotion is considered as being the most relevant element for the reading comprehension.

It is also important to stress the fact that extensive reading should be motivated and then regularly guided. This leads to construct a regular pace of reading and to encourage reading interaction in the class (Ellis & McRae, 1991). Additionally, the fact of highlighting reading context is also important because interesting experiences take place only in classrooms as Hsui (2000) claims “*Free of hassles and interruptions, and a relaxed atmosphere in which all the students know what is expected of them are prerequisites for the effective implementation of Guided Independent Reading*” (34). Moreover, according to Welch (1997), convincing students of the benefit of extensive reading and helping them comprehend that “*the class will be conducted differently from their other reading classes. They should realise that although extensive reading is not a method that they are used to, it is intended to help them develop into more fluent foreign language readers*” (ibid: 53). Thus, supporting the use of extensive reading helps the learners better comprehend their reading of the foreign language literary texts.

Generally, we can deduce that if extensive reading is enhanced, it can easily be part of the curriculum, develops the learners’ reading ability and general English levels and have noticeable effects on their writing skills, grammar, and speaking (Waring, 2009b). Therefore, it is important to give more attention to extensive reading from both EFL teachers and learners (this will be discussed in more details in chapter 5).

2.9 The Selection of Texts for Reading in EFL

The selection of suitable and relevant texts is very important for an effective reading. In that, many scholars and educators have identified the relevance of such process, especially for teachers who are responsible for selecting appropriately texts. This process requires taking into account many parameters. In this light, Williams (1986) claims that “*in the absence of interesting texts, very little is possible. An obvious principle, but one which is often forgotten. Interest is vital, for it increases motivation, which in turn is a significant factor in the development of reading speed and fluency*” (ibid: 42). By supporting this vision, Brumfit (1986) holds that the general conditions for texts’ selection are: “*Linguistic level, cultural level, length, pedagogical role, genre representation, and classic states also referred to as ‘face validity*” (Brumfit, 1986: 189). Therefore, according to Gilner & Morales (2010), the fact of choosing an appropriate material for reading requires:

looking through various titles, scanning through books, and, skimming over a few pages to check to see if it is accessible and likely to be interesting to read. In accepting or rejecting reading material, students develop internal judgement criteria that they use to access language input.

(ibid: 17)

Therefore, according to this claim, before the selection of texts to be read, the reader has to be aware that the materials are of different types and devoted for different purposes. In this light, Simenson (1987) classifies the reading texts into three types: ‘*authentic*’ (not aimed for language learners and published in the original language); ‘*pedagogic*’ (meant for language learners with various types of control which depends on the language itself); and ‘*adapted*’ (adapted from authentic texts). Other materials include: ‘*graded*’, they refer to ‘high interest low vocabulary books’, ‘*Young adult literature*’ (Reed, 1985), described as interesting and easy reading, or ‘*Easy read books*’ (Abrahamson & Conlon, 1988: 686). In other words, the materials’ readability depends on its language.

In fact, there exists various types of good reading materials available for EFL learners; the teacher’s role is to select the ones in which their language and concepts correspond to the students’ knowledge; what is so called ‘Language Learner Literature’. But, in this thesis, if this is applicable, the issue remains questionable since the selected population comprises graded learners (master 1).

2.10 Readers’ Classification in EFL

In this light, advanced reading has always been the focus of interest for many researchers in EFL. Many studies encourage the use of graded learners as being an important element in the reading curriculum (Krashen, 2009). The following definitions refer to the graded readers or reading:

- a. Advanced readers are merely books, fiction and nonfiction, in which the content is guided for the sake of meeting the learners’ language ability. An important source of language learner literature, reading texts which are written for an audience of language students, is known as graded readers (Ono, Day & Harsh, 2004).

b. Graded reading refers to short books about 15 to 130 pages, the language which is simplified or summarised to make the book easier for language learners' reading and comprehension (Waring, 2007), and they can take different genres. They are:

Books written specifically for language learners to develop their reading ability. They are made easy to read by simplifying the vocabulary and grammar so that the learner can easily understand the story. Graded readers are not children's books but in general they are books for adult language learners. (ibid: 08)

c. Graded readers control grammatical and lexical elements, and provide regular and enough new language forms repetition (Wodinsky and Nation, 1988). A graded reader is a book "written at a grading scheme, whether it is a simplified version of a previously written work or an original work written in simple language" (Hill & Thomas, 1988: 44). In other words, they stress the language simplicity.

d. Maley (1988) also holds that graded reading implies books in which language is summarised, put simply, and adapted according to the readers. He also claims that these strategies have always been used in teaching the English language.

In this study, we will conduct the experiment on advanced students, i.e. master students of English since they are considered as a suitable learning and teaching source of English. In fact, schema theory requires the use of prior knowledge or experiences that are related to the topic and the target language. In addition, the selection such population for this study is relevant for this study; in that it experience the students' prior knowledge with the language and the foreign cultures as well.

2. 11 Identifying Possible Reading Deficiencies in EFL

It is also relevant to use examples from cross-cultural communications, examples that may result in interactive problems and which deal with some pragmatic features and then introduce them to students to raise discussions (Rose, 1999). Teachers are supposed to be careful observers and to take notes for collecting their own information of the same examples and also must train learners to be good observers. Teachers may use potentially challenging events in presenting pragmatic notions to students.

Students may be capable of exchanging personal cases of problematic interactions from their own life experiences or from watching films or TV programmes in the target language. The examples explain different types of cross-cultural pragmatic matters, teachers and learners of English encounter. In this point, it is important to stress that the teaching materials can be the result of such encounters and shared with the learners during the introductory phase of classroom instruction on pragmatic issues. The various examples can be introduced to learners with an objective to determine if the discussion seems acceptable to them. In this light, learners can present and suggest alternative explanations for the pragmatic aspects in the exchanges.

2.12 Conclusion

In conclusion, background knowledge and linguistic competence are two complementary aspects. In other words, meaning is mainly derived from the person's knowledge of the world, yet comprehension deficiency can also be related to language deficiency. Furthermore, schemata relevance lies on textual elements which exist hierarchically at the letter, word, and discourse level. In this light, cross-cultural research represents a fruitful source of knowledge for the readers' textual comprehension with reference to their prior knowledge of cultural experiences. The present research study tries to shed light on the relevance of prior knowledge with regard to two culture-based texts. The next chapter '*Methodology*' focuses on the approaches used to measure EFL reading comprehension: comprehension questions and prior knowledge test.

Chapter III

Theoretical and Pedagogical Framework of the Study

3. Introduction

This chapter examines the theoretical and the pedagogical framework of the present research. It consists of some epistemological background that is related to the informants' linguistic, cultural and literary competence concerning the comprehension of two the culture-specific texts. These accounts are relevant since they help in narrowing the study. I also provide a general overview of previous research analysis with regard to data collection instruments in the literature review part. Basing on some previous research methodologies, I present a detailed description for my choices in the present investigation. Finally, I end up this chapter by setting up some aims to my study.

Among the noticeable changes that language teaching and learning have witnessed is the importance of the cultural aspect. This has brought changes in the structure of teaching and learning languages. The latter's objective does no more refer to the acquisition of communicative competence in the target language, which implies one's ability to perform in that language in linguistically, socially and pragmatically appropriate ways (Council of Europe, 2001). Instead, it is determined in terms of intercultural competence, which refers to the reader's ability to be flexible and act appropriately when s/he is confronted to actions, attitudes and assumptions of foreign cultures (Meyer, 1991). This definition goes beyond the communicative competence to include the intercultural one.

As Byram (1977) claims, the interactive effectiveness does not merely refer to an effective exchange of information, as it was the case of communicative language teaching. However, it also refers the ability to consider other cultural visions in order to interfere when necessary and to solve communicative as well as behavioural problems (Meyer, 1991).

3.1 The Relevance of Intercultural Competence in EFL Teaching

The integration of intercultural competence in teaching foreign languages has become a necessary requirement for both teachers and investigators. Research in the field of social psychology and intercultural communication has proven that linguistic and social skills, knowledge and attitudes need appropriate communication and effectiveness in intercultural context. The latter focuses on efficient cross-cultural interaction that is based on acquiring a key set of competences as presented in Byram's (1997) model of

intercultural communicative competence. His model comprises five different factors that are represented in the following scheme.

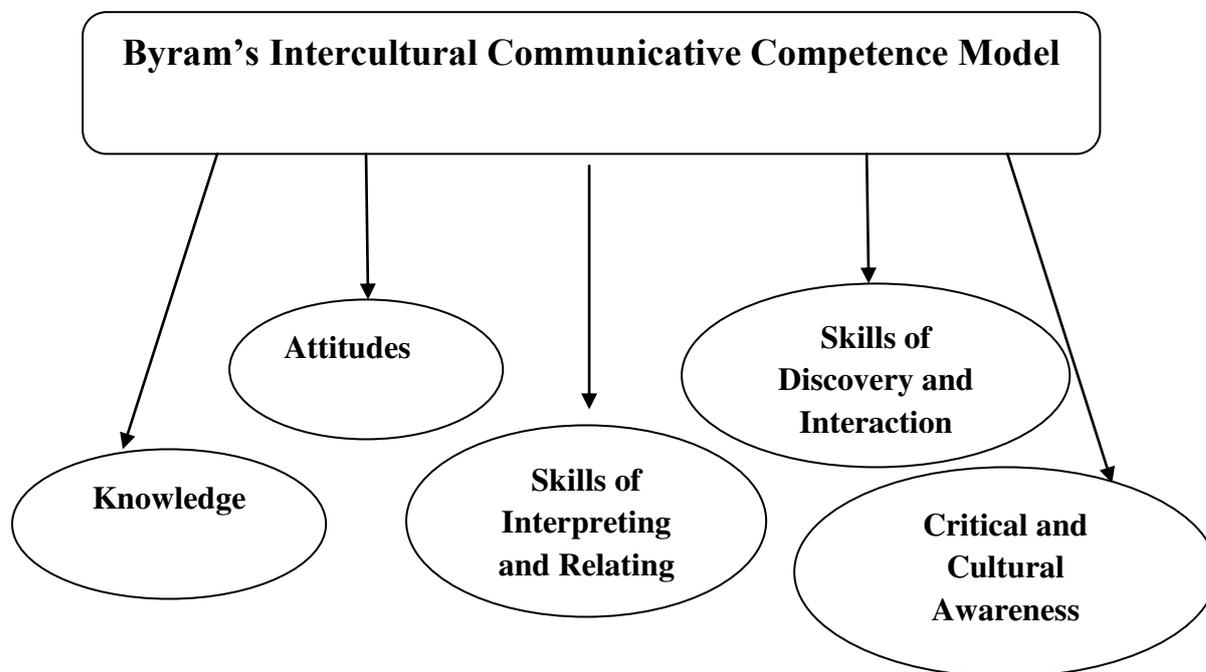


Figure 3.1 Byram's (1997) Intercultural Communicative Competence Model

Knowledge refers to learning about particular social groups, activities and acts of communication. However, attitudes include curiosity and openness towards the other and willingness to consult cultural values and beliefs and to exchange and engage with others. As to Skills of interpreting and relating, they refer to the ability to identify the cultural perspectives and relating between them and operate in new cultural situations.

With regard to communication and discovery skills, they depend on the capacity to acquire new cultural knowledge, cultural activities, the use knowledge attitudes and the skills under time limitations during an interaction. Hence, critical cultural understanding can be defined as the ability to access critically the different points of view and acts in one's own and target cultures. In fact, Jokikokko (2005) claims that intercultural competence is an ethical feature which focuses on some moral ways of existing, thinking and behaving.

In respect to this thesis, Byram's model – which comprises five features – is fundamental for both teachers and learners. By following this path, Kramsch and

McConnell-Ginet (1992) also claim that the main emphasis of teaching the intercultural approach - which is based on the target cultures - comprises comparisons between the learner's own country and the target one. Thus, this helps the learners improve a reflective behaviour towards a specific culture and civilisation of their own and other countries.

Educating learners to acquire a new language implies getting them used to be inter-culturally positive, by encouraging them to act as cultural mediators, to view the world through the other's eyes. Therefore, in order to use cultural learning skills, the teachers have to consider the speaker who crosses borders and who is somehow specialised in the cultural characteristics and symbolic values (Byram & Zarate, 1997). Hence, the teacher sees the learner as mediator between her/his own culture and the target one through crossing the obstacles that may exist between them.

In fact, the focus change in foreign language learners refers to a change in the assumptions raised on EFL teachers. In other words, they are actually not only supposed to teach the target linguistic rules, but also to put them in context against the sociocultural schemata that is related to it in order to help learners reach the five objectives set in Byram's model (Byram & Risager, 1999). Therefore, in order to enhance the intercultural learning process, foreign language teachers require extra-knowledge, attitudes, competences and skills. In addition, they also require being familiar with the fundamentals of cultural anthropology¹; culture learning theory, intercultural communication and being motivated to teach intercultural competence and knowing how to do so (ibid).

3.2 Intercultural Education Requirements

The relevance of global understanding at different levels has long been discussed. However, concepts such as intercultural education, intercultural learning, intercultural comprehension and interculturality have been the focus of many lectures and conferences in this field of research. The first two concepts have been interpreted differently in different national sub-cultures. In fact, they may perhaps refer to many things within the same culture. In other words, this may imply multicultural countries that comprise some cultural minorities such as refugees, immigrants or other ethnic groupings, etc. In this light, intercultural teaching has pointed at including different cultures and at improving their life

¹ Cultural anthropology is a branch of anthropology that focuses on the study of cultural variation among humans. It is in contrast to social anthropology, which perceives cultural variation as a subset of the anthropological constant.

Chapter III: Theoretical and Pedagogical Framework of the Study

quality. The concept of ‘intercultural education’ was in fact firstly presented in the USA, where it was used during the two world wars to refer to the educational programmes for the integration of different ethnic groups in American society (Doyé, 1999). However, in countries with a homogeneous cultural background, as the case of the Tunisian society, for example, intercultural education is mainly related to educating the inhabitants towards multiculturalism. This is probably due to the tourism policy of the Tunisian state and its long history of cultural tolerance. Therefore, this could mean that intercultural teaching aims at achieving the learners’ mutual and full understanding.

In this research work, the concept of intercultural education is used to refer to teaching, while intercultural learning refers essentially to a process through which learners acquire some kind of intercultural competence. The connection between both of them is illustrated below; that is a modification and an interpretation of a figure introduced by Nieke (1995) as mentioned in Doyé (1999). It is important to say that not only educational adaptations, but real intercultural encounters may also be considered as stepping stones for the learning process. Both formal and informal, inside and outside learning setting situations are pertinent, although this research emphasises institutional practice only, and more specifically on teachers’ behaviour towards learners’ feedback.

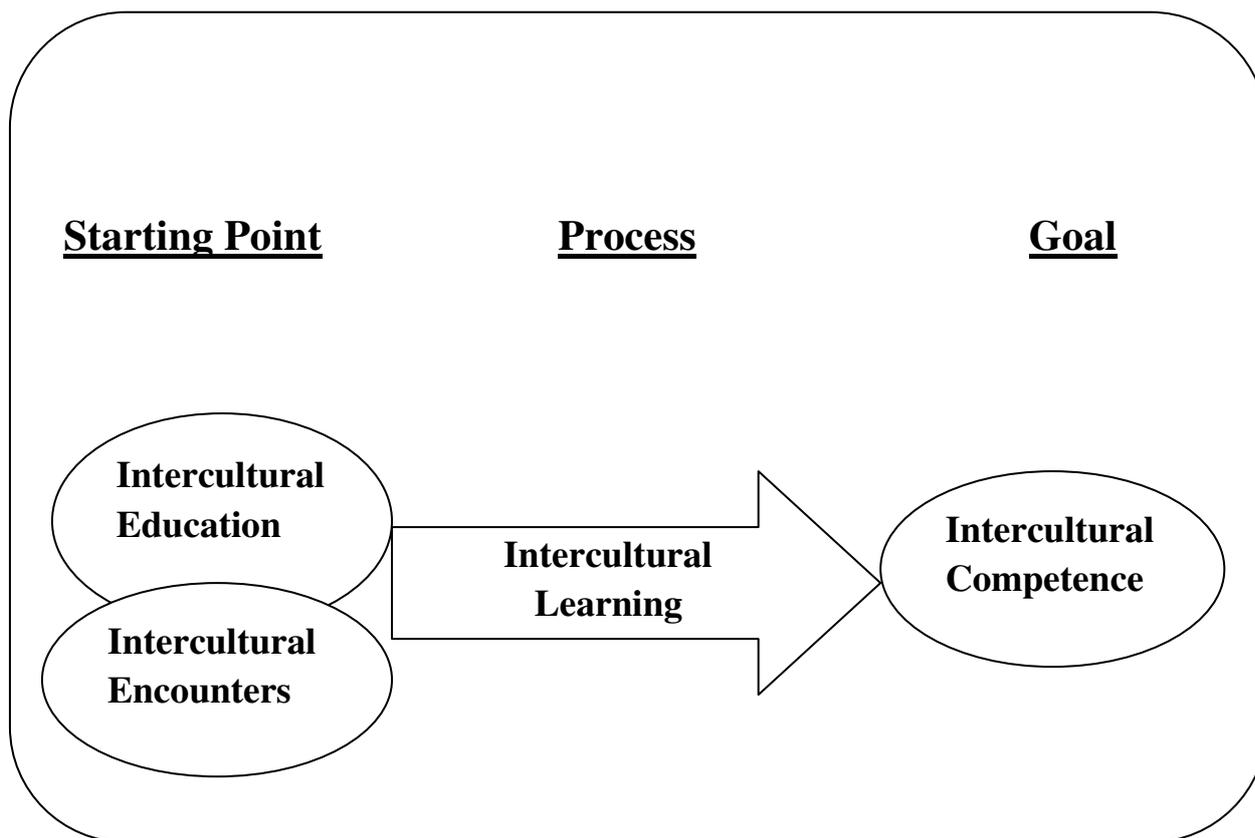


Figure 3.2 Nieke's (1995) Clarification of key concepts: Intercultural Education and Intercultural

Actually, there seems to be an agreement on the intercultural education which should be integrated as an important element in the literature teaching syllabus. In this light, in order to pass to the new millennium, UNESCO elaborated two commissions: *Culture and Development* and *Education in the 21st Century*, whose aims are to promote an intercultural approach in teaching and learning in the whole world. Therefore, their international project develops intercultural education at all the levels of education, the teachers' planning for this new aspect in teaching, the awareness of cultural diversity and of the requirement for intercultural interaction (Reiberg, 2000). The researchers also focus on the relevance of intercultural pedagogy as something that offers opportunities to education as a whole (Bensedik: 2005). In this light, this thesis tries to shed light on the importance of intercultural pedagogy for Literature Master Students at Mostaganem University through two short stories.

Chapter III: Theoretical and Pedagogical Framework of the Study

Among the main factors which play an important role in the requirement of intercultural learning, nowadays, are presented by Kaikkonen (2001). One of these is one's own cultural identity. In this work, I regard self-esteem and consciousness of the learner's own identity as a sort of foundation for intercultural learning. To put it otherwise, national identity, according to Haarmann (1993), is directly linked to one's roots, i.e. it is related to his/ her ethnic origin, the cultural aspect shaped by the social environment one is accustomed to, and by perceptions and value judgments. Therefore, the latter focuses on the comprehension of one's own culture, comprehension of foreign cultures, as well as others' interpretation of one's own culture.

Another important fact is the need for intercultural learning which refers clearly the multicultural reality in which we live. In this light, Kaikkonen (2001) emphasises the case of Europe, which seems to be developing in different directions. On the one hand, we notice the European Union striving for a stable partnership of states, and on the other, recent small states appearing in the Balkans. Moreover, it is claimed that languages are important in this changing situation without taking into account either their social, cultural or their political background (ibid). In that, they clearly tend to stick to their own languages because of historic national superiority, religion, ethnic identity, etc. However, such tendencies towards linguistic hegemony with the UN may be distinguished.

As it is held by Krumm (2004), English and somehow French are the dominant languages in the world, while other languages start to lose their importance. In fact, in Algeria, standard Arabic is the national language and French is the second language. Whereas for the English language; it is considered as the third or the foreign language. Additionally, he cautions about making linguistic diversity hidden in public or educational disciplines, which is already happening in reality, such as other languages especially in smaller European nations. Such evolutions can, according to him, result in an increasing consciousness of the opposition between cultures and people with various historical, religious and value backgrounds.

Nowadays, though we live in a society that is increasingly international through many intercultural encounters such as trade, internet, tourism, diplomacy and our capacity to face differences, foreignness and heterogeneity, it seems to remain unchanged. Despite the fact of implementing intercultural collaboration at different stages, facts such as racism, xenophobia, ethnocentrism, stereotypes, prejudices and various forms of extremism tend to

Chapter III: Theoretical and Pedagogical Framework of the Study

become increasingly common. These facts will have to be taken into account in the following discussion.

As an example to this thesis, the case of Algeria, it is important to hold that people's attitudes are changing positively. Actually, although there is a cultural variability, people do not show any rejection of foreign cultures. As an example, one may mention the case of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem. It is situated in an Algerian coastal city which hosts more than 2060 foreigners who have settled in the previous years for different reasons according to *Al-Watan* newspaper. Among the foreign students, there were many students who attended classes at the University or private schools to learn English, French or Arabic. While exploring this research study, it was important for me as a researcher to investigate it empirically.

At universities, since all the learners were already prepared to acquire and to tolerate new cultures – though the social and the intellectual differences that exist among the Algerian learners - no one of them expressed any rejection of foreigners. Therefore, it does not imply a complete admission of foreignness because the setting creates a favourable atmosphere that helps to accept the culture. It is noticeable that despite the fact that there are many foreigners in Mostaganem, their contact with local people is constrained and their discussions are limited to work issues (*ibid*). In fact, it has been observed that foreigners do not often go outside their camps or their place of work for fear that something bad may happen to them. In other words, it is assumed that the Algerian society is not yet ready to coexist with foreigners as it is the case in Morocco or Tunisia where tourism has already paved the way for a peaceful cohabitation.

The fact which holds that values and standards are internationally viable and the belief that is in some way superior to other cultures is known as ethnocentrism which is related to one's culture. In this light, Seelye (1988) distinguishes three main elements: integration and loyalty within the group members, hostile relationship between one particular group and the others as well as positive attitude within one group members unlike the pejorative stereotyping of other groups' characteristics.

With regard to Lustig and Koester (1999), all cultures are characterised by their high ethnocentricity to use principles of a specific culture in order to assess others' cultural acts. As a consequence, one can say that there is a general agreement on the common way,

Chapter III: Theoretical and Pedagogical Framework of the Study

for a given community members, to assume that their language is the most beautiful, their religion is the most faithful and reliable and their life style is the best one.

It is important to note that kaikkonen (2001) sheds light on the ideas of one's own best culture that are as profound as prejudices for diversity and foreignness. In fact, prejudices and stereotypes are nearly close in meaning, and many scholars have considered them as being synonymous for one and the same idea. From 1980s onward, psychologists started to come back to the primary distinction. In this respect, stereotypes are held to be cognitive and prejudices are held to be influential aspects of human attitudes to different groups of people. Moreover, they consider the different groups or phenomena as being reliable only for a part of these groups. Thus, the difference that can be drawn between stereotypes lies in the difference of one's own culture and the foreign one (Jensen, 1995). For example, it is known that British people are not talkative while the Americans are friendly, and the French cuisine is noble. Therefore, these generalisations are not valid and constant stereotypes are likely to be dangerous.

Furthermore, stereotypes of a particular country are generally evolved outside its borders, however; it sounds to be supported efficiently by the country itself which could involve them in its comics and it proliferates more in accordance to its own features. Therefore, regardless of the stereotypes' harmlessness, they may be found in daily discourses as well as they are regarded as being the best mainland for prejudices, and must be agreed upon with sensitivity concerning intercultural learning.

In the same vein, Lustig and Koester (1999) claim that prejudices imply a negative response against other people by relying on an absence of experience or an immediate knowledge. In other words, an early opinion can immediately lead to a serious decision. In this light, Allport (1954), who is considered as the pioneer of modern research on prejudices, states that if a learner is able to redress or correct her/his opinion in the presence of new evidence or argument, then he is not prejudiced. Moreover, he further claims that a person who is prejudiced, s/he has the tendency to disregard evidence that does not correspond with his/her own opinion or s/he may merely deviate from the evidence's principles to meet his/ her prejudices.

As the strength of prejudices, Albert Einstein claims that it is more difficult to break up a prejudice than an atom. Prejudices can be regarded as important elements; i.e. feelings like fear, anger and aggression are transmitted to other people, who are as often

dubbed “scapegoats”. Therefore, it is always easier to accuse someone for a calamity than to look for the reasons behind it.

Furthermore, by enhancing unprejudiced behaviour and avoiding discrimination, which may be viewed as practicable prejudice, is then relevant though it is not an easy task for present-day intercultural education. In spite of the fact that it is to be considered as one of the different issues of educational curricular, a close attention should be put on particular subjects. Thus, foreign language teaching is specifically appropriate to contribute to this task. I think that it can be seen as a practice, with regard to foreign language, to develop ethnocentric view and behaviour. Thus, a stereotype is a biased, simplifying and idealised portrait of one’s society and a similar, simplifying and negative view or opinion of other societies.

In fact, the majority of stereotypes are formed through social education. This process is mainly achieved by parents, groups, the mass media, as well as by teachers. Thus, this yields to enlarge the scope for educational tasks which aim to avoid negative and unreliable stereotypes towards particular social groups. In the following discussion, we will investigate the intercultural element in foreign language teaching, from a historical point of view, by stressing various ways of considering culture and the link between language and culture.

3.3 Culture and EFL Teaching

Language is considered as a vehicle to culture and the relationship between them is so complex. On the one hand, this is because of the fact that language is an essential part of culture, and on the other hand, language is a manifestation of culture (Agar, 1994). For instance, if a person wants to learn English, s/he is not only supposed to acquire the linguistics of the language but also all that is related to it and Britain. What the learner acquires comprises all the prejudices about the English language. Thus, by using a language, the learner guides himself with the culture of the language.

Moreover, in order to be a good speaker of a language, one has to be convinced that the target language and the thoughts are strong vis-à-vis many cultural parameters. In this light, Bedjaoui (2014) claims in her article ‘*Pedagogy and Stereotypes*’ that teachers aim to attribute some ideas in order to shed light on some teaching areas. In addition, these areas

Chapter III: Theoretical and Pedagogical Framework of the Study

of teaching such as literature and intercultural studies, allow educational tolerance and set aims, tasks and different views of such educational process.

Accordingly, Byram (1991b) claims, in this light, that the majority of understanding deficiencies in teaching English tasks are due to the lack of consideration of the link which relates language to culture. In the same light, Buttjes and Byram (1991) state that language does not merely reflect a cultural fact, but it manifests parts of the reality. Thus, language symbolises both the whole and part of the whole which. To put it otherwise, language represents sociocultural facts, beliefs and values. Hence, language and culture cannot be separated in teaching foreign language.

Additionally, textual language was the subject matter of close historical and interpretational explanations in terms of age and culture to which it belongs. Furthermore, listening, speaking, writing and reading were acknowledged as being the four main skills that every learner was supposed to acquire them. Furthermore, these are still recognised as aims in most curricular. But, there was an absence of the social dimension of language. In this light, Doyé (1999) classifies these criteria as setting, communicative purposes and the relationship between interlocutors, which were not regarded as being relevant, until the appearance of what is so-dubbed the Pragmatic Reform in the second half of the twentieth century.

Consequently, Doyé's (1999) classification of the new patterns lead to a shift in the main objective of foreign language instructions from linguistic competence to socio-Linguistic Competence to Communicative Competence. In other words, this implies that there is a shift of interest starting from the linguistic competence to the sociocultural one to the communicative one. In this respect, teachers thought that it was insufficient for the learners to be capable of yielding grammatically correct sentences if they were not enough skilful in using these sentences in real communicative contexts.

3.4 The Pedagogical Framework

As previously mentioned, the aim of this research is to see how the role of schemata is relevant for reading comprehension among EFL master students. Additionally, it tries to measure their capacities on reading comprehension of familiar and unfamiliar culture-specific texts. Moreover, its framework is based on the assumption that reading comprehension of literary texts, as it is explored in the present investigation, depends on

three features which are: the cultural competence, the literary competence and the linguistic one. (Cf. Chapter 2)

Basing on the intricacy of investigating comprehension, I prefer to emphasise the cultural competence. In other words, I favour the fact that diversity is partially ambiguous (Bernhardt, 1991) and recognise the intricacy of investigating the cognitive processes. This is because I think that the language of the literary texts is not considered as being an obstacle for this research study.

To what concerns the linguistic factor, the informants had already accomplished their B.A degree in English at this level. This implied that they are skilful readers and, thus; the English language is not a barrier in the case of literary texts introduced in this study. In spite this fact, this research study is consistent with what has already been mentioned in the review of literature that the linguistic competence may hinder the reading comprehension process. Then, the fact of testing this ability is measured in the students' tasks completion.

Regarding the literary competence, it is not supposed to be a problem since the students are used to confront literary narrative texts in their Literature modules during three years in their licence at SBA University. Additionally, British, American and other literatures are compulsory modules in their curriculum. Therefore, it is presumed that the literary competence would not impede the course of this research.

3.5 Theory and Methodology

Generally, the researches reviewed in the previous chapter deal with the cultural aspect and its relevance in the reading comprehension process. The various processes of approaching this issue differ considerably in each case study; it focuses on the different parameters as the cultural background, social context, particular related schemata, etc. As it has already been discussed in chapter 1, there exists also a difference in the researches' methodology design in the participants' schemata (cultural schemata, background knowledge, etc.). The selected texts, with regard to the genre and its used language, data collection instruments that are manifested through the given tasks and instructions, and analytical units of measurement that are manifested through various instruments, are significant parameters for this thesis research.

Chapter III: Theoretical and Pedagogical Framework of the Study

Among the different scholars who highlight the significance of the different procedures in reading comprehension are Paris and Myers (1981). They claim that there should be different procedures that allow comprehension monitoring. Particularly, they focus on the importance of English as a foreign language research (Brantmeier, 2004). In all the reviewed cases in relation to the different reading comprehension instruments as open-ended questions, close ended-questions, yes/no questions, instructions, etc. I notice that consistency in each instrument lies on the use of remembering process which may be important in the researches about cultural background and include the investigation of other parameters of reading as previously mentioned by many scholars as Chang (2006).

It is important to stress that the remembering type that is needed in almost all cases is literal, otherwise the learners are clearly asked to remember the authentic as precisely as possible (Hammadou, 1991). I also shed light on Steffensen, Joag-Dek and Anderson (1979) who claim that participants are supposed to follow the same order as well as the same words, to write steadily so that they could recall and if they cannot remember the precise words, so they jot down sentences which are close as possible to the original ones.

Another vision which consists of the students' order without referring to the text is the usual instruction as: write in English all what you can remember about the text, tries to highlight the main ideas as well as details, etc. Here, the emphasis is on the quantity of ideas that recalled from the students' comprehension of the text (Brantmeier, 2005). Additionally, according to Carrell (1984c), the participants are supposed to write all what they can remember from the text by using their own words or textual words. They are also supposed to attempt to write meaningful sentences rather than to write separated ideas. Accordingly, Rice (1980) holds that students are asked to rely on their memory in writing a passage as correctly as possible by using their own words in case they incapable of recalling them exactly.

In this light, Chang (2006) stresses that the circumstances under which the task of remembering takes place influence the reading comprehension. Moreover, Sharp (2002) sheds light on the relevance of instructions of a particular task which impacts its nature. In other words, he argues that the participants' recalls are meant to summarise the significant idea units rather than the participants' recalls in writing what they can remember. Therefore, he finds that the task instruction can affect the remembering process and, then, it has to be well explained. At this juncture, this process will be reviewed in the description

Chapter III: Theoretical and Pedagogical Framework of the Study

the instruments used for this thesis. Therefore, this will obviously necessitate analysing the students' questionnaires in great detail.

This research study explores the notion of remembering process that can be significant for the comprehension measurement. Williams, Hall, and Lauer (2004) claim that textual structure, familiarity with the content of the text, and students' reading comprehension affect their responses. In fact, they realise after concluding their experience that instructions are significant in recalling and identifying key words and responding either orally or in writing. Thus, these contextual elements pave the way for a better reading comprehension. In contrast to the traditional activities, where students were guided in their answers such as matching, true/false, multiple choices, etc. the response would depend, then, on the students' performance.

In spite of the fact that the researches mentioned in the previous chapter are related to schema theory for the sake of exploring reading comprehension, it emphasises the product resulted from the understanding which is manifested through the elements recalled from the text. At this stage, I can note that this claim of comprehension does not rely on the amount of recalled textual elements which has to be reviewed, since comprehension does not necessarily imply remembering (Chang, 2006). It rather relies on the quality of the recalled elements or the effective reading comprehension of texts.

In this juncture, recalling practice, as it is presented in chapter 1, tends to contradict many of its features. In contrast to the claim which holds that the remembering process can be considered more as a memory test rather than comprehension. Gambrel, Pefeiffer and Wilson (1985) as it is mentioned in Salimani Nodoushan (2014) claim that the recall process reflects the readers' assimilation of textual information, and thus; reflects their reading comprehension. Basing on this claim, comprehension is evaluated by the quantity of data in the response. Bernhardt (1991) holds that this method requires the readers to well comprehend the text in order to enable them to produce a logical and a consistent vision. In this light, the relevant element, i.e. reconstruction of textual elements, leads to errors and gaps in comprehension and therefore; allows noticing conceptual, linguistic and cultural aspects that are part of the comprehension process. Moreover, he also states that this way refers to the reader's construction of meaning with grammatically correct sentences as well as the paralinguistic elements which may hinder the comprehension process.

The use of the recall protocol, with regard to different elements, is supposed to be the main focus of this thesis. This has changed for the following reasons. First of all, the fact of using ‘*remembering*’ would necessitate the focus on memory theories that go beyond the field of this research work. It is also held that remembering textual elements does not imply automatically understanding the text itself but that learning may take place without comprehension (Sharp, 2002). Yet, there is a difference between the comprehension and remembering process though the latter contributes partially in answering the questionnaires on the selected literary texts.

However, it is important to note that this study questionnaires emphasis more the reading product rather than the reading process which is the focus of the recall aspect. As a final point, regarding the previous aspects of reading, one should stress that in this research study, the selected texts for reading are in their authentic setting; i.e. they are not modified. These authentic texts are conducted under certain artificial circumstances for the sake of experiencing them (to be discussed later). By considering such conditions, I see that the students’ psychological experiences which are related to remembering aspect, their comprehension, their assessment, and their tests differ in their environment with the exams’ circumstances where it is used to be.

3.6 The Relevance of schema theory in the Pre- reading Stage

As far as reading is concerned, teaching short stories require three main stages of reading: pre-reading, while-reading as well as post-reading activities. According to Espinosa (2005), pre-reading can be considered as the most important responses to schema theory (ibid). In order to guide and to teach students reading effectively, EFL teachers can do so by designing some tasks and activities. The latter aim at facilitating the learning objectives set by both the readers and the students.

According to Chastain (1988), the reading objective is mainly to strive for meaning or to reformulate the writer’s meaning. In addition, Brummitt-Yale (2011) posits that reading comprehension is a matter of understanding what the reader reads. In fact, reading is a voluntary, active and interactive process that occurs before, during and after one reads a written text. In teaching reading, the use of appropriate pre-reading techniques are widely considered as crucial elements in fostering an active and a productive use of the learners’ background knowledge (Williams, 1984). Therefore, these preparatory activities aim to activate the learners’ relevant knowledge, reconstruct this knowledge and serve as a

Chapter III: Theoretical and Pedagogical Framework of the Study

conceptual guidance in the reading of a text. In this light, a wide range of different activities and tasks can be identified.

Furthermore, it is claimed that learners tend to experience reading effectiveness if they are familiar with a set of vocabulary or key words before reading (Brummitt-Yale, 2011). In this respect, the present research work deals with such a type of pre-reading task. For the first short story, *The Boarding House*, the students are introduced to some key words as: boarding house, religion, marriage, etc. Chapter 5 will present an analysis in the results of the informants' acquaintance with such vocabulary. Similarly, the same procedures are conducted for the second short fiction '*The Lottery*'.

EFL teaching underwent different methods. In the nineteenth century, the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) was dominating. In this time, translating literary texts from foreign language to the learners' native language was one of the most important activities. Thus, literary texts were considered as a prominent source of EFL teaching materials (Prodromou, 2000). However, when the Grammar Translation Method was replaced by the Structuralism Approach in 1960s to the end of 1970s, there was not any use of literature. Furthermore, Structuralism focused mainly on the grammatical correctness and not on the interpretation, content or style. In other words, foreign language teaching was viewed in terms of linguistics.

Then, by introducing the Direct Method, the Audiolingualism, Community Language Learning, Suggestopedia, the Silent Way, Total Physical Response, and the Natural Approach dominated the foreign language teaching, literature was not used. After that, with the emergence of the Communicative Approach in the late 70s and the early 80s, literature was still marginalised. EFL classes tend to teach usable and practical contents. Therefore, teaching literature was not part of the curriculum. In this period, most EFL lessons were essentially experimented to allow the learners to communicate orally. As a consequence, dialogues were instructed in the curriculum.

Furthermore, since 1980s, EFL teaching started to witness an upheaval when literature reappeared. However, unlike the GTM, the present use of literary works in EFL classes is to enhance the communicative competence, provide 'a springboard for the development of critical thinking and aesthetic appreciation' (Bretz, 1990) and create students' awareness on the culture and society of the relevant country. Thus, literature is

Chapter III: Theoretical and Pedagogical Framework of the Study

nowadays going through an extensive reconsideration within English language teaching. In this fact, EFL classes have drawn more emphasis among teachers and more and more studies on the ways to teach literature. As a result, among many scholars, Lazar (1993) strongly recommended the implementation of literary texts into EFL curricular. Accordingly, many writings on this subject favour a content focused curriculum that includes literature (Kramersch, 1993).

Furthermore, the fact of teaching literature in EFL classes is beneficial since it provides: cultural enrichment, personal growth, authentic material and language development (Collie & Slater, 1991). In this respect, Erkaya (2005) also identifies four advantages of using short stories in teaching EFL: motivation, higher thinking level, cultural and literary competences. However, one may not totally agree with this scholar. First, the motivation aspect is probably linked to the short story's length. Second, higher thinking is not the monopoly of short fiction, but can also be applied to longer fiction or drama. Finally, cultural and literary competences cannot be limited to the short story only.

To begin, texts of literature can be more advantageous than other informational materials in encouraging the acquisition process since they are based on authentic contexts in learning new language. In addition, literary texts allow learners to identify literary themes and facilitate the acquisition of the target language. In other words, according to Brumfit and Carter (1986), a literary text refers to an authentic text and authentic language use, to which we can reply directly. Therefore, such an advantage seems to render literature appropriate to language teaching in different circumstances and cultures. Moreover, since literary texts deal with language for native speakers, literature stays as a teaching model whereby learners become familiar with different structures and agreements (Collie and Slater, 1991).

Furthermore, the fact of comprising real evidence of grammatical structures and vocabulary items leads literary texts to enhance the learners' consciousness of the target language and their competence in all language skills. Literary texts do not aim to fulfil specific purposes of teaching. They are rather interested in the author's concerns in his/her writing (Maley, 1989). Therefore, a comparison between languages used in textbooks implies that it is rich and varied in content. Many characteristics of the written language as the construction of sentences, the variety of possible structures and the various ways of relating ideas are classified at different levels of difficulty (Collie & Slater, 1994).

Chapter III: Theoretical and Pedagogical Framework of the Study

Moreover, when instructing learners to investigate literary language, they are simultaneously being asked to identify the standards of the language use (Widdowson, 1975). In fact, learners are supposed to get in touch with different languages, structures or conventions. This encounter is, then, relevant for the learners and more importantly for enhancing their language use. Therefore, they are able to value the richness and the diversity of the language and become critical vis-à-vis its different features.

Another advantage of teaching literature is the fact of providing cultural aspects about the target language. Particularly, literary texts enhance foreign language learners' vision about the setting and the population whose language is the target one (Collie and Slater, 1991). In other words, it tends to enable the learners to interpret discourse in different social and cultural backgrounds of the target language (Savvidou, 2004). In addition, when reading literary texts, learners start to view the world via others' eyes, regarding human values and different types of living and investigating others who live in different communities. They have the ability to understand the diverse events that the society witnesses, they can be social, political or cultural events taking place in a particular society. So, literature is a vehicle that allows learners to rely on their cultural background. Thus, in the present thesis, we aim to highlight the extent that cultural schemata has in the reading comprehension of literary texts.

Moreover, with respect to the fact that literature enables learners to comprehend and tolerate other cultures, people and ideologies which are different from their own, lead to personal and mental growth (Carter and Long, 1991). In the same vein, Littlewood (2000) focuses more on the relevance of the use of literature in EFL classes. He claims that the main issue of language teaching is the authenticity of the context. In addition, he argues that foreign languages are marginalised from the natural language context. In this respect, he claims:

Literature can overcome this problem because, in literary works, language creates its own context. The actual situation of the reader becomes immaterial as he or she looks on the events created by language. These events create, in turn, a context of situation for the language of the book and enable it to transcend the artificial classroom situation.

(ibid: 179)

By relying on these conceptions, it is clear that literary texts facilitate and enhance language comprehension. In otherwise, they provide real world experiences, connections between societies and individuals whereby the language used is either written or spoken, even though it is fictitious. In the present thesis, these ideas are apparent in the choice of the familiar short story ‘*The Boarding House*’. This process aims, as Littlewood (2000) claims, to highlight the relevance of the familiarity with texts as well as the authenticity of the language use. This implies that we tend to shed light on the fact that literature is a means which leads to a better comprehension of literary texts because of their authenticity and familiar cultural schemata.

3.7 The Selection of Short Stories

Within the framework of this dissertation, the short stories are selected, among the different literary genres, for the sake of length. Thus, in spite of its different advantages, some shortcomings arise in comparison with the use of other literary texts due to time constraints and syllabus instructions. For example, poetry requires the use of a sophisticated and a metaphorical language which tends to take more time to be understood. Regarding novels, their length necessitates a longer time in the sense that it is difficult for learners to read it given the time constraints.

As to drama teaching, it can be accomplished in class. However, because of the crowded classes, it would not be easy to perform plays within a limited timing. With regard to these claims, the selection of the short stories for this study does not require much time, the learner can read it in one session to comprehend it. In this respect, Allan Poe identifies a short story as ‘*a narrative that can be read at one setting of form one-half hour to two hours, and that is limited to, a certain unique or single effect to which every detail is subordinate*’ (cited in Abrahams, 1970). Thus, such a type of literary work seems to be the most appropriate genre to be used for this research since it contains one plot, few characters, brief description of the setting, etc. Therefore, it is preferable for students to be introduced to this genre rather than long fiction, drama or poetry.

Pardede’s (2010) study findings advocates the idea which holds that short stories are appropriate in EFL teaching. The results deal with the focus, perception, and the teachers’ identifications of their learners’ requirements at the Christian University of

Chapter III: Theoretical and Pedagogical Framework of the Study

Indonesia concerning the implementation of short stories in their language classes. This exploratory study showed that most informants consider short stories as being important for self-entertainment and parts of language learning classes. Furthermore, they also admit that the use of short stories in EFL teaching facilitates the mastery of language skills.

Teaching literature in EFL requires from the teacher an appropriate selection of stories. This is of his/her most challenging tasks given the socio-cultural background of his/her audience. Moreover, his/her other task is to assure teaching different short stories with regard to the learners' linguistic and literary competence. As regards the length of short stories which varies, the teacher is asked to choose a story in accordance to the course timing. In the light of this study, the shortness of the text is important for the students since it allows them to read, understand and complete the questionnaires and the tasks provided. Hill (1994) sheds light on three other elements in the selection of the text: the requirement of the students' abilities and skills, the linguistics and the stylistics² of the prompt text and the schemata content needed in dealing with the material.

The significance of the previous criteria can be regarded in terms of the vocabulary and the sentence structure of the short story to be taught. It has to be selected according to the learners' level. Since this research aim is to check the relevance of background knowledge, the short stories carry archaic foreign words, references, etc. The learners are, then, supposed to make use of his/her schemata in comprehending foreign cultural texts; they are asked to comprehend the speech used in the short story. In addition, the learner has also to understand the characters' roles and identify them as being local, ignorant or foreign. Thus, the fact of selecting short stories to be read has to take all these parameters into account, and it is the teacher who decides the readability of the text.

In order to achieve the readability parameter, the use of graded or simple stories is the most possible and practical one. With regard to Ur (1996), the fact of providing authentic texts to less skillful learners leads generally to frustration and non-productivity. In addition to the previous claims, Spack (1985) posits that the learner's interest should be considered in this process. In his view, it is significant for the teacher when selecting short stories to choose stories which would attract and please the learners.

²Stylistics is the study and description of choices of linguistic expression that characterise a group or an individual in specific communicative setting, especially in literary works.

Accordingly, Rivers (1968) holds that the students read and appreciate a particular story only if it deals with important things of their life interests and experiences. So, for him, students' background knowledge should be considered in the selection of short stories (as it is the case of this study). Thus, in the light of this thesis, Rivers (ibid) asserts that schema theory is relevant in teaching literary materials, and this study aims to either approve this claim or refute it.

3.8 Teaching Short Stories in EFL classes

While the previous discussion aimed to highlight the importance of the short story in teaching literature, the present one shifts this focus in order to examine its pedagogical bases. In fact, since the present research aims to check the relevance of background knowledge in the comprehension of literary genres, schema theory is, therefore, to be duly considered in the selection of the text in question. As an Algerian researcher, the first short fiction (*The Boarding House*) deals with cultural aspects that are close to the informants schemata. However, for the second text (*The Lottery*), it includes cultural aspects which are distant from the Algerian students' cultural schemata. In this respect, this section presents a sample of teaching a short story with some modifications according the thesis's central concern.

In fact, teaching a short story requires considering many students' parameters. Scholars as Adjideh (2006), Brummitt- Yale (2011), etc. have proposed many ways of teaching short stories; many samples of activities and tasks have been presented in this light. They aim to help teachers how to draw concretely their ideas about how to present and teach short stories in EFL classes. Furthermore, a student-centered approach is explained as a sample for this dissertation. It provides a detailed explanation of the short story, presents to the learners many occasions in order to construct their own thinking, ideas or feelings about the reading as well as enhances the learners' competences. In fact, what matters most here is their comprehension of the literary texts and some activities are not taken into account because of the learners' advanced level in the target language. Therefore, the following section presents a detailed design sample of teaching short stories in this thesis.

According to Brummitt- Yale (2011), reading comprehension requires understanding a particular text to be read. In this respect, the reading process occurs

before, during and after the reader reads a particular text. According to Ajideh (2006), learners read effectively only if they are familiar with the key vocabulary items of the text before reading it. With regard to this claim, activities such as questioning, creating semantic maps, etc. would be relevant for this research experience. And, in order to render the reading more effective, Bao Deyuan & Gao Yufen (2006) hold that it is not necessary for the teacher to devote more than one session in explaining the vocabulary items, the story events, and asking learners to read the literary text attentively. In the case of Algerian Master 1 students, they have completed a three-year B.A course in which they were supposed to have a good command of the English language. Thus, there is no need for the teacher to explain all the vocabulary items (ibid). Moreover, they argue that this way of teaching is classical and leads the learners to get bored easily. As a result, they suggest instead a teaching model that comprises three stages of reading: pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading phases which will be explained in the following discussion.

3.8.1 Pre-Reading Phase

In this phase, the teacher is required to introduce the topic of the literary text, to skim through the text, to scan it, to predict its events and to encourage the learners in order to activate their background knowledge. The latter process requires the teacher to urge the students to make use of their prior knowledge and skills for facilitating the reading comprehension of a particular literary text. Furthermore, Bao Deyuan & Gao Yufen (ibid) posit that teaching literary texts necessitates establishing an objective for reading. In addition, this model requires also the learners' language and skills in identifying the tasks for this stage. For them, there should be a familiarity between the textual content in the short fiction and the students' knowledge. In addition, the teacher's aim in asking them to read a specific text and set the objectives for such reading is to help and guide them in their reading comprehension. In this respect, the present research study favours this stage since the selection of the text to be read is done according to the learners' linguistic, cultural and literary levels. Thus, '*The Boarding House*' is chosen in respect to Master students of literature at Mostaganem University.

The pre- reading phase of this work consists of some questions that deal with their sociocultural background (religion, identity and social mores) of the target language. Besides, questions about the author, his country and culture have also been asked. As for the second short story, it is supposed to be unfamiliar to students. In spite of this fact, a

pre-reading task is devoted to this text which comprises a question about the definition of 'The Lottery' which is the main theme of the story. Additionally, in both short stories, there is a discussion to be conducted with the learners about the topic of the texts in which the learners exchange their ideas and expectations about the story events.

3.8.2 While-Reading Phase

As to the while-reading phase, it does not concern reading merely as an extensive process but also as the comprehension of the story per se. According to Bao Deyuan & Gao Yufen (ibid), this stage requires readers to highlight some facts or events while reading the text, while the teachers' task is to urge them to identify the aim for their reading. At this stage, the teacher's role lies in facilitating the text comprehension as well as the structure of the passage. In other words, the teacher acts as a guide for his/her students by encouraging them to be active in answering all the possible questions about the content of the text (ibid). In the case of the present thesis, the while-reading stage consists of a set of comprehension questions that deal with the story events and characters. Thus, in order to reach the learners' effective reading comprehension, the implicit questions require literary knowledge to be deduced from the text itself, as well as explicit ones that solicit the use of prior knowledge or experiences. Within the current experiment, it is requested from the learners, at this stage, to answer both implicit and explicit questions about the stories' events in order to check their literary, linguistic and cultural competences. Therefore, these questions imply the extent of the learners' comprehension and abilities to express their mastery of both the story and the competences.

In the same light, Bao Deyuan & Gao Yufen (ibid) argue that we can employ statements, instructions or questions which may orientate the reading process in identifying the relevant knowledge and the paragraph layout of the story. This implies that the teacher is supposed to be more motivated and engaged in this process. At this stage, while the learners are solicited to comprehend a particular text and to answer the questions related to their reading, teachers can help students to perceive the relative importance of text concepts and how these ideas are related to one another.

3.8.3 Post-Reading Phase

To what concerns the last stage, as an appropriate task for the post-reading phase are comprehension questions. According to Bao Deyuan & Gao Yufen (2006), the teacher

Chapter III: Theoretical and Pedagogical Framework of the Study

is supposed to take into account the vocabulary difficulty of the provided texts, to ask students to highlight the writer's objective from their reading, to analyse the grammatical structures and to encourage them to write about their reading. At this stage, by relying on these principles or instructions, the linguistic competence is measured through the learners' answers. And regarding the reading purpose, they are asked, in the provided questionnaire, to draw the moral conveyed by the story. For the first case (*The Boarding House*), the learners are supposed to highlight the familiarity between the Algerian culture and the target one (the Irish culture). And to what concerns the second short story (*The Lottery*), the learners are supposed to draw the extent difference between their culture and the target one in relation to practising the lottery. In addition, they are expected to call for their background knowledge to assess this celebration in America from an Algerian point of view (religion wise).

The pre-reading phase is expected to review the whole story, the summary of its events, the bottom-up analysis, and to relate prior knowledge to the textual one. Therefore, it is through the readers' answers to the questions of this phase that one can analyse his/her grammatical as well as linguistic competence.

According to Bao Deyuan & Gao Yufen (2006), most techniques that are used in the while-reading stage can be used for the aim of this stage. In addition, they recommend instructing students to work either in pairs or in groups. However, this is not the case of this research study, since what matters most is the learner's background as an individual. In other words, the aim of this research work is to check the impact of the schemata with both familiar and unfamiliar short stories through the learners' answers. In this stage, Bao Deyuan & Gao Yufen (2006) also focus on the grammar, vocabulary and/ or discourse tasks. But, this is not the main focus, in this study, because the learners are presumed to be linguistically skilful since they are Master 2 students. Therefore, appropriate choices should be made depending on the story characters and the students' needs.

The last stage of the pre-reading phase should concern the use of new relevant textual information with the learners' already acquired knowledge. In the EFL context, among the most used material for this step is writing; yet there exist others such as discussions, role-plays, conversations, etc. (ibid). In this respect, the selection of one of these lies on the students' level, cultural background, class size, etc.

Teaching reading can include three phases: the pre-reading stage, the while-reading stage and the post-reading stage. In addition, each phase requires a set of activities and tasks to be used. Thus, this method implies providing the learners with the useful skills solicited in effective reading comprehension to match the learners' needs in EFL in terms of literary, cultural and linguistic knowledge.

3.9 The Importance of Teaching Literature

Literarily, the word 'tolerance' denotes the ability to support some conceptions and thinking that one does not agree with. Such a definition is not applicable for every society. Moreover, it is not obvious to nourish this ideal in intolerant or partly intolerant societies such as Algeria. As a result, many scholars started to consider tolerance as a learning process through which the learners respect and learn from each other, disregarding differences, meeting cultural differences, denying clichés and creating new thinking. Unfortunately, according to many American students, the concept of tolerance is viewed as being ideal which is meant for academic purposes (Keshavarz & Assar, 2009). Therefore, tolerance is required to be important in the learning process since the latter deals with diversity, culture, gender, language, religion, etc.

Particularly, literature is considered as a vehicle that leads the reader to different areas in the past, present and future and encourages ones to use his/her imagination to understand a particular literary genre. In this respect, the ability to read literary texts is viewed as the most important skill that university students have to learn. They generally have to deal with EFL solely in their studies. However, in the case of Algerian learners, they are supposed to be skillful at literature and linguistics, and they do use English only for academic purposes. Thus, this implies that it is significant to teach tolerance through foreign literary texts, to understand and empathise in order to put him/herself in the shoes of other people in order to accept them with their differences.

With regard to foreign language, reading comprehension can be an ambiguous process that deals with using linguistic and cultural aspects which might, consequently, yield confusion for the readers. Thus, effectiveness in such a process may depend on several factors; one of them being tolerance of ambiguity that readers face in their reading. In this light, it is important to investigate their psychology since they are aware of the influence of language in their learning.

Additionally, one of the features of reading comprehension in EFL is either the tolerance or the intolerance of ambiguity. Reading comprehension can be considered as being ambiguous because of some characteristics like being new or unusual to some kind of texts, having too numerous cues to interpret, or being perceived as unstructured (Brown, 1987). In this light, Norton (1975) view the intolerance of ambiguity in interpreting data as being vague, non-complete, multiple, not structured, contradictory or unclear as relevant for the psychological menace. In addition, Reiss (1985) hold that learners, who consider themselves as being good at a language, view tolerance as being significant to them. Furthermore, Oxford (1990) posits that EFL learners are generally influenced by the new, the various writing mechanism, unfamiliar vocabulary items, grammatical rules, etc.

As a characteristic which enables learners to solve their uncertainties about language learning is tolerance of ambiguity. In spite this fact, Oxford (ibid) demonstrates that with regard to this characteristic, many learners lose their focus, which is solely gained by an appropriate use of metacognition like paying more attention and relating new knowledge to the familiar schemata (ibid: 136). Whereas; Chapelle and Roberts (1986) classify EFL learners, who are highly tolerant towards particular texts, as being comfortable in ambiguous situations in which the interpretation of motives is unclear. In addition to this claim, learners who are less ambiguous are regarded as threatening members in the reading comprehension process (ibid). Therefore, foreign language learners generally know the words' meaning in reading; however they may give up if they encounter some difficult vocabulary items.

In this sense, tolerance of ambiguity was regarded as a negative feature of many reading strategies which emphasise the learner's linguistic knowledge. According to Ely (1989), tolerance of ambiguity showed also a positive significance in generating meaning in the reading process. In this way, it aims to prepare learners for future reading comprehension. As an example, El-Koumy (2000) identifies the differences that exist among different levels of tolerance of ambiguity among Egyptian university students by relying on Norton's measurement (1975) of reading comprehension in EFL. His study highlights the link between tolerance of ambiguity and learning techniques which demonstrate that high, mid and low tolerant ambiguous learners can present different learning techniques that can, instead, result in different levels of language learning success. Therefore, he tries to point out that EFL learners are helped in order to render the ambiguity of students more tolerant vis-a-vis the language and culture of the foreign texts.

3.10 Tolerance Relevance in Teaching Literature

As debates are raised to deal with the learners' diversity in reading, they are required to be ready for their integration in the global society. Consequently, due to the development of technology, there is facility and easiness for people and students in particular to be exposed to foreigners from different parts of the world. At this stage, learners are able to acquire universal skills, accept change and admit relationship of all people in order to yield more efficient lives (Schmidt, 2010). Accordingly, in order to use the target language successfully, a fundamental relationship among people with distinct schemata and thinking has to be built. Therefore, by considering such relationships with tolerance, it would facilitate working together and make it significant for doing it.

The fact that Algerian students are exposed to printed books, libraries and online readings is an evidence for their intellectual openness. In the present case study, *The Boarding House* story reveals how it describes the social hypocrisy, the way women are paralysed by religion in Dublin and the oppressive world around them. At this juncture, a short story is not an allegory; it is rather a human experience of another world. Furthermore, it is significant to integrate that society, understand their characters, be involved in the story events and most importantly to be empathetic towards the characters and the story itself. Thus, the reading comprehension of short stories implies understanding the experience of the target culture.

In fact, if empathy is considered as the stepping stone of any literary story, literature aims, therefore, to change, shed light and develop thinking. Moreover, the fact of experiencing empathy is somehow a censorious indicator for achieving tolerance. Readers are likely to face personal and authentic events and draw differences and similarities between characters and the readers themselves. For example, in the first case study *The Boarding House*, the informants are supposed to compare the characters of the story to the Algerian society. Particularly, they relate the Irish women to the Algerian ones in their thinking and manipulation of men. This is shown in the manipulation of Polly and Mr. Doran by Mrs. Mooney. Indeed, the latter schemes to marry him to her daughter.

Therefore, the Algerian and the Irish are similar in their religious hegemony in their societies. Whereas, for the second fiction '*The Lottery*', readers are asked to compare themselves -as being Algerians- to the American characters of the story. In fact, they are

Chapter III: Theoretical and Pedagogical Framework of the Study

required to identify their unfamiliarity to the sociocultural background of the target community as the lottery celebration unlike the first story. Therefore, short stories often lead the reader to expose his/her thoughts and feelings about the characters, students might feel like they know and focus on these characters in ways they have never experienced within their society. Moreover, most students tend to read short stories as if they were involved in the story in order to arouse the extent of empathy or tolerance difficulty to experience through the reading process.

Following this path, another view has been raised in the light of diversity among students of literature. In fact, Christensen (2000) conducted an experiment on diverse students about a Chinese literary text. The latter dealt with violence; it created a relationship between the learners' lives with the text. Furthermore, it reflected their cultures, time and gender about their reading (ibid). Consequently, her students showed more empathy with the involved characters of the story since familiarity exists between both social lives. Such empathy, according to Christensen's experiment is essential for the readers' personal openness, comprehending different societies and building them.

Literature is an important means to enhance tolerance or empathy in reading about diverse texts. Generally, literary stories represent human culture and therefore target different issues of life. In addition, by using such a means in communication, one can share opinions, principles and experiences about his/her culture. In this fact, the present studies hold that reading about various societies enhances learners' positions about differences. Therefore, this is multicultural type of reading allows them to create opportunities in order to render them more explicit and question the clichés and opinions claimed by people about themselves and about others. Therefore, in the case of the population of the current exploratory study, Literature Master students are supposed to read and understand diverse literary texts regardless of their unfamiliarity with the text or their language difficulty.

Accordingly, short stories can also urge learners to acquire different critical thinking and skills, taking into account different views, finding solutions, and drawing comparisons (Demircioğlu, 2008). With regard to these convincing views, most of the studies conducted on tolerance or empathy shed light on implications for teachers as well as learners in their successful reading comprehension. However, these studies do not highlight much of the advantages of teaching tolerance and the relevance of teaching

literature in doing so. As a result to this claim, there is a requirement for further research studies to analyse the various tasks which aim to implement tolerance in literature classes.

Generally, language and tolerance are considered as being interrelated. Particularly, Danks and Rabinsky (1999) hold that language has not been always used for deceiving, manipulating and dominating people of a particular society, but also refers to a medium for education. This paves the way to make English language classrooms favourable for discussing tolerance (ibid). Thus, language can either be positive or negative towards tolerance. In this respect, literature is regarded as a means to use the powerful aspect of language. At this juncture, these two scholars (ibid) regard teaching literature as a transformative social process whereby learners can see the way thoughts can be changed and acknowledged (ibid). Any literary genre will not render a person tolerant, but at least, teachers have to implement reflection among the learners and develop it through discussion, tasks and writing.

3.11 Conclusion

Overall, this chapter describes some theoretical and practical decisions in relation to schema theory in the reading comprehension process of literary texts. I have briefly revisited some important theories designed for this research work. Additionally, I have also drawn some useful points to the model of teaching short stories with regard to the learners' background knowledge, on which this thesis is based. After describing the theoretical foundations that are relevant for this thesis in chapter one and two, the way has been paved to introduce in details this research work in the current chapter. The following chapter will describe the materials and the techniques used in this investigation. Moreover, it will present a detailed description of the methodological steps and procedures adopted in this research dissertation.

Chapter IV

**Methodology Design and
Instrumentation**

4. Introduction

As it has been mentioned so far, the present research work tries to examine the role that background knowledge plays in the reading comprehension of short stories in English. The research aims to measure both individual and group interpretations on the reading comprehension of familiar and unfamiliar culture-based texts. More particularly, this study analyses the impact of three categories of question-answer dichotomies, namely, textually explicit, textually implicit and schematically implicit to check:

- a. If schemata help Algerian learners in their reading comprehension of English by relying on the learner's cultural background knowledge.
- b. If there exists a relevant variance in the comprehension tests that are based on the questionnaires' type of questions (textually explicit, textually implicit and schematically implicit), as well as text type (an Irish text and an American text).
- c. If an advanced level of cognitive understanding and proficient reading are demonstrated solely by being linguistically skilful or by possessing a high prior knowledge or the combination between the two.

This chapter aims to describe the research design of the materials used in this exploratory work and the methodological steps followed to carry it out. In fact, it consists of the instruments and the means that were used to accomplish this research and to demonstrate its impact on the methodological choices that concerns data collection, analysis and interpretation.

4.1 Context of the Study

The University teaching in Algeria is based on the LMD system. It was firstly introduced in the Algerian universities during the academic year (2004-2005). And, for Mostaganem University, where this research study was conducted, it was introduced in 2009 in the department of English. It includes three stages: Licence (B.A), Master and Doctorate degree. First, the Licence is three years of common core study. Second, Master programme is a two year programme in which learners are oriented into different branches of speciality. They are mainly: civilisation, linguistics, literature, didactics, etc. Regarding the Doctorate programme, it is three to five years of research. It is considered, with regard

to many experts, as an evaluative step for the Algerian universities as well as a reform for the global high educational system at the national level. Indeed, the production of doctoral theses at the local level by young researchers would be a big challenge not only for the supervisors but also for the whole national university system. The quality and scope of these doctoral theses would be the beacon or the gauge by which both researchers and their directors would be assessed.

As far as the department of English is concerned, it comprises thirty one teachers who are specialised in different fields of teaching English as a foreign language that are mainly: didactics, language, civilisation, literature, pedagogy, etc.

This thesis is framed in the context of EFL research at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem, in the department of English. In fact, it investigates the learners' cultural understanding of foreign literary texts. These learners belong to a two year Literature Master programme. Particularly, the motive behind conducting this research framework is mainly practical. To put it otherwise, by taking into account this experiment, there is collaboration between students and the researcher and the researcher and the teacher.

4.2 The Participants

The present exploratory study investigates the reading comprehension of master1 students of the Didactics of literature comprehension of two culturally different literary texts. In addition, it also explores the teachers of literature's propositions and answers about this issue. The following analysis presents a detailed description of both teachers and students who contribute in this work.

4.2.1 Students

In this research work, the involved students of participated voluntarily. They are enrolled in Master 2 in literature. They are a total number of 78 students; 67 Algerians and some 11 Malians. Data were collected in May 2015. I have chosen to conduct this research with such students because I thought that since they were my ex teacher's own students, it would be helpful for me to carry out this investigation in his presence and support, it was reassuring. In that, he familiarised me with his students and asked them to collaborate with me in order to create a safe atmosphere to conduct this exploratory research. Moreover, the

motivation and the contribution of the students helped me to create a respectful atmosphere in the group, and their contribution ensured a smooth participation in the research study. The following table summarises the population of this investigation:

The Total Number of Master Students	78
The Total Number of Malians	11
The Total Number of the Algerian Participant Students	67

Table 4.1 The Population Division

For the first short story, the contact with the students is divided into three phases: the pre-reading phase, the while-reading phase, and the post-reading phase. The first meeting was devoted for checking the learners' background knowledge about *The Boarding House*. They were asked to answer some questionnaires related to schemata and to their social background. Actually, different observational notes were taken during this session. Concerning the second session, learners were supposed to read the short story and to answer the comprehension questions in order to check their understanding of the story culturally, literarily and linguistically. And finally, for the last meeting, learners were supposed to answer some post reading questions.

For the second short story, *The Lottery*, the same protocol was conducted. The contact of the learners with this short story was also divided into three stages. In the first meeting, the students were given some pre-reading questions to test their background knowledge about the topic which contain, according to me as an Algerian researcher who share the same cultural background as the informants, unfamiliar background to the Algerian culture. Concerning the second meeting, they were asked to read the short story and to answer the comprehension questions in order to check their understanding. Finally, the post-reading questions were asked to check the extent of comprehension of the story in spite of the unfamiliarity with the topic. The table that follows sums up the study procedures:

Literary Text's Title	Author's Name	Level of Familiarity	Procedures: questionnaire
<i>The Boarding House (Dubliners)</i>	James Joyce	Familiar	1. Pre-reading phase 2. While-reading phase 3. Post-reading phase
<i>The Lottery</i>	Shirley Jackson	Unfamiliar	1. Pre-reading phase 2. While-reading phase 3. Post-reading phase

Table 4.2 The Literary Selection

4.2.2 Teachers

In this research study, most of the participant teachers of English literature used to be my teachers. In fact, their age varies between thirty and sixty years old. Their experience in teaching at the university differs from one teacher to another. Moreover, some of them were trained abroad, while the others were trained locally. Regarding their contact, it was not easy to interview them because of their unavailability and busyness. Accordingly, many of them did not accept to take part in the interview. Consequently, the questions of the interview which were meant to be conducted as questionnaires were, then, converted as and distributed to the teachers during summer holidays 2016. Some of them were sent the questionnaires via e-mail. And their answers were collected in September 2016.

4.3 Instrumentation

During the experiment, it might be important to mention, at this stage, that these students were aware about the research study. They were supposed to read two literary short stories and perform some tasks based on their background knowledge and their reading of those materials. These tasks were provided with instructions that were required

to be done individually (the same tasks for both texts). By the end of this chapter, I will present a detailed description for the methodological procedures adopted in this research.

Data were collected in different sessions (on different dates), in May, 2015, November, 2015 and September, 2016. The participants were required not to prepare for the sessions. In other words, they were not asked to study the texts and have a prior idea about the background knowledge that these texts may call for. Each text required three sessions. They were provided with some questionnaires in which they were asked to reflect on their understanding of each text. Thus, data were collected in each session, however some of them were sent by e-mail, such as personal information and questionnaires about reading in English. The following parts include an in-depth analysis of readers' data collection.

4.3.1 Data Collection and Instruments

By considering the two chosen short stories with different themes, i.e. marriage in *The Boarding House*, celebration in *The Lottery*, different views and different cultural heritage are considered. In other words, we move from the cultural background related as in *The Boarding House* to the one related to *The Lottery*. The participants were supposed to answer in writing in the pre-reading phase, while-reading and after the reading phase. More specifically, the reading response task is the reader's frame which is based on her/his personal reflections and understanding of the text. These interpretations are determined by the visual representations of textual elements such as the combination of words, phrases or sentences with different information displays as: table, grids, diagrams, etc. Personally, it seems to me that the readers' response, the written tasks as well as the teachers' questionnaires are more interesting tools in exploring and measuring the reading comprehension process rather than the traditional method of measurement of the recall process.

More precisely, the collected data comprised the following:

- a/ a questionnaire about students' biographical information;
- b/ a questionnaire about the purposes of reading in English;

Chapter IV: Methodology Design and Instrumentation

c/ a questionnaire about the possible difficulties noticed by the reader and some strategies that may overcome them;

d/ a prior knowledge questionnaire about the cultural knowledge emphasis for both texts;

e/ a while reading comprehension tests;

f/ a post reading comprehension tests;

f/ a grid which aims to explore the cultural comprehension elements identified in each text;

g/ personal observation notes taken during the students' literature classes;

h/ the research instruments for each text are mentioned in the research design with the aim of investigating the reading process, i.e. the way readers view the cultural aspect in both texts while reading.

Following Sharifian, Rochecouste and Malcom's (2004) view in the different levels of familiarity with the cultural background knowledge, the two different texts which are selected, in this study, from different cultural schemata represented the experimental part of this research. Description of the short stories appears in the following details. It might be relevant to stress that the first short story, *The Boarding House*, tends to deal with a topic culturally close in content to the participants' culture. This short story is extracted from the collection of short stories entitled *Dubliners* written by James Joyce in 1914. It deals with the notion of Marriage in Ireland, and the narrator depicts the story events from an Irish cultural view since he belongs to it. The second short story deals with a culturally different textual knowledge taken from *The Lottery*. It is written by Shirley Jackson in 1948 and depicts the Afro-Americans life during the segregation period. In that, it deals with the celebration which is organised each year in an American village where one of the villagers is stoned until death.

As a result to the reading of these short stories, the informants performed different tasks which were approached from a cultural point of view. In addition, various readers' attitudes towards the textual cultural background knowledge as: simplification, generalisation and elaboration of cultural data were taken into account in the analysis of the results. Therefore, in this respect, two procedures of investigation are used in the present study; they refer to observations in literature classes of the teacher and the students

and questionnaires for both teachers of literature and Master 2 students' reading of the short fiction. As a result, these means are used for more reliability and credibility of this study results. In this respect, many scholars refer to the use of three methods of investigation as 'a triangulation method'.

Moreover, Cohen and Manion (2000) define triangulation as an '*attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behavior by studying it from more than one standpoint*'. However, this investigation was intended to be as such, however because of the teachers' unavailability, it was then used as a questionnaire for them. The following figure explains the methodological procedures used in this investigation.

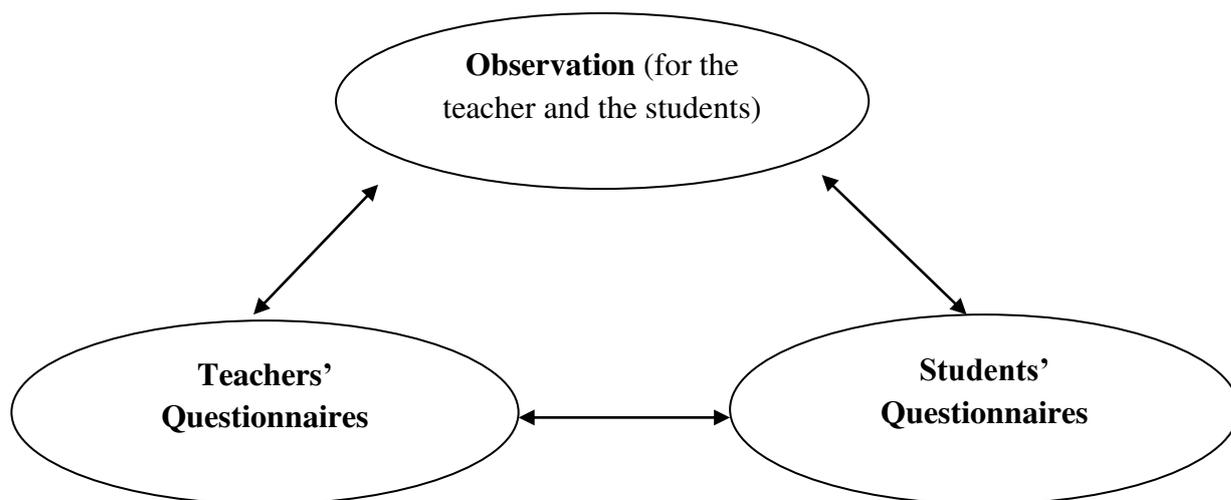


Figure 4.1. The Methodological Procedures

Furthermore, as a testing method of analysis used in the present investigation, this investigation deals with a comparison between two cases of study. In other words, it compares between the two culturally different short stories. Particularly, it is used to test the effect of two factors or variables on the same population of study. For more

Chapter IV: Methodology Design and Instrumentation

description, the following table illustrates the objective behind the use of each methodological procedure followed in this process of investigation.

Method/ Data Collection tools	Objective
Questionnaire (Teachers/Students)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-The attitudes of both teachers and students.-Strategies adopted by teachers and learners for an effective reading comprehension of a literary text.-The relevance of the linguistic, the cultural and the literary competence in the reading comprehension.
Experiment and Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-The learners' reaction towards the literary text.-The interaction between the learners and the teacher on the literary text.-Checking the learners' cultural and linguistic competences.
Tasks (Students)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-The learners' reading of the short stories.-The interaction between the researcher and the learners based on their prior knowledge about the short stories.

Table 4.3 The Description of the Methodological Procedures

4.3.1.1 Observational Description

Among the most important instruments a researcher can rely on is observation. It allows us to gain a type of data about the learners which contribute in helping them to learn and to overcome some educational deficiencies. Generally, all the teachers are supposed to shape the learners' behaviour, they have to make observations continuously. In this way, they can evaluate the behaviour of the learners in terms of series of criteria to render the observations more reliable and precise. Accuracy in observation is relevant in the sense that it enables us to capture a specific element or an aspect of the behaviour before us (Harrison, 1983). Thus, to extract some of the relevant data, I support this investigation by other tests such as questionnaires and tasks.

In education, we test in order to improve the students' learning process. Concerning the observation devices, in this investigation, it was done in two stages. At the beginning, I was obliged to look for permission from my supervisor to attend his lectures of literature with Master 2 students. Then, at this stage, among the notes that I have taken independently about the learners' behaviours in literature classes during two sessions are the following:

1. Most of the learners were present and punctual.
2. Most of the learners seemed to have prepared the lesson beforehand.
3. Most of the learners participated voluntarily.
4. The teacher, who is my supervisor, was rigorous with the students.
5. Students' background knowledge in literature seemed to be adequate.

By the close of the second session of the independent observation, my supervisor allowed me to introduce myself to the Master 2 students. I also informed them that I am going to teach them two short stories for the next sessions without disclosing their titles.

For the next session, I opened a kind of discussion with the learners in which most of them were involved. I have written the title on the board, and then asked them to reflect on it. Many of the students answered correctly by what the title meant. Among the different answers: *a kind of hotel in which many people live in, a Hawch, a big house, a motel, a residence where lower middle class people live and rent, etc.* And, when I told them about the story events, most of them were interested and involved. They seemed to like the story and their reaction was rather positive.

Regarding their interaction, they tended to master the language well. For the majority of the students who contributed to the debate, their language was correct, except for some of them who lacked fluency. For more reliability, some pre-reading questions were distributed at the end of the session. They were supposed to submit the questionnaires by the end of the session which lasted one hour. They were very motivated to answer the pre-reading questions. In addition, they were also given other questionnaires about their background knowledge in their reading in English in general, to be returned the next session.

For the second short story, where the subject was supposed to be unfamiliar to them, the observation was made during the first session. First, I introduced the title of the short story to the learners. Then, I asked them about their knowledge concerning the title (*The Lottery*). Among the collected results of the observations: *a game, Qmar (in Arabic)*. So, if compared to the first short story, the students' involvement was not as positive as in the first one, although many of them did participate. I then distributed some pre-reading questions about *The Lottery* to render the observation more reliable. At the end of the session, which lasted approximately half an hour, I collected their answers about the short story. Their motivation was not as different as for the first case study.

To summarise the observations made so far, we can say that the learners did not show a high difference in motivation between both short stories. In the first case, they seemed to be well versed in the topic. While, for the second one, they did not show any rejection of the topic; rather, they were eager to know about the story events. However, they showed more enthusiasm during the debate of the first story than the second.

4.3.1.2 Questionnaire Description

The questionnaires were administered in Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University to a total number of seventy eight post graduate students. The test was administered during three sessions for each short story. This arrangement was required by the fact that it was not possible to get one appropriate time that suited me as a researcher. Therefore, this investigation necessitated prior arrangements with my supervisor, the teachers of literature and the students in order to agree on the sessions to be held during their spare time.

As regards the questionnaires given to the learners, they were provided with three types of questionnaires. For the first type, it concerns the learners' biographical information which contain structured questions about their gender, religion, contact with foreigners and social background. For the second type, it concerns three close-ended questions provided with instructions. They deal with the purposes of reading short stories in English, the difficulties faced and the strategies to become a better reader. And to what regards the third type, with respect to Bao Deyuan & Gao Yufen (2006) model of teaching short stories, it contains three stages: the pre-reading questions, the while- reading questions and the post-reading questions. These stages were applied for both short stories.

After dealing with the questionnaires which concern reading literary texts, the learners are, first, given biographical information to be submitted at the end of the last session that follows the post-reading questionnaire. This is included in part 1 of the questionnaire. Among these questions, they are supposed to mention their names and gender in order to see if this influences their understanding and tolerance vis-à-vis the stories to be read. As for the questions about the learners' religion, their trips abroad and their contact with foreigners aim to check if their religious belief influences their reading by being either tolerant or not. Thus, this facilitates identifying the extent of familiarity with the read story in English and to see if their use of the target language is used outside the university context.

The second questionnaire deals with the purposes of reading short stories in English. It is a series of close-ended propositions provided with an instruction. It aims to check the frequency of reading in English either for academic purposes, for work, for being up to date, or for pleasure (see appendix 1). By choosing one of the proposed answers, we can identify the learners' motives in reading short stories in English.

Part 3 contains two questions about the difficulties experienced when reading and the strategies to become a better reader. The first one is a structured question; it proposed difficulties that may either be lexical, syntactic, stylistic, structural or cultural. Asking such a question is leads to identify the causes that may hinder the learners' reading comprehension of literary stories in English. This can help them in enhancing their reading comprehension.

As regards the second question, it consists of some proposed strategies that may contribute in helping the readers to better understand literary texts in English. It is provided with structured questions; i.e. yes/no questions. Among the proposed strategies: studying vocabulary, studying style, extensive reading or attending extra-courses of English. The aim behind such a question is to try to identify the learners' possible effective ways that can overcome their reading comprehension difficulties.

4.3.1.3 Reading Tests

Regarding the tests of the study cases, they were conducted through three stages. For both short stories, *The Boarding House* and *The Lottery*, the study undergoes three main stages; the pre-reading stage, the while-reading stage and the post-reading stage.

i. The Boarding House

In this case, the Master learners of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis were first given the questionnaire after a discussion with the students. During this interaction, some notes about the learners' cultural background knowledge were taken. After this, they were supposed to answer the questionnaire and submit it before the end of the session. The questionnaire comprises twelve questions; they deal with the description of the Irish society in the early 20th century. In addition, they tackle the religious as well as the societal parameters of Ireland. The aim behind the questions asked is to check the learners' schemata about Ireland, and therefore to see if the topic of the short story is familiar to them and near to their own culture. Moreover, they were eager to answer the questions and even their participation tended to be positive. They showed high enthusiasm, precisely because of great similarities between the Irish and the Algerian societies.

For the first question of the pre-reading test, it is an unstructured and a schematically implicit question. The learner is supposed to reveal their knowledge about the early 20th century Irish society.

Item 1: How can the Irish society be depicted during the early 20th century?

For the second question, it is an open-ended question. It is a schematically implicit question where the learner is supposed to highlight the main societal classes in Ireland

Chapter IV: Methodology Design and Instrumentation

during the early 20th century. To put it otherwise, s/he is required to mention or high light the upper class, upper middle class, middle class, lower middle class and lower class.

Item2: During that period, was there any relation between marriage and social class?

For the third question, it is also a structured question. It is a schematically implicit one. In this stage, the learner is supposed to identify the impact and the relevance of religion on both the Irish society during the same period. The former is required to highlight the control of Christianity on the Irish mind and the way people lived then.

Item 3: Is religion important for the country?

Yes

No

For the second stage, it was done during the session that followed. Here, the learners were asked to read the short story, and then answer the while-reading questions. This questionnaire consisted of eight questions guided by an instruction. The questions dealt with the characters of the story, religion and marriage in Ireland. This session was longer; it took more time than the first one since the learners had to read the text and answer the questions. Then, the questionnaires were collected at the end of the session, and the learners seemed very enthusiastic through their participation.

For the first question, it is an open-ended and a textually implicit one. The learner is supposed to discuss the nature of women in the short story. In this question, the former is supposed to mention that women were at that time manipulative as Mrs. Mooney and her daughter.

Item 1: Discuss the manipulative figures in this story?

For the second question, it is an open-ended and a schematically implicit one. The aim behind asking such a question is to depict the religious control in Ireland of the characters of the short story. The learner is supposed to answer by stating that religion was omnipresent in Ireland, and Mr. Doran was a pious man that was blackmailed by Mrs. Mooney on the ground of his professional status and religious position.

Item 2: How is religious hegemony represented in this story?

The third question is an open-ended and textually implicit one. It aims to test the learner's reading interpretation about the author's vision and attitude towards marriage in 'The Boarding House'. The learner is supposed to stress the negative view of marriage considered as a mercantile transaction whereby Mrs. Mooney plans to marry her daughter to Mr. Doran.

Item 3: What is Joyce's attitude to marriage in this story?

The fourth question is an open-ended and schematically implicit one. It aims to check the learner's ability to comprehend and interpret the complexity that exists between the mother Mrs. Mooney and her daughter Polly. The learner is supposed to identify this relationship where the mother pushes her daughter indirectly to get married to Mr. Doran.

Item 4: How do you fathom the relationship between the mother and her daughter?

The fifth question is also an open-ended and a textually implicit one. The learner is required to highlight the social relationship which relates Mr. Doran with regard to their society. If so, it should be clearly mentioned that they cannot match since they do belong to two different classes.

Item 5: Are Mr. Doran and Polly well suited with regard to the eye of their society?

Concerning the sixth question, it is an open-ended and a schematically implicit one. The aim behind asking such a question is to check if the learner comprehended the test, and to see if s/he is able to draw the main themes and issues of the short story: 'marriage', 'social hypocrisy' and 'religion'.

Item 6: What are the main themes and issues of the short story?

To what regards the seventh question, it is an open-ended and a schematically implicit one. It aims to verify the learner's categorisation of the Irish society according to the story. The learner is required to answer by classifying the Irish as hypocritical people who use religion as a means to hide their true nature. And this is seen in the story through Mr. Doran's marriage to Polly because of the trap set by the mother.

Item 7: How would you categorise the Irish society through this story?

Regarding the third stage which consists of two questions, it aims to check the learners' post-reading of the short story in order to check if its morality has been well conveyed to the learner. The learners were asked to answer the questions. This took place during the following session after the while-reading phase. Permission was given from the teacher, who is the teacher of literature, in order to be allowed to distribute the last questionnaire of this case study. It consists of two questions, in which the learners were supposed to identify their familiarity with the target culture, and to check if this contributes in a better comprehension of the text.

For the first question, it is an open-ended and a textually implicit question. It aims to see the learners' deductions after reading the short story. The learner has to focus on the family relationship and the importance of the institution of marriage in the Irish society.

Item 1: What values has the author focused on in this short story?

Concerning the second question, it is an open-ended and a schematically implicit question. It consists of the learner's comparison between his/her own culture and the target one. Therefore, the Algerian learner is supposed to mention the points of similarity between his culture and the Irish one: the importance of family union, religious hegemony, social paralysis and social hypocrisy.

Item 9: How can you compare Ireland during the early 20th century and contemporary Algeria?

i i. The Lottery

For the second case study, *The Lottery*, it was supposed to be unfamiliar to Mostaganem master students. It has also undergone three stages, as the first case of study; the pre-reading, the while-reading and the post-reading phases. The learners are supposed to read the text in the class and to answer the questionnaire at the end of the session. It consists of thirteen questions. During the first session, there was a discussion about the topic '*the lottery*'; however the learners' involvement was limited; as they were less enthusiastic than with the previous story. This session did not take a lot of time, it took about fifteen minutes. At the end, the questionnaires were collected.

Chapter IV: Methodology Design and Instrumentation

For the first question of the pre-reading stage, it is an open-ended and a schematically explicit one. The learner is supposed to define the term ‘lottery’ as a means of raising money by selling numbered tickets and giving prizes to the holders of numbers drawn at random, or as a situation whose success or outcome is governed by chance. The aim behind asking such a question is to check if the topic is familiar or not to the learner’s cultural background knowledge.

Item 1: As Algerian EFL learners, how would you define the term ‘*lottery*’?

For the second question of this stage, it is a semi-structured question. The latter is asked to check his/her experience with such a practice in order to identify their familiarity and empathy towards it. As an answer to this question, they are expected to say that it is not practiced because of their religious instructions and then, they have to explain the level of their familiarity with it and more importantly their tolerance towards this practice.

Item 2: Is a lottery usually a positive or negative experience?

Yes

No

Why?

For the while reading questions, the learner is supposed to answer twelve questions, all of which are open-ended. Some of them are schematically implicit while others are schematically explicit. These questions aim to verify the learners’ literary as well as his/her linguistic competence.

As to the first question, it is an open-ended and a textually explicit one. The learner is asked to identify the setting of the short story which takes place in a small village on June 27th (unknown year).

Item 1: what is the setting of ‘The Lottery’?

And to what regards the second question, it is an open-ended and a textually implicit one. It aims to see the reader’s identification of the mood throughout his/her reading of the short story. In this question, the learner is supposed to mention that the mood changes. It changes from the opening of the text, where the day is described as clear

Chapter IV: Methodology Design and Instrumentation

and fresh, to the end of the text where the stoning of a villager takes place. While the scene is depicted as beautiful, the actions are depicted as being anything but pleasant.

Item 2: How is the mood/tone at the beginning of the story, and how does it change at the end?

For the third question, it is an open-ended and a schematically implicit one. It aims to check the reader's ability to identify his/her literary competence through their comprehension of where the lottery started to take a new vision. Here, the reader is supposed to mention that this game which is practiced on a yearly basis starts to take a new turn in stoning an innocent person.

Item 3: At what point in this story did you start to think about "the lottery" in a different way? (Be specific)

For the fourth and the fifth questions, they are open-ended and textually implicit ones. They aim to examine the learner's literary, cultural and linguistic competences through their depiction of men in the short story. The learner is supposed to mention that this story enforces an unfair distinction in class status between men and women. The power is exclusively held in the hands of males in families. Women are portrayed as inferior housewives who must submit to their husbands' power over them because as men's force lies in their work, they see women as inferior beings in the society. The roles of men and women are expected to fulfill, in *The Lottery*, a firm division between the two genders.

Item 4: How are men and women depicted at the beginning of the short story?

As to the sixth question, it is an open-ended and a textually implicit one. It seeks to see the learners' interpretation which lies on their reading comprehension of the text. The reader is supposed to answer that the villagers treat the black box with fear by considering it as a choice which will result in stoning. It is starting to lose power within other villagers that used to uphold the tradition. People are becoming more reluctant to partake in the lottery.

Item 5: How do the villagers treat the black box in the story?

Chapter IV: Methodology Design and Instrumentation

To what regards the seventh question, it is an open-ended and a textually implicit question. It aims to check the readers' reasoning and understanding of the text. The learner is supposed to answer this question by stating that the population of the town grows, the black box couldn't hold the wooden chips any longer because the slips of paper take up less room.

Item 7: Why did Mr. Summers use paper slips instead of wooden chips in the lottery?

For the eighth question, it is an open-ended and a schematically implicit one. It aims to check the learner's literary comprehension of the theme of the short story and to check how to interpret it. In this question, s/he is supposed to mention that rituals of the lottery have been forgotten or changed in the USA. The lottery is now looked upon basically as just another day of the year. In the morning, the papers are drawn and the stones are thrown by noon in time for lunch. The reader can also claim that the lottery is unfair now since Tessie thinks it is so by the way she chooses her paper. Old Man Warner states "*people ain't the way they used to be*" and this can imply that he thinks the lottery is unnecessary. Yet at the end, he participates because this is the only part of the whole ritual that has not changed stone throwing.

Item 8: How is the lottery different and how it used to be in the story?

As to the ninth question, it is an open-ended and a textually explicit one. It seeks to check the learner's literary reading comprehension of the text. The reader is supposed to answer that it is not important; Mrs. Hutchinson admitted that she forgot the day of the meeting and she was washing the dishes.

Item 9: What was Mrs. Hutchinson doing before she came to the town meeting? Is this important?

For the tenth question, it is an open-ended and a textually explicit one. It aims to check the reader's literary competence about the characters involved in the short story. S/he is supposed to say that as the oldest man in the village, Warner is the one who comes the closest to state a rationale for the lottery, which apparently has origins so old that even he cannot say how it began; all he knows is that it is associated with abundance and with the agricultural cycle of the year. He seems to take it upon himself to make sure that the

Chapter IV: Methodology Design and Instrumentation

village doesn't change. When he hears that other towns have given up the lottery entirely, he grumbles, "*used to be a saying about Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon*".

Item 10: Who is Old Man Warner? What attitude does he represent?

For the eleventh question, it is an open-ended and a textually implicit one. It aims to test the learner's literary deduction and reasoning of her/his reading comprehension of the text. As an answer to this question, the reader is asked to say that the reason why the villagers practise the lottery is merely because it had become a tradition that has been followed since the time of their ancestors. They represent that the society blindly obliges the repetitive practice of an unquestioned tradition.

Item 11: Why did people practise the lottery?

For the twelfth question, it is an open-ended and a textually implicit one. The latter is interrelated to the previous one. It aims to check the learner's reading comprehension of the story. The learner is supposed to mention that people did not have the choice to practise the lottery. Most of the characters are static, because they don't care who is being stoned, as long as it is not them. Before Tessie was chosen to be the one stoned, she was very happy, and didn't seem to mind that it would be someone that she knows that would be stoned until it was her turn.

Item 12: Do you think that people believe that they have the choice to practise the lottery? Why or why not?

And finally, for the post reading questionnaire, it was conducted during the last session. It did not take a long time, it took only fifteen minutes. It comprises three open-ended questions. They aim to check the learners' reading comprehension of the short story.

Regarding the first questions, it is an open-ended and a schematically implicit one. It aims to check the learners' reactions of the lottery and its use with regard to their own culture as Algerians. The learner is asked to hold that his/her religion forbids the lottery practice and his/her culture contradicts this act.

Item 1: How would you react if the lottery tradition was part of your culture?

For the second question, it is an open-ended and a schematically explicit one. It aims check the learner's cultural and linguistic competences. In this question, the learner is supposed to mention points of resemblance between his/her culture and the target one. But, since the learners are Algerian Muslims, so there should not be any resemblance between both of them.

Item 2: Does the lottery resemble one of your cultural habits? (Mention it/them)

Finally, for the last question, it is an open-ended and a schematically explicit one. It aims to identify the readers' difficulties in the reading comprehension of the literary text which is unfamiliar to them. The learner is required to highlight the literary, cultural and linguistic difficulties in his/her reading.

Item 3: Is this story difficult to be read and comprehended? Why? Why not?

For the analysis of the questionnaires, they were all collected, however only twenty of them were meant for the analysis. This sample was chosen at random, since the questions are open-ended questions. This will be better developed in the following chapter.

4.4.1.3 Teachers' Questionnaire Description

The teachers' questionnaire constitutes the last means of investigation. It comprises two main sections; the first one concerns teaching literature and the second one deals with how to teach a short story. The aim behind conducting such a questionnaire is to reinforce the collected data from the observations and the learners' questionnaires.

Regarding the first part of the questionnaire, it includes twelve questions, three of which are open-ended ones and nine of which are close-ended ones. They are preceded by an instruction to facilitate the way to answer them. The objective behind asking these questions is to know the teacher's different ways of teaching literature and whether there are factors that influence it.

The first question is a close-ended one. The teacher is asked to mention the number of years in his/her teaching career in order to know if the teacher's experience influences the learners' reading comprehension of literary texts.

Item1: How long have you been teaching literature?

Years

For the second question, it is also a close-ended one. It is a yes/no question which aims to ask the teacher about whether s/he was trained before his/her teaching. This leads to highlight if a prior training before teaching does impact the effectiveness of the teaching of literature.

Item 2: Have you ever been trained before teaching literature?

Yes No

As to the third question, it is a close-ended one. It is provided with three answers. The teacher has to answer either by yes or no. This question aims to identify among the provided answers the objectives behind teaching literature. It consists of an open-ended question where the teacher is asked to give other objectives if they are not cited in the list.

Item 3: What are your objectives behind teaching literature?

* Developing your learners' linguistic competence Yes No

* Stimulating your learners' cultural background Yes No

* Developing learners' interpretative and critical Yes No

literary ability

*Others. Specify please!

The fourth question is an open-ended one. The teacher is supposed to highlight the possible obstacles that might be faced in teaching literature. By identifying these obstacles, this may lead to some strategies that can facilitate literature teaching.

Item 4: What obstacles do you generally face in teaching literature?

The fifth question is an open-ended one. It aims to know the teachers' identifications of the difficulties their learners generally face in their reading of literary texts. This can lead to think about ways to overcome these difficulties.

Item 5: Which kind of difficulties do your learners generally face in the reading comprehension of literary texts?

Chapter IV: Methodology Design and Instrumentation

For the sixth question, it is a close-ended one. It is a yes/no question where the teacher is supposed answer whether schema theory is included in the curriculum. This question aims to see if the teachers take into account the learners' background knowledge in their teaching of literature.

Item 6 : Is schema theory involved in the curriculum? Yes No

For the seventh question, it is also a close-ended one. It is a yes/no question where the teacher is asked to say if the learners' cultural background is considered in the selection of the literary text to be read by the learners. It aims to show the extent to which the cultural background is important in the reading comprehension of literary texts.

Item 7: Do you take into account the learners' cultural background in selecting literary texts to be read?

Yes No

Concerning the eighth question, it is an open-ended one. It aims to identify the teachers' propositions of the different strategies that can overcome cultural difficulties the learners may encounter in their reading of literary texts. Multiple answers may be considered in this question.

Item 8: What strategies do you use to solve cultural difficulties that learners' may encounter in reading literary texts?

For the ninth question, it is a close-ended one. The latter is a yes/no question where the teacher is supposed to say if s/he uses specific techniques in order to enhance the learners' literary competence. Then, there is an open-ended question related to the first one where the teacher is asked to explain the way s/he uses these techniques in his/her literature classes.

Item 9: Do you use specific techniques to improve EFL learners' literary competence?

Yes No

If yes, how?

The tenth question is a close-ended one. It is a yes/no question which aims to identify the teachers' evaluate of their learners' literary competence as being good,

Chapter IV: Methodology Design and Instrumentation

acceptable or not very good. By identifying the teachers' evaluation, it would facilitate to find strategies to improve their literary competence.

Item 10: How would you evaluate your learners' literary competence?

* Good

* Acceptable

* Not good

For the eleventh question, it is a close-ended one. The latter is provided with a series of factors that can bring changes to the learners' schemata. In this question, the teacher is supposed, according to his/her experience in teaching, to say whether each of the proposed factors brings changes or not in order to know which of them is effective in teaching literature.

Item 11 : In teaching literature, which of the following do you think can bring changes to the learners' background knowledge?

	Yes	No
A. Reading literary texts helps the learner to draw the difference between his/her life and the foreign one.		
B. Students often notice the similarities between events in literature and their own lives.		
C. Students often empathise with the characters of the literary work.		
D. The learners are rarely influenced by the text which pushes them to change the way they live.		
E. When students seem to understand the literary text, it is because they have been able to relate it to their own concerns about life.		

For the last question, it is a close-ended one. This question paves the way to the second part of the questionnaire; it starts with a definition of empathy, and the question aims to highlight the extent to which the learners are involved in with a particular short

Chapter IV: Methodology Design and Instrumentation

* Post- reading:.....

For the third question, it is an open-ended one. It deals with the teacher's propositions about the different means and ways to develop the learners' abilities in the reading comprehension of a short story. It aims to see how this teaching differs from one teacher to another and to indentify which way is the most effective.

Item 3: What do you propose to enable your learners to better read and understand the short story?

And to what regards the fourth question, it is related to the previous one. While, the first one is an open-ended question, the second one is a close-ended one. It includes some proposed strategies that the teacher may use in teaching the short story. And the teacher is supposed to choose among the provided space the strategies s/he uses in his/her teaching of short stories or to mention any others if they are not cited in this list.

Item 4: What strategies do you use in teaching short stories to your students?

- I help them read for plot and character relationship Yes No
- I help them to analyse the language Yes No
- I make them to be aware of the short story's non verbal Yes No

Others? Please, specify!

For the fifth question, it deals with the selection of short stories. It is an open-ended question where teachers are required to answer freely. This question aims to see the teachers' criteria in the selection of a short story to be taught in the class. Moreover, it seeks to check theses criteria's effectiveness for the learners' full understanding and comprehension of the short story according to their experience in teaching.

Item 5: On which basis do you select a short story in order to be fully exploited in your class?

Regarding the sixth question, it is a close-ended question that is provided with three frequency adverbs. It deals with teaching students how to interpret the short story. This question is provided with five items that are focused on: linguistic competence, themes, images, symbols and the target culture. In this case, the teachers are supposed to choose the frequency of their teaching of short fiction.

Chapter IV: Methodology Design and Instrumentation

Item 6: In teaching students how to interpret a short story, you focus on:

	Often	Sometimes	Never
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linguistic competence (vocabulary and syntax) • Themes • Images • Symbols • The target culture 			

And for the seventh question, it is divided into two main sub-questions. Concerning the first one, it aims to see to what extent extensive reading may enhance the reading comprehension. And for the second one, it aims to check whether the teacher always instructs extensive reading of literary texts or not. This may lead to check if extensive reading is an effective strategy in the reading comprehension of short stories.

Item 7: Extensive Reading: this factor requires reading much, for different reasons, to enhance the learners' reading comprehension of short stories.

	Completely	Partly	Not at all
- Does extensive reading in literature enhance reading comprehension?			
- Do you always instruct extensive reading of literary texts?			

To what regards the eighth question, it is a close-ended one. It tries to seek the frequency of times teachers teach short stories in their class in order to highlight their importance.

Item 8: How often do you teach short stories in your class?

Often Sometimes Never

4.5 Qualitative Vs. Quantitative Analysis of the Study

The present study is based on a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods of investigation. Primarily, it relies on a triangulation method since it employs an observation, a task and a questionnaire for both Master Literature students and their

teachers. These three methods are used for the reliability of the results which will be discussed in details in the following chapter. This implies that this study is longitudinal since it relies on observing the students during different sessions in their literature classes. In this respect, the researcher does not interfere; she rather conducts several observations of the same phenomenon which is the learners' reading comprehension of short stories.

By considering two variables, this experiment was conducted throughout three weeks, for each story, in order to detect the behaviours and the changes learners witness in their reading of the familiar and the unfamiliar short stories. In addition, it involves the investigation of the changes readers make during the recall process. Therefore, on the basis of this dimension of analysis, researchers claim that the recall process also contributes in exploring the *process* of the reading comprehension. In this light, Heinz (2004: 98) and others stress that the process of recalling "enhances quantitative and, more importantly, qualitative data collection". Thus, qualitative data collection is more dominant in this research rather than the quantitative one.

For the quantitative data collection method, it aims to analyse the quantification of all the ideas of a text in the recall process. The short story is divided into idea blocks, which are then identified and quantified in the recall process. The more ideas exist in the remembering process, the more learners are supposed to have understood the short story in their answers to the questionnaires provided. Such a dimension of analysis emphasises the quantity of the recalled elements and how accurate they are remembered. However, it is important to highlight that the quantity of recall is a measure of comprehension in the sense that the quantity can be recalled where memory is an important factor in the reading comprehension.

Moreover, the qualitative analysis requires a close exploration of the possible changes readers witness during their remembering process. In this respect, investigators of this field hold that recall procedures lead to the exploration of the reading process. Among many scholars, Heinz (2004: 1998) highlights that the recall process improves quantitative, and most importantly, it improves qualitative data collection. Consequently, I can state that the latter process is manifested in terms of linguistic units and quality of recall analysis which change the readers' process in their reading comprehension of literary texts. Despite

this fact, I notice that there is considerable confusion in this formulation since the analysis depends on the changes made precisely during *recall* not during *reading*. Therefore, there is a need to find strategies to improve the recall process such as the extensive reading, vocabulary session techniques, or reading response tasks that I will propose in the final chapter in great detail.

Particularly, there is a noticeable confusion when investigators use schema theory. With regard to this quantitative and qualitative analysis of recall, they hold that this study investigates the process of reading. Furthermore, very few studies in literature in relation to schema theory give a whole picture of performance (Steffensen, Joag-Dev and Anderson, 1979). In addition, some scholars state that that there is a tendency in discourse research to focus only on few preferable measures. These measures are chosen to conform to the theoretical position. On the one hand, those scholars who are constructivist¹ biased tend to call for more elaborations and intrusions. And on the other, those who are abstractive trace theory biased tend to measure amount of recall of textual elements (ibid). In other words, the authors aim to continue their research, in the sense that they look for more elaborations, distortions and amount of recall of relevant and irrelevant textual elements. Therefore, they simultaneously try to explain and hypothesise within schema theory.

Moreover, the qualitative changes are noticed when the researchers hold that readers yield elaborations, distortions, etc. during the reading process and later in recall, this difference is not considered or manifested in the study design. The contradictions and the conformity that I explain here between the theory levels, data collection and data analysis are a feature of the studies reviewed in the previous chapters of this thesis.

Regarding the cultural studies reviewed in the previous chapters, I notice the importance of the contrast that exists between both *product* and *process* in the reading comprehension, represented in most methodological decisions. This contrast lies between the quantitative analysis of remembering via the frequency of occurrence of the already

¹ **Constructivism** is primarily a *theory of learning* based on the idea that knowledge is constructed by the knower based on mental activity. Learners are considered to be active organisms seeking meaning. Constructivism is founded on the premise that, by reflecting on our experiences, we construct our own understanding of the world we live in.

acquired and known ideas of the short stories and qualitative analysis of remembering via the observation of the changes readers witness in their reading comprehension.

Therefore, both the process and the product are used together in the methodology of the present research. As it is mentioned in Sharifian, Rochecouste and Malcom (2004), in spite of the cultural familiarity which exists with the short stories, undoubtedly, the methodology stresses the importance of both process and product. Overall, the distinction between them falls apart in this case until the process is complete as this investigation is concerned with the while and after reading and how the existing pre-knowledge is modified by the process itself.

4. 6. Conclusion

This chapter has described the research design of this experimental study in details and has also involved the rationale for the methodological decisions. It has given an overview of the research design in order to allow the reader to view the different procedures adopted in the realisation of this investigation. In this respect, I have presented an overview of previous research in accordance to the data collection instruments and the data analysis measures in the literature review.

By noticing some deficiencies in traditional methodological tools with regard to the circumstances under which this study was conducted, I have then proceeded to adopt my own. The latter process has been followed up by an explanation of each proposed instrument and measure. Thus, the chapter focuses on providing an explanation of each particular methodological decision and their complementation to render the research more reliable. In the next chapter, light will be shed on the interpretation and the analysis of the data as they actually occurred in the present investigation. To put it otherwise, it will try to describe, illustrate the way I followed in the analysis of the collected data.

Chapter V

Data Analysis and Discussion of the Findings

5. Introduction

The present chapter deals with the description of the results and the analysis of data obtained in this exploratory study. They are arranged according to the main research questions; i.e. the findings of the data collection instruments are taken into consideration in the analysis of both the students' and the teachers' responses. Particularly, I present the results in two main sections in order to facilitate their readability. The first section is devoted for the questionnaires' results which concern the purposes of reading short stories, the difficulties and the strategies for reading stories in English. And for the second section, it includes the analysis as well as the discussion of the findings about the different stages of reading literary texts. The statements provided in this investigation are arranged according to the presentation of the results taken during the different tasks presented to the participants in the comprehension process.

Moreover, this chapter sheds light on findings linked to understanding familiar as well as unfamiliar culture- based literary texts. I will present a close analysis of the different processes involved in the reading comprehension of such literary genres. These processes concern all of the linguistic, the cultural and the literary understanding since the aim of this research is to explore the relevance of the learners' prior knowledge in reading. Furthermore, this chapter tries to discuss, through the results obtained, the extent of distinction between reading familiar and unfamiliar texts. However, this will result in the learners' effective understanding of any culture-based texts.

The current chapter starts by introducing the main issues of this study, important for presenting the results. First of all, there should be a clear distinction between the three stages of reading both texts (prior, while and post reading). Another important factor is the dichotomy *process-product* which is already discussed in chapter 2. Yet, it is also significant to highlight the relationship between the instruments used in the data analysis process as it is already described in the previous chapter. The latter, then, tries to present a summary of the results based on different measures of analysis in order to yield an overview of the way EFL master students read and comprehend cultural and literary texts in this research. Therefore, it provides a detailed analysis of one participant, whose answers to the comprehension questionnaires of the stories is considered as a representative model of the other participants.

5.1 An Overview of the Study

It is important to answer the main question of this research study which is: are the Master EFL learners' linguistic, literary and cultural schemata necessary in the reading comprehension of literary texts? I have already mentioned in chapters three and four, in the *pre*, *while* and *post* reading phases represent, the aim of this investigation design. More particularly, I have also described the triangulation method that is based on three main instruments included in this study in order to explore the process of reading. To put it differently, this investigation explores how these readers approach literary texts during the reading process itself. It is manifested through the difficult elements or items the learners see before and *during* their reading by identifying their points of misunderstanding from the read text. In fact, it is through answering their pre-reading questions that they can use their retrospective recalling of data that are based on their cultural aspects. The latter are related to the text as in the case of *The Boarding House*.

Whereas, in the case of the second short story, the same procedures were conducted; i.e. the retrospective recalling in the pre-reading questions differ in their unfamiliarity or their cultural distance between the readers' socio-cultural background and that of the text. And to what concerns the while- reading questions, they reflect either the significance or insignificance of learners' background knowledge use in their answering comprehension questions about the text. And on the other hand, the post-reading questions are designed for the sake of allowing the learner to self-assess him/herself in terms of cultural appreciation of such themes as marriage and gambling.

5.2 Manipulating the Research Questions

In manipulating the research questions, it is important to stress the relevance of the dichotomy *product & process* in reading comprehension. This dichotomy is important in drawing the methodological decisions for the present investigation. In this respect, there is an opposition which lies on the *quantitative* analysis of the purposes of reading short stories in English, difficulties experienced during reading English and the strategies to overcome them when reading such texts. Besides, the *qualitative* analysis of the readers' reflections leads to interpreting and recalling textual elements. Therefore, the opposition that exists between product and process is based on the way reading and understanding is approached in this study. Moreover, the total number of this population is estimated to 78

master students, among which 22 are Malians. The latter are not considered in this research since they do not fall in the scope of this study. Therefore, in conducting this work, only 31 students among 67 learners were chosen randomly as a representative sample. They were questioned about the idea that deals with their interpretation of textual elements as a reliable signal for their comprehension. Consequently, this idea measures the textual interpretation which refers to the *product* of comprehension that occurs after reading. Moreover, it is significant to consider it as an appropriate measure to the while reading comprehension as a process.

Furthermore, in the analysis of the reading comprehension, there is a distinction among the learners' degree of comprehension. In other words, the difference which exists among their responses about before and while reading questions is taken into consideration in the qualification of their comprehension. In this light, a grid about the readers' responses is designed for the sake of assessing them (to be presented later). The design for such a model allows me to classify the reading level of comprehension with regard to the three phases of reading.

5.3 The Learners' Questionnaires Analysis

It seems significant to begin reporting the results of the informants before introducing the analysis related to the aim of this thesis. By taking into account the learners' mastery of the language and prior knowledge, by being aware of the readers' identity, their relation to reading short fiction and their motives behind reading short stories enable the researcher to analyse their questionnaires. Therefore, the results should respect the scope of the learners' profiles that will be presented later.

5.3.1 Biographical Information

Furthermore, the main focus of this research lies on its findings from the collected learners' biographical data in EFL context. The latter are conceived to underline the relevance of the reader's sociocultural background which allows the description of his/her experiences with EFL reading. Additionally, such experiences may differ from one student to another because of urban and rural background differences.

Chapter V: Data Analysis and Discussion of the Findings

The biographical questionnaire enables us to see that the population is made of 67 informants among whom 48 are females and 32 males. However, as it is already mentioned, for the sake of manipulating the data analysis, I preferred to choose only 31 students at random (as it is shown in the following table). In the present sample, out of twenty informants, there were 23 females and 8 males. There is a superiority of females over males if compared to the total number. Most of them seemed to be in their early twenties when the questionnaires were first distributed. The following table and pie charts present close details of the participants' questionnaires.

<i>Names</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Practicing Muslim</i>	<i>Social origin</i>	<i>Trips abroad</i>	<i>Contact with foreigners (Internet)</i>
Wafaa	Female	Yes	Rural	No	No
Fatima	Female	Yes	Rural	No	No
Khouira	Female	Yes	Urban	No	Yes
Boualem	Male	Yes	Urban	No	Yes
Zakaria	Male	Yes	Urban	Yes	Yes
Soumia	Female	Yes	Rural	No	No
Zinelabidine	Male	Yes	Urban	No	Yes
Abdelghani	Male	Yes	Urban	No	Yes
Lamia	Female	Yes	Urban	No	Yes
Leila	Female	Yes	Rural	No	No
Sami	Male	Yes	Urban	Yes	Yes
Asmaa	Female	-	Urban	No	Yes
Rokaya	Female	Yes	Rural	No	No
Abdenmour	Male	Yes	Urban	Yes	Yes
Nassima	Female	Yes	Urban	No	Yes
Ayoub	Male	Yes	Urban	No	Yes
Marwane	Male	Yes	Urban	No	Yes
Zohra	Female	Yes	Rural	No	No
Mariem	Female	Yes	Urban	Yes	Yes
Nabila	Female	Yes	Urban	No	Yes

Table 5.1. The Students' Biographical Information

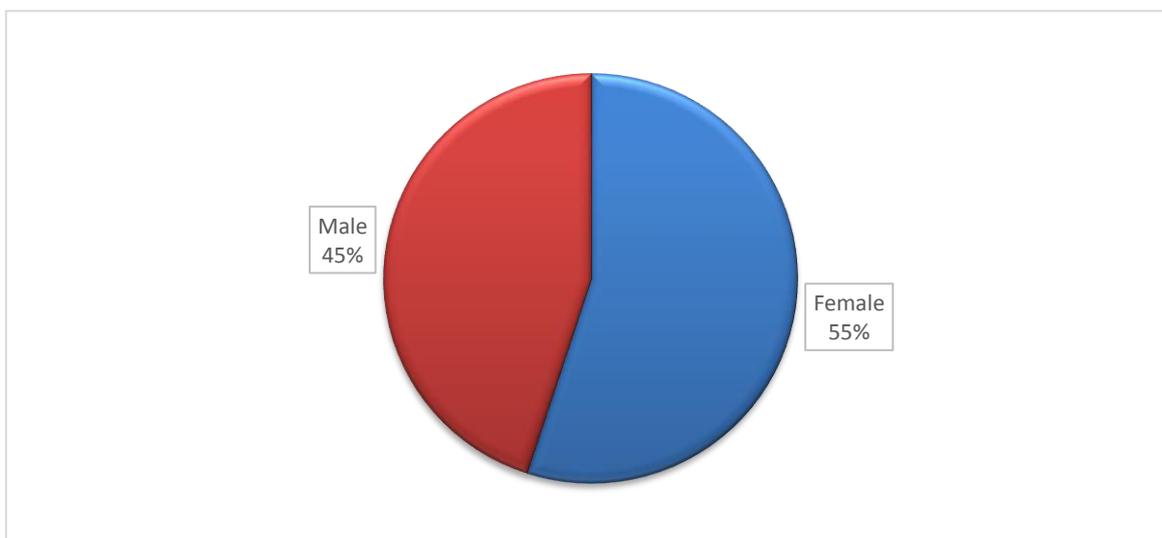


Figure 5. 1 Participants' Gender

According to the results of the informants' practice of religion, all of them reported that they were practicing Muslims apart from one female (Asma), who did not provide any answer to this question. Therefore, this implies that religious practice tends to be strong among them. This can provide important information since the story of *The Boarding House* has a religious motif among others. In addition, this point is important since it allows us to check their tolerance towards cultural issues in foreign texts as in *The Lottery*. In other words, this shows the impact of the readers' religion in their comprehension of foreign texts.

To what concerns the readers' social origins, 6 informants hold that they were from rural origins and 23 of them hold that they were from urban ones. The fact of asking the readers about their social origins aims to check if they affect their reading, as it is already held in chapter 2 and 3 by Rosaldo (1993), Norton Pierce (1995), etc. In other words, the readers' social background affects their reading comprehension of literary texts. Moreover, such a question aims to see if either their urban¹ or rural² origins hinder their reading comprehension of literary texts or not. Therefore, this factor is going to be taken into

¹ **Urban:** to describe a small, traditional society where people have personal face to face relationship with each other and where they value social relationships as ends in themselves.

² **Rural:** People in such societies has more impersonal, distant relationships with each other and lived to use social relationships as a mean to an end. Individualism is valued more than group solidarity. (Ferdinand Tonnies, 1887).

account later in the analysis of the learners' reading comprehension questions. The following chart presents the social origins of the informants.

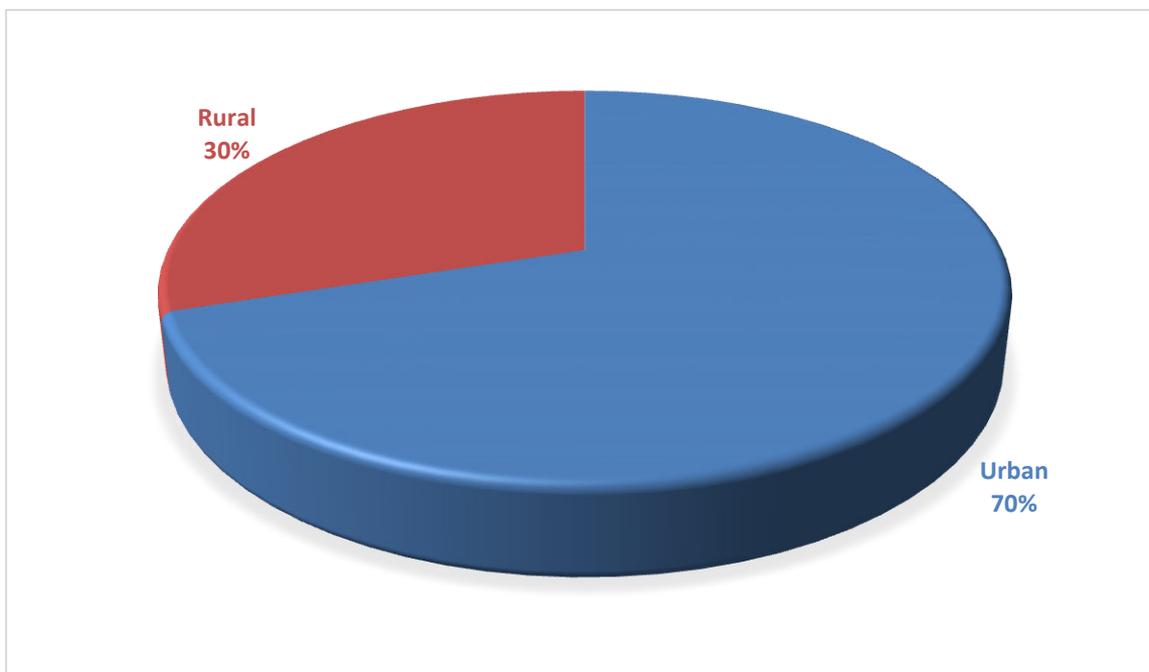


Figure5.2. The Learners' Social Origins

Concerning the readers' questions about their trips abroad and their contact with foreigners, they aim to check the readers' openness towards foreign cultures. Furthermore, they also aim to highlight the extent of their tolerance towards reading foreign fiction, as it is the case of this research work. In other words, the learners' trips abroad and their contact with people from different parts of the world may allow them to be more open to know other cultures and eager to read about them.

The following bar graph presents a result of the readers' answers about these questions. Most of them do not travel abroad nor have contact with foreigners. In that, 31 % of the informants have never been abroad though they study English. And only 31 % of them do have contact with foreigners via the internet. Therefore, in respect to schema theory, this can imply either their intolerance towards the Irish and the American cultures or their ineffective reading comprehension since they did not have prior experience with them. The following bar graph presents the findings concerning these factors.

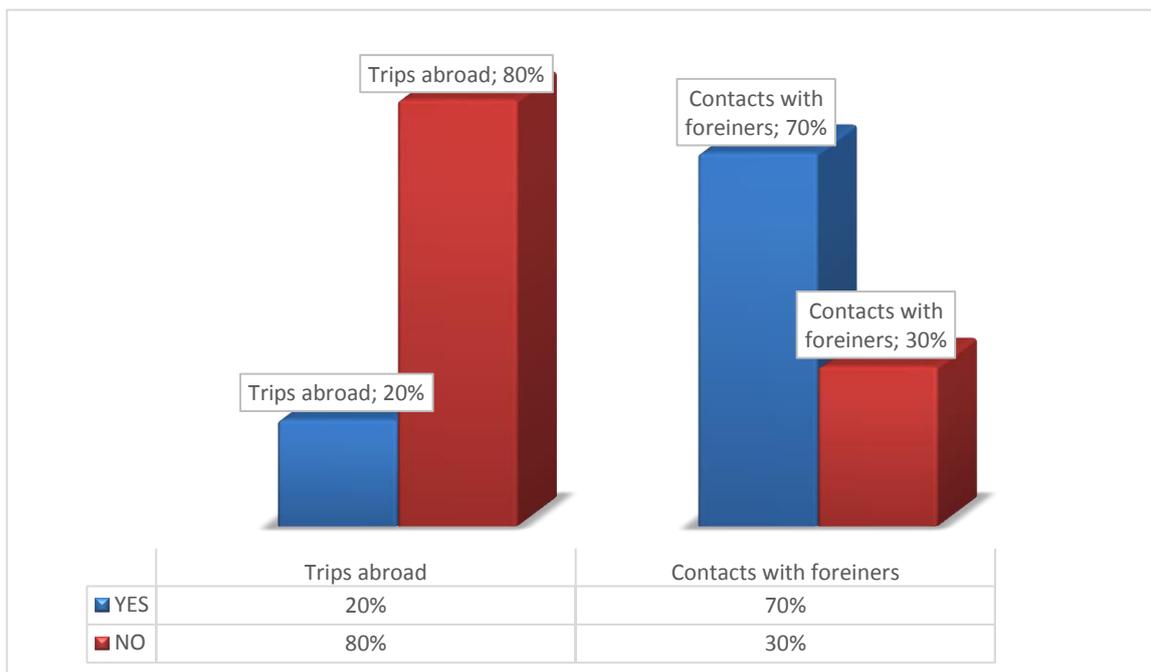


Figure 5. 3 The Readers’ Trips Abroad and their Contact with Foreign

5.3.2 The Readers’ Motivation in Reading Short Stories

The questionnaires of the learners’ purposes of reading short stories showed the way the participants view reading. They deal with the extent of their learners’ aims frequency: their academic objectives, work, being up to date and pleasure. According to the results of the questionnaires given to the informants, among the sample, only 3 students reported that they had never read short fiction for academic purposes, only 2 of them rarely read for such purposes, 3 students sometimes read them and 24 held that they often read for these purposes. These results can imply that most students are motivated only by their academic requirements as exams or the teachers’ instructions. Only one informant did not provide any answer to this question.

Concerning the second purpose, only two students held that they have never read short fiction for work, 3 informants do rarely read them for the same reason, 9 of them held that they sometimes read them for work and 7 readers read such type of stories. These results imply that they are also motivated by the work in reading short stories.

Additionally, to what regards their reading to be up to date in reading short stories, only one reader has never read for such a reason. Four of them rarely read such kind of stories. Furthermore, 9 of the informants held that they sometimes read for the same reason. And 6 of them often read short fiction in order to be up to date. This may refer to their high motivation and will be up to date in reading such kind of fictional stories.

For the last motive of reading short stories, there was one informant who has not provided any answer to this question. No reader that s/he has ever read such type of fiction for pleasure. Four of them held that they rarely read short stories for pleasure. And, 9 of them sometimes read them for the same reason. Moreover, 6 informants held that they often read this type of stories for pleasure. Consequently, this may imply that most Master students who read short fiction for pleasure seem to be quite motivated.

Therefore, as the results show, Master students of literature are motivated in their reading of literary texts. After the analysis of their questionnaires in order to check their motives behind reading short fiction, the findings showed their motivation. The latter is manifested through their academic requirements or their teachers' instructions, work as a teacher of literature, reading being up to date fiction and reading merely for entertainment and pleasure. The following chart shows the details of this analysis.

5.3.3 The Difficulties in Reading Short Stories

Concerning the questionnaires which deal with the difficulties learners face in their reading of short stories, they may not be or they may be lexical, structural or cultural. By analyzing such difficulties, we can seek some strategies to overcome their reading problems. Therefore, in analyzing such questionnaires, the findings showed that only 3 of the informants claimed that they do not face any difficulties in reading short stories. In addition, 23 of them held that they see lexical misunderstanding, i.e. the vocabulary items that readers do not understand. Moreover, only 4 of the informants saw that they found reading difficulties in terms of stylistics. In other words, the difficulty of the literary style learners find in their reading of short fiction that can be considered as an obstacle for their comprehension.

Besides, 21 students held that they found structural difficulties in their reading of such a type of stories. This may imply that they have problems of understanding English grammar. To put it differently, their mastery of the English language seem to be weak since half of the informants held that they face such a deficiency in doing so. Finally, only 4 readers encounter cultural problems, i.e. they may neither understand nor tolerate foreign cultures in their reading short fiction. Thus, according to these findings, Master students seem to lack more lexical and structural mastery of the target language rather than the cultural or the stylistic one.

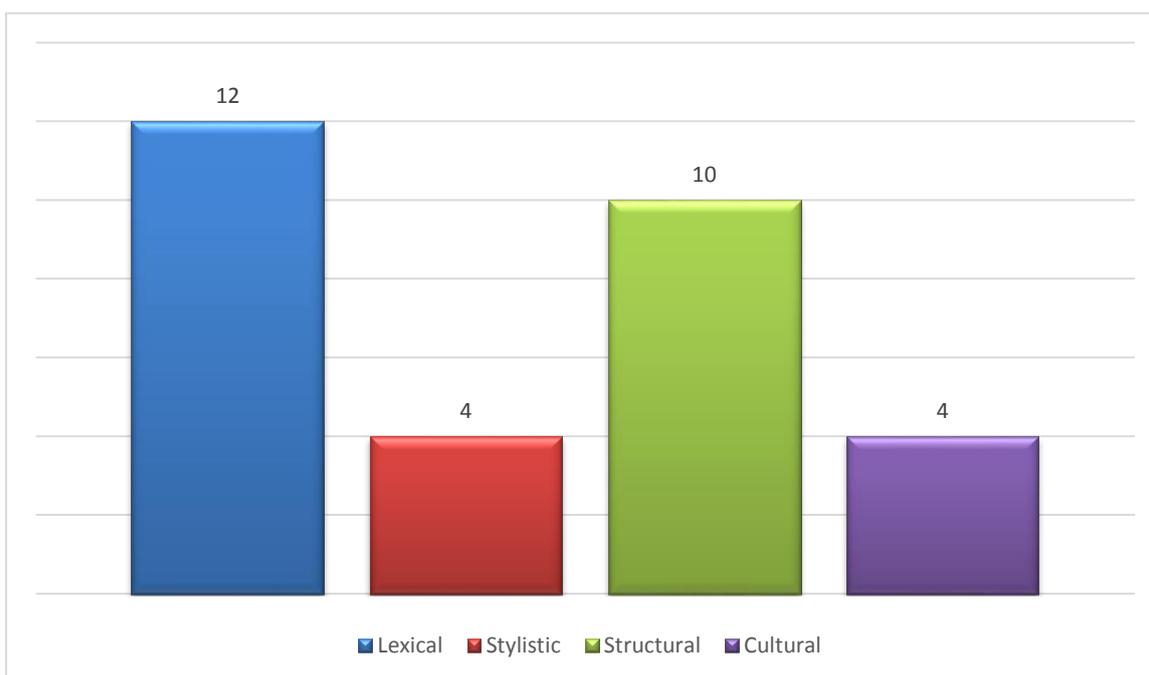


Figure 5. 4 The Difficulties in Reading Short Stories

5.3.4 The Learners' Strategies to Improve Reading

By asking this questionnaire, the informants were supposed to answer whether the proposed strategies were relevant or not for their reading effectiveness. Among these strategies, there are: studying vocabulary, reading more (extensive reading) and attending extra-courses in English. Regarding the first strategy, it is important to mention that out 31 informants, 3 of them did not provide any answer. Besides, 3 of them held that they did not agree with the study of vocabulary in order to become a better reader; while, 26 of them agreed on studying vocabulary items for the same reason. Therefore, in addition to the

previous findings (lexis and structural difficulties of reading), learners are aware of their need to improve their reading deficiencies by learning more vocabulary or lexis.

As to extensive reading, 28 students from the sample agreed on reading more as being one strategy to become a better reader, except one student who did not provide any answer and another one who disagreed with this strategy. Concerning the attendance of extra-courses of English, 3 informants did not answer and 6 of them disagreed with this strategy. In addition, 23 of the students agreed that attending extra English courses fosters the effectiveness of their reading. Therefore, according to these findings, it is better to use these three strategies that may lead to improve the reading comprehension of the target language and then, their reading of short stories. The following graph presents the results of this questionnaire.

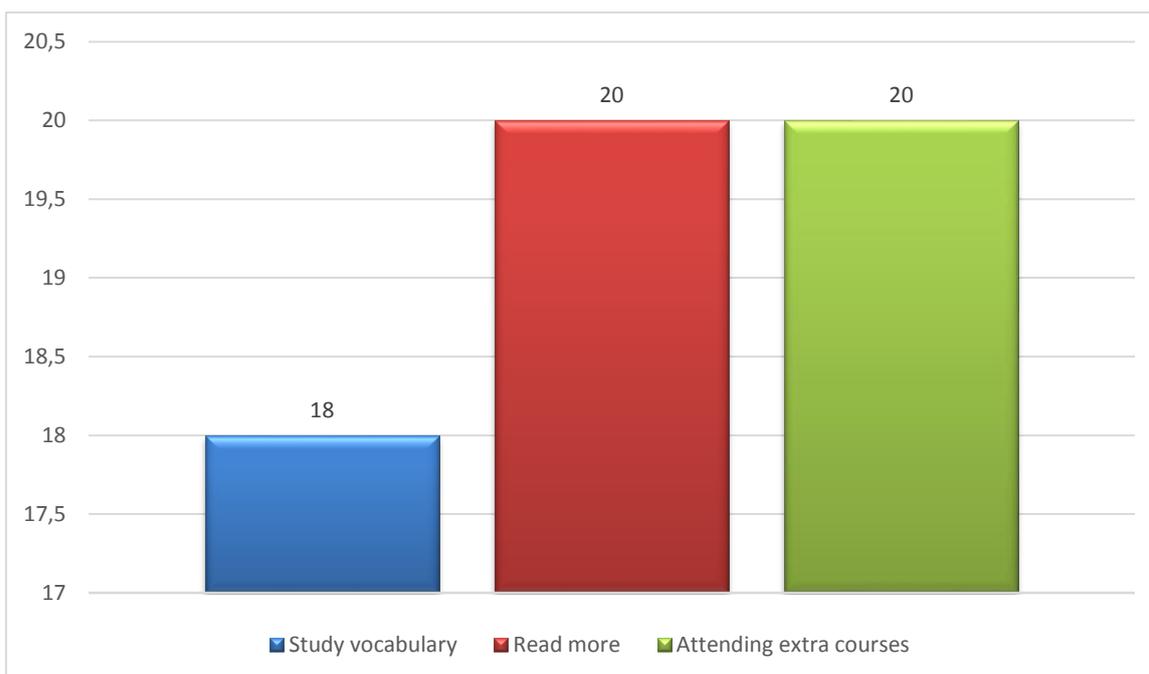


Figure 5.5 The Learners' Strategies to Become Better Readers

With regard to these findings, it is important for us to stress the importance of the grammatical and the linguistic knowledge of the target language. In other words, the readers should be taught effectively the grammatical rules of English. In addition, it is important to provide them also with the necessary vocabulary items related to the short story to be read. In that, these elements may facilitate the reading comprehension of such a

type of fiction. Besides reinforcing the importance of these elements, instructing extensive reading and attending extra courses of English for the mastery of the language lead also to an effective reading comprehension of short fiction. By taking these criteria into account, a close analysis of two students from different social background will be presented later.

5.4 Evaluating the Learner's Reading Comprehension of Short Fiction

The informants' comprehension questionnaires are related to both short stories of this investigation. Both of them have three stages: the pre, the while and the post-reading stages. In order to analyse the readers' questionnaires, the following scales have been designed for analysing them. The first one aims at assessing the readers' cultural, content and literary understanding of the short fiction. For the second scale, it aims to rank the learners' level of tolerance towards reading the short fiction. In addition, their assessment varies between 1 and 3; 1 implies unsatisfactory level, 2 refers to acceptable level and 3 means satisfactory one.

As to the last score which deals with tolerance towards the reading of a short fiction, it varies between 1 and 3. In that, 1 refers to the fact of being intolerant, 2 implies being neutral and 3 being tolerant towards the target culture. These reading dimensions of comprehension aim to deal with the learners' cultural, linguistic and literary competence. The following tables and graphs represent the informants' assessment questionnaires about *The Boarding House* and *The Lottery* stories.

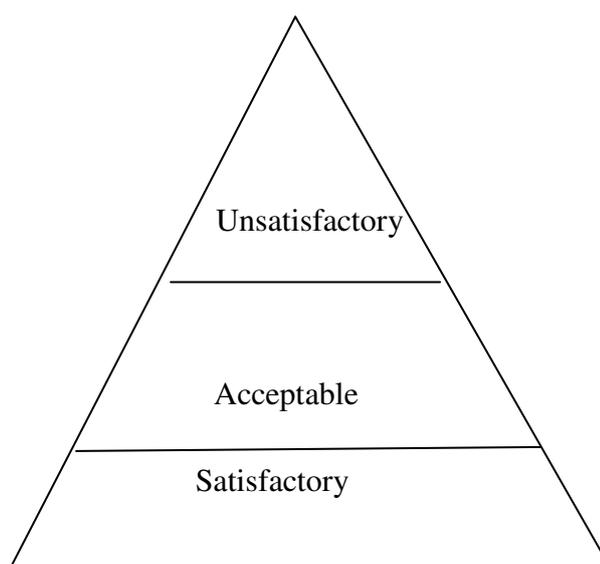


Figure 5.6. The Readers' Grading Scale of Comprehension

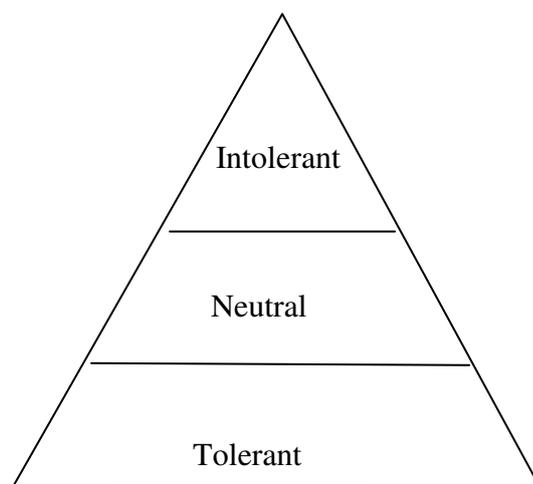


Figure 5.7 The Readers' Level of Tolerance in Reading Foreign Texts

5.4.1 The Analysis of the Learners' Reading Comprehension of *The Boarding House*

The following table and graph represents the results of the informants' findings of the different dimensions of their reading comprehension of the Boarding House. The table reports the assessment of each student about his content, literary and cultural understanding, the stylistics and his level of tolerance in reading this short fiction. By analysing these involved elements for each student may enable us to identify the weak spots of his/her reading comprehension.

Chapter V: Data Analysis and Discussion of the Findings

i. The Boarding House

<i>Names</i>	<i>Cultural Understanding</i>	<i>Stylistics</i>	<i>Literary Competence</i>	<i>Content Understanding</i>	<i>Tolerance</i>
Wafaa	3	2	3	3	3
Fatima	2	3	2	3	3
Khouira	3	2	2	3	2
Boualem	2	2	3	3	2
Zakaria	3	2	3	3	2
Soumia	3	3	3	3	3
Zinelabidine	3	2	2	3	3
Abdelghani	3	2	2	3	3
Lamia	2	1	2	2	2
Leila	2	2	3	3	3
Sami	3	2	2	3	1
Asmaa	3	2	3	3	3
Rokaya	2	1	2	3	2
Abdenmour	3	2	3	3	3
Nassima	3	2	3	3	3
Ayoub	2	2	3	3	2
Marwane	3	2	3	3	3
Zohra	3	2	3	2	2
Mariem	2	1	2	2	1
Nabila	1	1	2	2	1

Table 5.2 The Learners' Reading Comprehension Dimensions

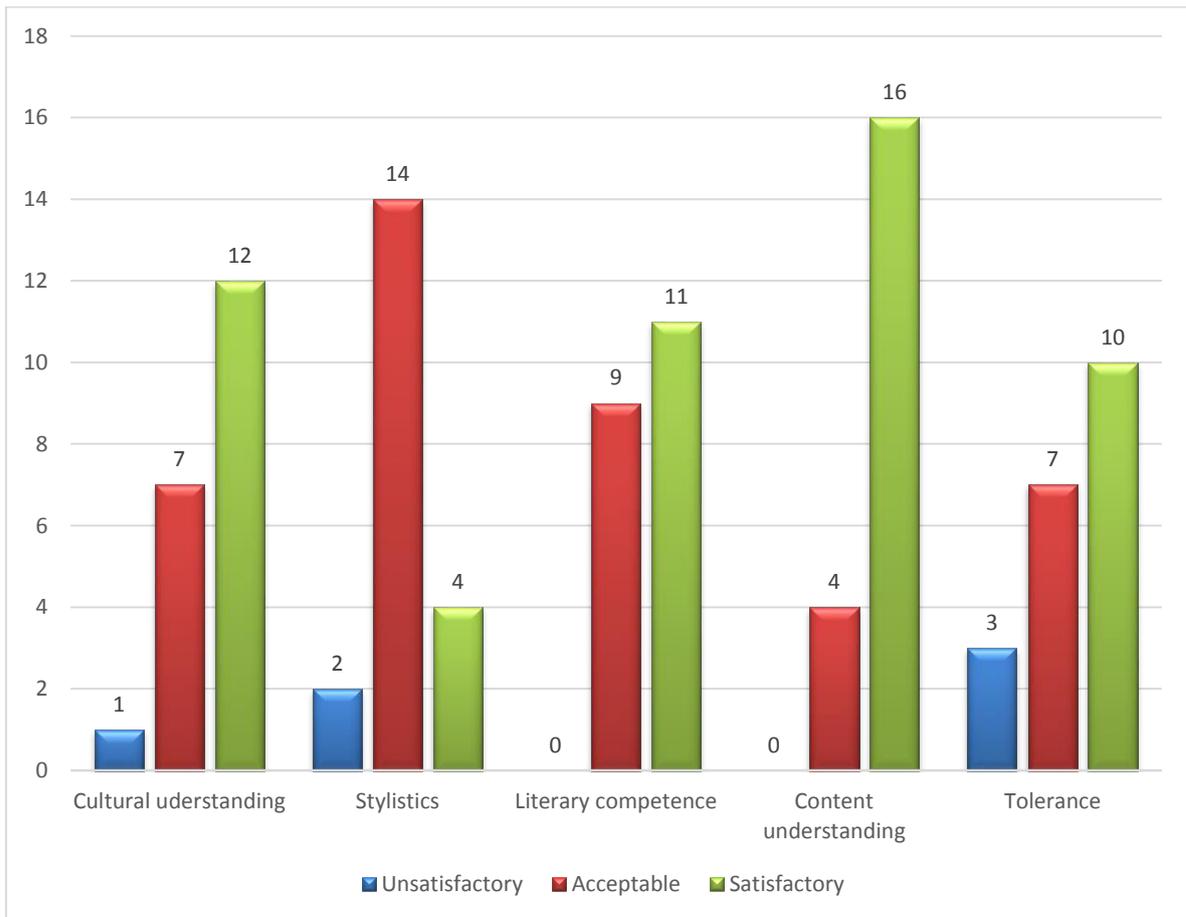


Figure 5. 8 The Learners' Reading Comprehension Dimensions (*The Boarding House*)

Regarding the analysis of the questionnaires, as it is shown in the previous graph, the students seem to well comprehend the story. Their cultural understanding seems to be quite satisfactory since most of the students did not show much cultural obstacles in their reading comprehension. Likewise for the literary as well as for the content understanding of the short fiction that appears to be highly satisfactory. To put it differently, their comprehension of the literary content seems to be acceptable according to their answers of the questionnaires. Except for the stylistics of their writing, it tends to be weak if compared to the other dimensions. Furthermore, the readers tend to be quite tolerant towards the main topics of the story that include marriage, religious issues and other societal concerns. All these parameters may contribute in assessing the readers' level of comprehension of this short fiction.

Chapter V: Data Analysis and Discussion of the Findings

The cultural understanding is manifested by the learners' conceptualisation of the cultural aspect of the story's topic. In other words, in this case, the learners' understanding of the Irish culture is shown in their answers to some of the comprehension questions. As a result of the collected questionnaires, most of the students showed their understanding of the Irish culture since they have likened it to their own one. Thus, they claimed that, in this very case, both cultures share common traits. The latter are manifested mostly in both societies' hypocritical attitudes towards marriage. On the one hand, Mr. Doran is trapped by Polly's mother such that he can only resort to marrying her for fear of facing social and religious pressure due to his status. The young Irish man enjoyed Polly's close relationship and womanly care. Remember the evenings when he would come back late only to be served dinner and "stout" by his girl friend. Remember also the nights when she would, on tiptoe, come to his room, in light clothes, to light his candle.

Despite all this, Mr. Doran finally realised that the young girl's grammar is "bad" and her reputation is soiled. In short, as in Algerian culture, Irish men court their females with the aim of having them as sexual partners, not as wives. These two cultures seem to make a difference between the one and the other. On the other hand, Polly was used by her mother as bait for catching a husband and founding a family. In this case, the gentlemanly Doran whose job and social status make him an ideal partner attracted the mother's attention. After Polly's failure at college, and her father's hustling at work, the mother cunningly planned to find her husband, synonymous with social and economic security.

To what concerns the readers' literary comprehension, it is based on their comprehension of *The Boarding House* short story. The latter is manifested in their understanding of the characters, setting, events and plot of the story. In analysing the results of the questionnaires, the informants showed their full comprehension of these literary elements. All of them could distinguish the different personae of the story characters and most of them were able to interpret the plot of the story correctly. However, there were some differences noticed among their answers, as it is shown in the graph above, in which all of the students' answers were satisfactory and others were acceptable in their way of interpreting textual content in terms of amount and appropriateness.

In the same light, the respondents' stylistics in answering the questionnaires seemed to be quite acceptable. As it is shown in the graph, the majority of the informants' stylistics was acceptable. However, some vocabulary mistakes were noticed in these

students' answers such as: women (singular), she go instead of goes, etc. In addition, some structural mistakes have been noticed, i.e. many students seem to face some difficulties in writing some sentences appropriately. For example, Doran love Polly, she wants him as a husband because of her mother, etc.

To what concerns the choice of the linguistic items, most students' answers were not too elaborate, yet they were grammatically correct and acceptable. Among them, only four students have chosen highly elaborate linguistic items in their answers. Furthermore, the style of their writing was acceptable, except some elaborated writings. In short, regardless the learners' mistakes, the informants' stylistics is acceptable in terms of vocabulary choice, syntax, grammar and style in their answers to the questions.

As to the readers' tolerance, it differs from one student to another. Though all the informants share the same nationality, social habits and cultural customs, their tolerance vis-a-vis the story is not the same. Half of them seem to be highly tolerant towards the topics of the text, among them the idea that Polly had to go out of the way to find a husband, willy nilly. Moreover, seven informants were neutral since they did not show any rejection of the foreign culture, and only three of them expressed neither their tolerance nor their intolerance. Therefore, most students seem to be empathetic towards the target culture of the short fiction. This is seen in their answers to post reading questions where most of them expressed the empathy that exists between the Algerian culture and the Irish one. Consequently, the fact of being tolerant or empathetic towards the target culture of a particular fiction genre may contribute to their better reading comprehension of short stories.

As a conclusion to this analysis, we can deduce that the closeness or familiarity between the short story's topics and that of the readers' one seems to be beneficial in an effective reading comprehension. Their reading understanding of short stories, then, is based on their literary and cultural competence as well as their tolerance. However, one should note that in spite of the fact that most of the informants' answers are not stylistically elaborate, they were able to well read, comprehend and interpret the short story appropriately. Thus, as to the hypothesis provided for this study, this analysis holds that reading comprehension of literary texts requires cultural, linguistic and literary competence.

5.4.2 The Analysis of the Learners' Reading Comprehension of *The Lottery*

The following table and graph represent the findings of the informants' questionnaires of the different dimensions in their reading comprehension of *The Lottery*. The table represents the assessment of each student's understanding of the content, the literary and cultural understanding, the stylistics and his/her level of tolerance in reading this short fiction. Analysing these elements for each student may facilitate highlighting the weak spots of his/her reading comprehension of this story. After that, a close comparative analysis will be presented between both stories to check the validity of the first hypothesis.

Chapter V: Data Analysis and Discussion of the Findings

ii. The Lottery Short Story

<i>Reading Comprehension Dimensions</i>					
<i>Names</i>	<i>Cultural Understanding</i>	<i>Style</i>	<i>Literary Competence</i>	<i>Content Understanding</i>	<i>Tolerance</i>
Wafaa	3	2	3	3	3
Fatima	2	2	2	2	3
Khouira	3	3	3	3	1
Boualem	3	3	2	3	1
Zakaria	3	3	3	3	2
Soumia	3	3	3	3	3
Zinelabidine	2	2	2	3	1
Abdelghani	1	2	2	2	2
Lamia	3	3	3	3	1
Leila	2	1	3	3	2
Sami	3	3	3	3	2
Asmaa	1	2	1	1	1
Rokaya	3	3	3	3	2
Abdennour	2	2	2	2	1
Nassima	2	2	2	3	1
Ayoub	2	2	3	2	2
Marwane	2	2	2	3	1
Zohra	1	3	3	3	1
Mariem	3	3	3	3	2
Nabila	2	3	3	3	2

Table 5.3 The Learners' Reading Comprehension Dimensions (The Lottery)

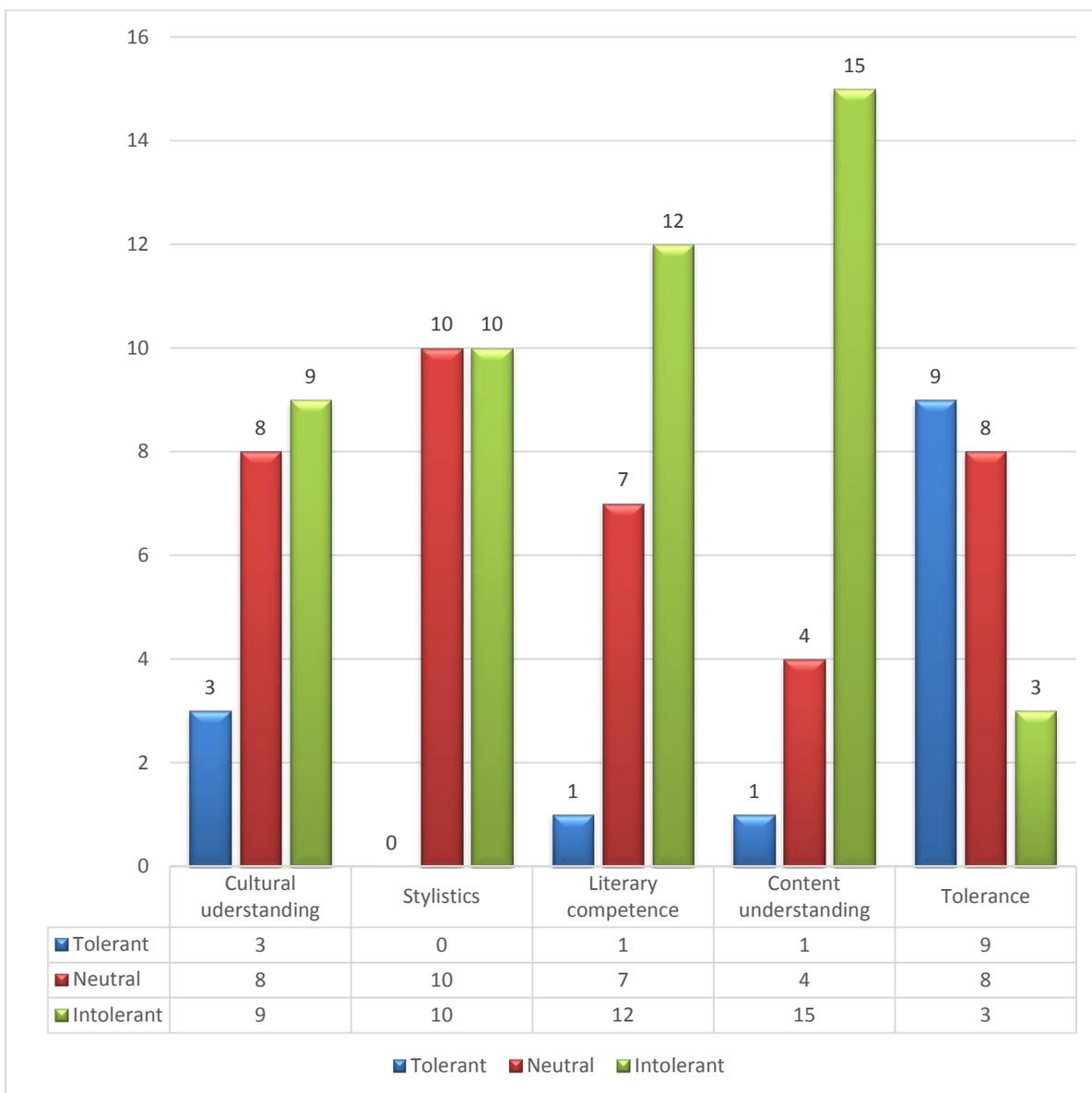


Figure 5.9. The Learners’ Reading Comprehension Dimensions (The Lottery)

Regarding the analysis of the questionnaires, as it is shown in the previous graph and table, the students seem to well comprehend the story. Their cultural understanding seems to be quite satisfactory though the students show that the target culture is somehow distant from theirs in *The Lottery*. As to the content understanding of the short fiction, it appears to be satisfactory. In other words, their comprehension seems to be satisfactory according to their answers of the questionnaires. Except for the stylistics of their writing, as in the first case, it tends to be unsatisfactory with regard to the other dimensions. Moreover, the learners’ tolerance towards the main topics of the story, which include the

lottery celebration and the American societal traditions, seem to be quite neutral. All these parameters may contribute in assessing the readers' level of comprehension of this short fiction.

The cultural understanding is assessed by the learners' conceptualisation of the cultural understanding of the story's topic. To put it differently, the learners' understanding of the American culture is expressed in their answers to some of the comprehension questions. As a result of the questionnaires' findings, most of the students expressed their comprehension of the American cultural aspect of the story, though they expressed the social and religious distance that exists between both cultures. Thus, they hold that, in this very case, both cultures are clearly distinct. This distinction is manifested in the Algerian and the American cultural differences: their religious beliefs, traditions and customs. The lottery celebration reflects an American attitude that does not meet the Algerian religious values. In the story, although the villagers are aware that it is "unfair", they continue to celebrate it. Therefore, there is a kind of social hypocrisy among them. Remember Tessie Hutchinson, the unlucky loser of the lottery, who has always been excited about the lottery and fully willing to participate every year, but when her family's name was drawn, she protested that '*the lottery isn't fair*'.

The family relationships are essential to how the actions of the lottery are carried out, but these relationships mean nothing when the unlucky victim should be stoned. Remember when Tessie has drawn the marked paper, for instance, her husband and children turn on her just as the other villagers do. Therefore, although family relationships reflect almost everything about the lottery, they do not guarantee loyalty or love once the lottery is over. At this stage, the informants view this sociocultural behaviour as being unfair too and all of them expressed their religious rejection of such an act. They claimed: '*I don't like this culture, it is unfair, it contradicts my religion Islam*'. However, in analysing their answers to the questionnaire, their cultural rejection did not prevent them from comprehending the text appropriately. The findings revealed that most of them comprehended the cultural aspect of the text appropriately.

Regarding the informants' literary comprehension, it is based on their understanding of *The Lottery* short story. As for the first case, the latter is manifested mainly in their identification of the story's characters, setting, events and plot of the story. As a result, the informants showed their full comprehension of these literary elements. All

of them could distinguish the different personae of the story characters: Tessie Hutchinson, Old Man Warner, Mr. Summers, Bill Hutchinson and Mr. Hurry Graves. In addition, most of them were able to interpret the plot of the story correctly. As it is shown in the graph above, there were no differences to be noticed; all of the answers were satisfactory, except one student whose answers were too concise. In short, all the answers revealed the students' full understanding in their interpretation of textual content in terms of amount and appropriateness.

In addition, the respondents' style in answering the questionnaires seemed to be quite satisfactory. But, as in the first case, some vocabulary errors or mistakes were noticed such as: theme self, focus to the ethics, ethic, etc. In addition, some structural mistakes were also mentioned in the questionnaires' answers, i.e. many students seem to face some difficulties in constructing sentences correctly. For example, '*Ireland during the 20th centuries are complex and colonize from the upper class but in nowadays is become an independent country*'. Concerning the choice of the linguistic items, most students' answers were not highly elaborate, yet they were grammatically correct and acceptable except half of the students have chosen highly elaborate linguistic items in their writing. In short, the style of their writing was acceptable and their answers were precise. Consequently, in spite of the fact that the learners made errors³_mistakes⁴, their style is acceptable in terms of vocabulary choice, syntax and grammar in their answers to the questions.

As to the respondents' tolerance, it differs from one student to another. Though all the informants share the same nationality, social habits and cultural customs, their tolerance vis-a-vis the story differs. Unlike the first case, nine of them seem to be highly tolerant towards the topics of the text, among them the idea of the lottery celebration regardless of their awareness of its "criminal" act. Moreover, eight informants were neutral

³ **An error:** According to Brown (2007), refers to idiosyncrasies in the language of the learner. They are actually deviation from adult grammar of a native speaker. It shows the competence of the learner. Then mistakes are referred to performance errors in which the learner knows the system but fails to use it while errors are the result of one's systematic competence. It means that the learner's system is incorrect. In addition, an error cannot be self corrected.

⁴ **A mistake:** According to Brown (2007), refers to a performance error that is either a random guess or a slip, seeing as a failure to use a known system correctly. Mistakes can happen in both native and second language are the result of some sort of temporary breakdown, hesitations, slip of the tongue, random ungrammaticalities, or imperfection in the process of producing speech and can be recognized and corrected by native speakers. In addition, a mistake can be corrected by the learner him/herself.

since they did not show any rejection of the foreign culture. In other words, they claimed their neutrality towards this cultural behaviour by making a clear distinction between their religious principles and the target culture. And only three of them expressed their total intolerance of the lottery celebration by claiming that, as Muslims, it is an unfair, cruel and unacceptable behaviour and is not part of the Algerian culture. Therefore, though most students did not express much empathy towards the target culture, as in the first short fiction, their comprehension was effective. In addition, in spite of the fact that the informants, be they Algerian Muslims, do not share much cultural background with the text topics, this did not prevent them from understanding the text. Consequently, the fact of being intolerant or non-empathetic towards the target culture of a particular fiction genre may contribute to their better reading comprehension and not in reading deficiencies.

As a conclusion to this analysis, we can deduce that the closeness to the short story's topics and that of the readers' one is not an essential element in an effective reading comprehension. The reading understanding of short stories, then, is based on their literary and cultural competence. However, one should note that in spite of the fact that most of the informants' answers are not linguistically elaborate, they were able to read, comprehend and interpret the short story appropriately. Thus, as to the hypothesis provided for this study, this analysis holds that reading comprehension of literary texts requires cultural, linguistic and literary competence.

5.5 Analysis Sample of the Case Study

This section presents a close analysis of two distinct informants' comprehension questionnaires of both short fictions. It represents an analysis of Leila's and Sami's answers to *The Boarding House* and *The Lottery* questionnaires. By taking into account the informants' sociocultural background, the following analysis presents the students' answers of the questionnaires in details. The choice of these two informants for the analysis sample has not been based on their gender for the sake of explaining the assessment of their answers. However, it is important to note that Leila is from rural origins, she has never travelled abroad and has no contact with foreigners; whereas Sami is from urban origins, he has travelled abroad and is in contact with foreigners. The following table presents a comparison between both informants in details in terms of gender, religion,

social origin, trips abroad, contact with foreigners, purposes of reading in English, the difficulties experienced in reading literary texts and strategies to become a better reader.

5.5.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Results

	Leila	Sami
Gender	Female	Male
Religion	Practicing Muslim	Practicing Muslim
Social Origin	Rural	Urban
Trips Abroad	No	Yes
Contact with Foreigners	No	Yes
Purposes of Reading in English	Academic Purposes Pleasure Curiosity	Academic Purposes Work Pleasure
Difficulties Experienced in Reading Literary Texts in English	Lexical Structural Stylistic	Lexical Stylistic
Strategies to Become a Better Reader	Studying Vocabulary Extensive Reading	Extensive Reading

Table 5.4 Comparative Results of Leila and Sami’s answers

5.5.1.1 Analysis and Interpretation of Leila's Questionnaires

The following discussion involves a close analysis of Leila's questionnaire on *The Boarding House*. It will include language, comprehension of the story, and empathy/tolerance towards the story (see appendix 10).

In analysing Leila's answers, we can notice that she has understood this story appropriately and was tolerant towards this topic. However, some grammatical, language and style deviations are noticed. Many of these occur through Leila's tendency to use punctuation where it would not normally be necessary. As such, we can notice sentences where they would normally be with verbs in order to express the notion of events. For instance, a grammatical mistake, "*the upper class was the rich*", here a relative pronoun is missed to introduce the adjective which describes the upper class. Language mistake or error such as: '*discribe*', '*manipulation*' instead of 'manipulative' to be used as an adjective to describe the nature of women. Another grammatical mistake, she used the preposition 'with' as it is mentioned in this sentence: '*plan to marry her daughter with Mr. Doran.*' instead of using 'to'. The intrusion of 'with' instead of 'to' could probably be related to her thinking in Algerian Arabic (Marry with nor marry with). Again, these remarks contribute to provide the informants' answers with more appropriateness and correctness the syntax wise. By taking into account these mistakes and the chosen style, Leila's language was generally acceptable as she was attributed 2.

Note the additional semantic deviation here where Leila actually expressed herself rather awkwardly. For instance, in the sixth question of the while-reading phase, the informant slightly deviated the exact meaning to answer it. She referred only to '*love, marriage and responsibility*', but she was supposed to highlight also the importance of the family union and the religious hegemony. In general, Leila's answers were satisfactory since she succeeded to well interpret the content and events of the fiction appropriately. In analysing her questionnaire, she could identify and distinguish the different characters of the story and their personae. For instance, Mrs. Mooney's trap to find a potential husband for her daughter targets clearly Mr. Doran, who enjoys satisfying his needs by going out with Polly. However, he does not want to have her as a wife because of her bad reputation and their illegal relationship. Though Leila did not mention that Mr. Doran did not accept

Polly as a wife because of her ‘poor grammar’, this did not affect her understanding of the text.

Moreover, Leila has succeeded to make a comparison between her culture and the target one. In that, she mentioned the hypocrisy that is shared between the Algerian and the Irish societies in the last question of the post-reading phase. In this light, we can notice her understanding of the cultural aspect that Joyce expressed in this text. As a result to her answers, she was attributed 3 on her cultural understanding and 3 on her content understanding.

As a conclusion, Leila seemed to be highly tolerant towards the topic of the story, in that she likened the Irish society to the Algerian one in their way of thinking and behaving. This is presented in answering the post-reading phase where she is supposed to express her point of view and comprehension about the main topic of the text. She showed the socio-cultural closeness or familiarity to the target culture. In short, despite her mistakes of syntax, vocabulary and grammar, she showed her full understanding of the cultural aspect that Joyce expresses in the story.

The following discussion involves a close analysis of Leila’s questionnaire of *The Lottery* short story. It will also include language, comprehension of the story, and empathy/tolerance towards the story (see appendix 10).

In analysing Leila’s answers, we can notice that she has understood this story appropriately. However, she showed her intolerance towards this topic with some grammatical, language and style deviations that are noticed. As for the first story, many of these occur through Leila’s tendency to use punctuation where it would not normally be necessary. For instance, ‘.....a different way, when Mrs Hutchinson.....’, in this case, there should not be a comma between these two sentences. Again, we can also notice sentences where they would the verbs should not be used as: ‘pricisily’ instead of ‘precisely’ and ‘rises’ instead of ‘raises’. For instance, a grammatical mistake, ‘If this lottery tradition was part of my culture, I do not accept it’, here the second verb should be put differently because of it is conditional type 2. Thus, it should be used: ‘..., I would not accept it...’

Another grammatical mistake or error since in the answer that follows it included ‘At the beginning’, she used such as: ‘In the beginning of the story, the writer describes

carefully the setting’, here the respondent should have used ‘At the beginning’ instead of ‘In the beginning’, as it is mentioned in the sentence. In addition, she mentioned, in the fourth answer of the while-reading phase, this expression ‘will be taken place’ which expresses the future passive, here she was supposed to use the previous verbs of this sentence in the past simple and use ‘would take place’. By taking into account these mistakes, Leila’s language was generally acceptable as she is attributed 2 for her style, which was not too elaborate, as for the first story.

It is important also to highlight some semantic deviation here where Leila actually expressed herself rather awkwardly. For example, in the second question of the pre-reading phase, she slightly deviated the exact meaning to answer it since she referred to the time expressed in the text and not the time of writing the text. Thus, we can refer to such answer as being misunderstood. She was rather supposed to highlight mention the period before the second world war in which the American people did were not liberalist. However, in short, Leila’s answers were satisfactory since she succeeded to well interpret the main events of the fiction appropriately. In analysing her questionnaire, she could identify and distinguish the different characters of the story, for instance, when she describes the women as being ‘simple and poor’ and men as being ‘traditional’. She also could identify the different personae of the story as Mrs. Hutchinson, Old Man Warner, Mr. Summers, etc. With regard to these semantic deviations, Leila comprehension of the text is acceptable, therefore, she is attributed 2 on her content comprehension.

Moreover, Leila seems to make a clear distinction between her culture and the target one. In that, as it is stated in the second answer of the pre-reading phase: ‘but it is forbidden by our religion (islam) once it is related to games and money’. It means that such a practice is certainly accepted neither by the informant’s culture nor her religion (Islam). She refers to the ending of the story as being obscure. With regard to Leila’s sociocultural background, i.e. religion, being Algerian Muslim and from rural origin, these did not prevent her from well understanding and comprehending the culture Jackson wanted to convey through the story. As a result, she is attributed 2 on her cultural understanding.

Finally, Leila expressed her total intolerance towards the topic of the story in the last phase of the questionnaire. To put it differently, she referred to her religion in refusing the target cultural attitude (*The Lottery*); she expressed her refusal and claimed her engagement to change that practice if it was possible. In addition, she mentioned that the

lottery attitude is obscure in this story. However, unlike the previous one, despite the fact of Leila's linguistic mistakes and her intolerance towards the foreign cultural tradition, she succeeded in understanding and interpreting it appropriately.

5.5.1.2 Analysis and Interpretation of Sami's Questionnaires

The following discussion presents a close analysis of Sami's questionnaire of *The Boarding House* fiction. It will encompass language, comprehension of the story, and empathy or tolerance towards the story (see appendix 11).

In analysing Sami's answers, we can notice that he has well comprehended this story and was empathetic towards this topic. However, as for Leila, some language and grammatical deviations are observed. For instance, punctuation mistakes or errors where a comma should be put to give a further explanation for the sentence as: '*society_where traditional*'. In addition, '*.....norms the best example when....*', here, the informant should put punctuation in this sentence to clarify the meaning of the sentence; he is supposed to put a full stop before stating 'the best example' and a comma after it. '*affection ect.*', here, it should be written like this: ', etc'. In addition to some grammatical mistakes, for example: '*Religious influence which plays*', here, normally the respondent should not use 'which' since there are not two sentences to be joined. Such deviations might be considered as errors and not mistakes since he is not scored in answering the questionnaire.

Furthermore, '*Mrs. Mooney want*', in this case, he has to add 's' because it is the present simple. In the fourth question, in Sami's description of the mother, he claims: '*.....the mother looking....*', it is an action that should be put in the present simple as 'the mother looks'. In this light, for the seventh question of the while-reading questionnaire, he used two different tenses (the past and the present simple), in this very example, the description necessitates the use of the present simple. Some language mistakes are also noticed, in the second question of the pre-reading question, he states: '*where traditional vision of family authority to man and woman submission.*' here, the statement is incomplete since it requires an action, it may be put as follows: 'traditional vision of the family was represented by the men's authority and women's submission'.

Again, in this sentence: '*.....conservative which work with religion norms in resolving its problem*', 'religion' is supposed to be used as an adjective to describe the

noun. Another example when Sami claims: '*Polly is so little than Doran*', here, he should use 'younger than' instead of 'little than'. However, by taking these deviations into account in addition to the informant's choice and use of vocabulary appropriately, we can say that they did not prevent him from well comprehending the story and answering questions appropriately. Accordingly, he was attributed 2 on his linguistic and chosen style.

It is important also to claim that there are some semantic deviations which are expressed in Sami's answers. For example: 'society was known as being too conservative', in this case, we can notice that the informant is somehow influenced by his mother tongue (Arabic) in using 'as' rather than 'for' in defining the Irish society. Again, Sami claims in the second question of the while-reading phase: '*people work with religious norms*', here, he wants to say that the Irish people are so religious, or more precisely, there is a religious hegemony on the society. However, he misinterprets his thought or idea probably because of his poor mastery of the language.

Generally, Sami's answers were satisfactory, in that he was able to well interpret the story events and its themes. When analysing her questionnaire, she was able to distinguish the fiction's different characters and their personae. For example, he could identify Mrs. Mooney's persona since she is worrying to marry her daughter to Mr. Doran. In addition, Sami also highlights that Mr. Doran wants to spend time with Polly, but hesitates when things turned seriously because she is younger and less educated than him, and also because of his relation with the church. By answering in such a way, we can notice his well comprehension and interpretation to the main story events and characters. Again, he was also able to classify her in the low class of the Irish society and to identify that there is no real love between them. In addition to these, Sami succeeded to symbolise the marriage as way to reflect Mrs. Mooney's responsibility over her daughter. As a result, he was attributed 3 on his literary and content understanding.

Moreover, Sami succeeded to draw a comparison between his own culture and the target one. In that, in the post-reading phase, he highlighted that the contemporary Algerian society and the Irish one, during the 20th century, are similar in their hypocrisy, their fear of the society's judgments and their religious hegemony. Thus, Sami seems to understand appropriately the cultural aspect expressed by Joyce in the text. Consequently, in analysing his answers, he was attributed 2 on his understanding of the story's culture.

In conclusion, Sami seemed to be tolerant towards the story's topic. In other words, the way he likened the story's characters to the Algerians' behaviour implies his tolerance. This is noticed in his answers to the post-reading questions, where he is required to express his opinion about the topics of the story. He shed light on the cultural closeness between his culture and the foreign one. In general, regardless of the syntax, language and grammatical mistakes or errors, Sami expressed his understanding and tolerance towards the cultural aspect that Joyce expresses in this story.

The following discussion presents an in-depth analysis of Sami's answers to the questionnaire of *The Lottery* fiction. It will include, as in the previous ones, language, comprehension of the story, and empathy/ tolerance towards the topic (see appendix 11).

In analysing these questions, we can notice that Sami has well comprehended this story though he expressed his intolerance. However, it is important to stress some grammatical, language and style deviations. They are manifested in his use of punctuation where it should not be as in: '*.....that the women at that time had to assure the house work and it refers to her forget it is better than attending it*'. Here, in addition to the incoherence of this sentence, we can notice that punctuation is needed in order to clarify its meaning.

Other grammatical mistakes were also noticed: '*allow each year that someone*', in this case, the use of the relative pronoun is unnecessary in addition to the need of punctuation. We can also notice some language mistakes such as: 'a price' instead of 'price', 'wining' instead of 'winning', 'unhuman' instead of 'inhuman', etc. Again, we can also stress the inappropriate use of tenses. For instance, in the second answer of the while-reading phase where he used the past simple, the present and the future tenses in describing Mrs. Hutchinson's behaviour. Here, Sami was supposed to use only one tense, i.e. either the present simple or the past simple.

Furthermore, we can also observe some semantic deviations expressed by Sami in answering the questions. In the second answer of the while-reading phase, by reading his answer, we can guess that he has understood the text, but does not know how to express it. He referred to the mood, at the beginning, as excitement where he was required to describe it by using adjectives. In the sixth answer, he described the black box as being 'highly represented'. In this case, he may have misinterpreted his own thought, and probably

meant that the black box was considered as being sacred. Again, in the ninth answer, he used this expression: *'they accept it for granted'*, where he wanted to say 'to take it for granted'. Regarding these remarks and the style Sami adopted in answering the comprehension questions, his language as a whole was acceptable. Generally, it is important to claim that he succeeded to answer the questions appropriately.

Note Sami answers' deviation where he was required to express his thought in another way. For example, in the third answer of the while-reading phase, the answer could be acceptable, but he was expected to mention the period before the Second World War, which has revolutionised the USA. However, Sami succeeded to identify the different characters and their personae such as: Mrs. Hutchinson who was represented as a typical housewife and was condemned by being stoned until death because of the lottery. He also identified Mr. Summers, the organiser of the yearly celebration or practice. In addition, he successfully described men and women of the story since he has drawn a clear description of them. Above all, he could also highlight the metaphor Jackson used in order to refer to the black box as a symbol of a sacred tradition that it was inherited from one generation to another. According to the analysis of his answers, as we can notice in his literary and content interpretation, were quite satisfactory. Therefore, he was attributed 3 on these two parameters.

In conclusion, Sami succeeded clearly to draw a comparison between his culture and the target one. In that, he expressed his intolerance towards the target culture by referring to his cultural and religious background that does not allow him to practice the lottery if it is related to gain easy money by chance. Moreover, he was able to highlight that the notion of the lottery differs in this story since it opposes reality. In other words, he explained that the one who is supposed to be the winner in ordinary lottery ends up being stoned. He could also identify the villagers' awareness of the criminality of this practice; however they could not take it for granted because it represents part of their cultural background. Consequently, Sami was attributed 3 on his cultural understanding. In short, by taking into consideration the distant socio-cultural background with the target culture, mistakes of language and grammar did not prevent him from well understanding and well interpreting the story events and culture appropriately.

With regard to Leila and Sami's findings of the questionnaires, we can notice that neither the sociocultural distance nor the high linguistic competence contributes in the

learners' comprehension of literary texts. In other words, their comprehension depends neither on their sociocultural background familiarity with the story nor on their language mastery. Regarding Leila's background as being from Algerian Muslim and rural origins, as a whole, she succeeded to well comprehend both short fictions; the first one which deals with a familiar topic (the importance of marriage) and the second which deals with foreign cultural tradition. Therefore, regardless of the language mistakes, her unfamiliarity with the topic of *The Lottery* story does not prevent her from well comprehending and interpreting the story and its literary aspects. The findings of both of Leila's questionnaires revealed her acceptable and correct answers that reflect her satisfactory level of understanding of the two short stories. Regarding Sami's background as being from Algerian Muslim and urban origins, he also succeeded to comprehend both short fictions appropriately. As for Leila, despite his language mistakes, Sami was able to interpret both stories correctly. More importantly, in spite of the cultural distance or unfamiliarity between *The Lottery* story's topics and Sami's cultural schemata, it did not prevent him from well comprehending and interpreting the fiction appropriately.

As a conclusion to the previous analyses, we can deduce that schema theory is not valid in this case. Thus, the findings of this investigation invalidate or infirm the hypothesis which has been tested for this research work. In other words, the results of the informants' questionnaires show that they can comprehend foreign literary texts either with familiar or unfamiliar topics, regardless of their urban, rural or Muslim origins. By admitting the fact that the informants of this investigation are Master 1 students of English, they are presumed to be competent at the target language as well as in its literature.

As a result, schemata of the texts to be read are not necessary for them since they are supposed to master the language, understand any literary text and interpret it correctly. In addition, they are also asked to be empathetic and tolerant towards any foreign text as they are studying EFL and specialising in it. Therefore, all these parameters lead to enable them to comprehend appropriately foreign literary texts. In short, as it is the case of this study, we can conclude that schema theory cannot always be relevant in the selection of literary texts to be taught.

In order to bring more credibility to the findings of this study, some questionnaires of teachers of literature at different universities, whose experiences differ, have been used. The following section comprises an analysis of their answers to the questionnaires about

teaching literature, the relevance of schema theory and empathy or tolerance. In that, 10 teachers have been selected for such an investigation.

As to the first section, it deals with the different techniques students use in teaching literature. Their experience in teaching it varies between 4 to 25 years. None of them held that s/he has been trained to teach such a module before. However, all of them aim at developing the learners' linguistic competence, interpretative and critical literary abilities. 9 of them held that they aim at accessing their students' cultural background except for one teacher (T1). T2, in his/her part, has added that she aims at developing the students' abilities to read, understand and reflect on different texts by involving them emotionally and intellectually, and communicating values. T3 has also claimed that there exist other objectives such as skills of comprehension, analysis, interpretation and criticism, besides motivating them emotionally.

According to her, this contributes to their personal development/ growth. As to (T4Benmazel), he added that the teacher has to develop interdisciplinary competence among the students by comparing literature with painting, sculpture and movies. Therefore, these results confirm the teachers' awareness of the relevance of the learners' cultural schemata in teaching literary texts. However, their claims also highlighted the importance of motivating the students' personal growth. As a result, unlike the students' questionnaires findings, almost all the teachers hold that they take into account the students' cultural background in teaching literary texts.

As to the difficulties that teachers encounter in teaching literary texts, they posited that most of them are due to a lack of language mastery or understanding. According to them, the latter is manifested in the students non- understanding of complex words and the vocabulary used in the culturally different literary texts because of their lack of reading. Consequently, this results in misinterpreting the hidden messages. Moreover, some of the teachers claimed that they have also problems in interpreting literary theories. However, many of them held that students lack motivation to read foreign literary texts; for them, the context is alien to theirs. Accordingly, with regard the prior analysis' results; this partly confirms the students' awareness concerning their lack of language mastery as well as of extensive reading.

Furthermore, in respect to the study objectives, the data collection results demonstrated that schema theory is not instructed in the curriculum. To put it differently, all the teachers claimed that they take into account the students' cultural schemata in teaching literary texts. This implies that all the teachers select texts to be taught according to the students' sociocultural background by using different strategies. In that, Prof. Bahous has claimed that he takes into consideration empathy and tolerance in the selection of texts, in addition to mediating between his students' own culture and the target one. For him, this would lead students to better comprehend and then, overcome the obstacles of misunderstanding some foreign cultural aspects. Similarly, with regard to T5, she carefully selects literary texts to avoid cultural clashes and encourages them to draw these differences.

As for T2, she invites students to a new cultural space through drawing comparison and contrast between both cultures. In addition, she stressed the importance of understanding before judging; i.e. she initiates tolerance and empathy among students. T3 held that she would explain and make students aware of the cultural difficulty and providing examples. In short, we can deduce from the teachers' answers that mediation between the text culture and the target one is important in teaching literature as well as empathy and tolerance. Though *The Lottery* was culturally different and the students were not empathetic, they succeeded to understand and interpret it correctly, regardless of the style and language mistakes. This is what the previous results have shown. Therefore, this invalidates the teachers' presumption about considering the students' background knowledge since they are Master 1 students.

Regarding the teachers' use of specific techniques to improve the students' literary competence, 8 teachers do so, except for T6 and T7. According to most teachers, they use different ways to present literary texts to their students such as bringing documentaries related to the text to be taught, quizzes to identify the strength and weaknesses, repeated exposure to such a text and literary materials, opting for short genre, motivating students to read shorter texts, long novellas and then novels, adapting movies of novels to attract them towards literature, and then urge them to read texts alone, etc.

In addition to these claims, interestingly, T5 presented a detailed explanation about the techniques he uses to enhance his learners' literary competence. He mentioned that, as a first step, he introduces the influences that shape a specific literary text, explains new or

difficult words, presents the author's biography, lists the basic literary elements used to read and analyse the literary work. Then, parts the text related to broad ideas or highlights literary elements in bold. Finally, he includes a writing workshop to consolidate the acquired knowledge. Such strategic steps could be beneficial, but again, the findings of the prior investigation did follow these steps, and then the comprehension was satisfactory. As a conclusion, it is important to stress that the informants of the previous part of this investigation are Master 1 students, so their level of English is presumed to be advanced. As a result, by providing the students with the necessary steps to analyse a literary text, an effective reading comprehension could be achieved.

Generally, all the teachers' evaluation of the students' comprehension of literature is acceptable. In this light, all of them hold that the fact of noticing the similarities between events in the fiction genre and their own lives could bring changes to the learners' schemata. This could render them more empathetic, tolerant and more open towards foreign cultures. However, no one claimed that the influence of learners by the text pushes them to change their life style or thinking. In other words, the students are not influenced by the foreign culture that is expressed in the literary fiction. Moreover, the teachers hold that the students' relation of the literary genre to their own concerns about life sometimes can contribute in well comprehending the fiction as it cannot. For example, if we consider *The Lottery* which is culturally distant from the Algerian learners, in this case, the students are not empathetic towards it; thus, they cannot be fully involved in the story or put themselves in theirs.

We can conclude by stating that teaching literature does not necessarily require selecting texts that are culturally close to students. It rather requires motivating students to read the literary texts, attracting them by using different devices such as movies, documentaries, etc. in order to take them out of the routine of reading and explanation. In addition, they should have been taught how to analyse any literary genre appropriately in workshops for example, as it is stated by T5. In short, teachers of literature are transmitters of foreign culture; they are supposed to overcome all the cultural conflicts and barriers that may exist between the students the target one. As a result, the students become more empathetic, tolerant and able to read, interpret and analyse any EFL literary text appropriately. The following section presents a discussion about teaching short stories.

This section comprises an analysis of the teachers' questionnaires about teaching short fictions. It deals with identifying the learners' obstacles in reading specifically short stories, the different activities they are asked to do and the different strategies to overcome them.

To what regards the problems that teachers of literature notice among their learners in reading short stories, their answers differ from one teacher to another. The following graph presents the results of their answers. In analysing these results, only 3 teachers claimed that students do not understand the characters of the short fiction. This may be due to the obscure personae the authors attribute to the story's characters and the students' misinterpretation. But generally, students do not face problems in understanding these as it is already proven by Master students' correct description and interpretation of the characters of both short fiction, regardless of their intolerance and the cultural differences that exist between them.

In addition, almost all of them claimed that students do understand the language used in the texts. This implies that their knowledge of the language is developed since they are Master students. However, in addition to the collected data in the analysis of the students' questionnaires, the teachers confirm their lack of confidence in making their own interpretation of the story in making language, style and grammatical mistakes. In that it is true that they comprehend the language of the story, but encounter difficulties in interpreting and expressing their thoughts.

In addition, most of them confirmed that their students are able to comprehend ambiguous texts. And, this is confirmed in the students' comprehension of the lottery meaning that contradicts the reality. Moreover, 6 teachers confirm that the students encounter problems of understanding cultural background of the short fiction, i.e. they are more empathetic towards its culture. Again, this does not correspond to the students' answers; their intolerance towards the story of *The Lottery* did not prevent them from understanding the story correctly. Therefore, teachers are required to overcome these difficulties by using the strategies that are mentioned above.

In respect to this research interpretation, the three phases of reading have been applied (Pre, while and post reading). All the teachers have confirmed their use of these steps in teaching short stories. In that, regarding the pre-reading phase, they argue some of

their techniques such as referring to historical background of the text, brainstorming tasks, introducing the influences that shape a specific literary text, explaining new or difficult words, presenting a detailed biography of the writer, providing students with cultural background, etc. This phase, as the teachers claim, can be considered as being not too relevant for Master 1 students, in that, in our investigation, the informants have been introduced to an overview of the Irish culture during the early twentieth century; whereas, they have not been provided so in *The Lottery* fiction. However, they have been asked to define the lottery to test their familiarity and empathy towards this topic. The results were the same since in both cases the students were able to understand and interpret the short stories correctly. Therefore, this phase may not always be significant for advanced learners.

For the while-reading phase, most teachers confirm that it is a stage where students are given a vocabulary study exercise through which they elucidate, with the guide of their teacher, unfamiliar vocabulary words in order to improve their comprehension. Others claimed that they may select some passages in the story and discuss work on it together with the students in the class by creating a discussion. And in order to test the validity of the latter, the while- reading questions are important to see if they were able to identify the literary elements such as: the characters, the events, images, symbols and the plot, as well as to draw the morality of the text. In short, the master students selected for this investigation were able to interpret the answers of such a stage correctly; i.e. they expressed their comprehension of the stories.

For the last stage, the post-reading phase, a great majority of them asserted that the students should be asked to write an essay or a project to be presented in the class. The latter include an explanation of their understanding of the story as well as their tolerance towards it. According to some of the teachers, this stage can be resumed in a discussion session through which students exchange their ideas and points of view about the topics expressed in the text. In short, these three stages can be considered as being important as far as the students are concerned. In other words, they have to be adapted according to their needs and level.

As a solution to the learners to become better readers, the teachers posit that it is preferable to select short stories with topics to meet the students' preferences. To put it differently, for these teachers, it is better to select short fictions with topics that meet their

interests and levels achieve better results. Furthermore, among the proposed strategies, 8 teachers claimed that they help their students to read for the plot and character relationship. All of them help their students to analyse the language, and 6 teachers asserted that they make them aware of the short story's non verbal aspects.

Again, we should remember that the informants are Master 1 students in teaching Literature; i.e. their level is presumed to be advanced. In this light, the informants succeeded to well comprehend and interpret both short stories in spite of their unfamiliarity, their style and language mistakes. Therefore, teachers should only guide them and urge them to use the dictionaries to check their meanings, motivate them to read and teach them to be autonomous in their reading comprehension. Then, in this case, the teacher plays the role of a guide to his/her students as it was shown in the results.

In evaluating students on their interpretation of short stories, teachers take into account different criteria. Among their answers, all of them often focus on the linguistic competence (vocabulary and syntax), themes, images and symbols. In addition, 8 of them often focus on the target culture of the story and only 2 sometimes focus on it. Therefore, in this case, it is paramount to consider all these literary elements in the evaluation of the students' literary works.

5. 6. Conclusion

As a conclusion, all the teachers admitted that extensive reading completely enhances the students' comprehension of literary texts. In general, through the analysis of the teachers' questionnaires and with regard to the collected data from the students' ones, we can deduce that the sociocultural background of Master 1 students of literature is not necessary for them. In that, neither their comprehension nor their interpretation of the short story was hindered by their unfamiliarity, intolerance to its topic or language mistakes.

Therefore, we can posit that schema theory is not reliable in the case of advanced learners. In other words, they are supposed to be skilful students who are capable of dealing with any foreign literary text in EFL context since it is their field of interest. Consequently, the teachers are required to encourage students to read extensively in order to widen their knowledge, and then their tolerance vis à vis any fiction that is based on culturally different background. In other words, thanks to the extensive reading, students'

Chapter V: Data Analysis and Discussion of the Findings

background knowledge becomes more and more rich and open towards other cultures; i.e. their schemata is not static, it is rather in a continuous change. Such a process enhances their tolerance and empathy in reading foreign literary works.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The objective of the present exploratory work was to test the validity and reliability of the sociocultural background of graduate Algerian university students in reading foreign literary texts in EFL context. Regarding the latter, university teachers of literature have also shared the responsibility for not succeeding to motivate enough their students as well as not to use appropriate techniques for doing so. Therefore, my study was motivated by the requirement to boost the university learner to well read and comprehend foreign culturally distant texts. In other terms, I tried to enhance the reading comprehension process of EFL literary fiction by taking into account the learners' sociocultural background.

In fact, other important variables could be relevant for this investigation in order to highlight the contribution of the learners' schemata in their reading of literary texts. To put it differently, among these variables there is the influence of the social or cultural schemata and the linguistic or the literary competences which could highly contribute in their comprehension and interpretation of foreign fiction. This led to an investigation which shed light on the students' cultural, linguistic and literary competences. It also shed light on the teaching of short fiction, which was the case study of this research work, by exploring the interaction reader/ text from an experimental point of view.

Regarding the claims raised on the reading theory which have investigated thoroughly the understanding of the students' interpretations of literary texts, their presumption relied on the consideration of cultural background knowledge, the formal features of language and of understanding the literary elements. Therefore, the students' interpretations of the foreign literary texts hold a close evidence of their relation to the language of such texts. At this stage, I presumed that the linguistic competence of this population of master students, who are assumed to possess the same mastery of the foreign language, would facilitate their interpretation in the foreign texts in EFL context; especially in Algerian universities. Moreover, I presumed also that the texts' language and the vocabulary used would allow them to well comprehend and shape their understanding in various ways of the very text.

As a result to this exploratory research, some pedagogical implications have been set in respect to the topic of this thesis. However, it is important to stress that my remarks on the students, the teachers, the context, the syllabus, the approaches adopted by the

General Conclusion

teachers and the generalisations to be made seem to bring more credibility to these elements.

In trying to describe the students' deficiencies in their reading comprehension of foreign literary texts, I aimed to depict the experience about the relationship between the text and the reader for sake of decoding meaning; i.e. their interpretations of the literary fiction. This process, as already claimed by Paran (1996) and Bernhardt (2003), sheds light on other parameters related to the readers' background which are responsible for this connection with the literary text. Instead of considering the latter's criticism solely, other analyses have to be taken into account which can be, for example, of a social or psychological nature in order to try to find efficient strategies to boost a cultural relationship between the student and the text. In this light, I attempted to offer a close description of the reading comprehension process and its characteristics; especially the learner/ reader who plays an important role in this process. Hence, in depicting such a process, I shed light on many new perspectives on the students' engagement in reading literary texts to generate their own interpretation by relying on both external and internal factors. The former refer to the context of the text, the impact the learner's sociocultural background, and the teachers' role in the selection of literary fiction by considering the learners' competences vis-à-vis the target culture in EFL context. Regarding the latter, they include the very student's linguistic, cultural and literary competence in EFL context which is supposed to be taken into account in the selection of the literary texts to be read.

Regarding my description of the deficiencies of both the students' interpretations and the teaching of literary fiction, I tried to present a sketch of the main exploratory studies which have been driven in literary reading context. Therefore, the aim behind this depiction was to explain the way investigators stressed their attention on the influence of the sociocultural background on the reading comprehension of literary texts in EFL context while supporting their assumptions with more arguments. Particularly, the motivation behind my aim to conduct such a study was the desire to test to what extent sociocultural schema is reliable for reading foreign literature. In other terms, many scholars and investigators hold that schema theory has to be taken into account in the teaching of literature. Therefore, I aimed to see whether Cook's (1989) claim in which he held that comprehension can take place by relying on mental processes whether schemata is present or absent. To put it otherwise, the absence of background knowledge does not hinder the

General Conclusion

reading comprehension process, but rather contributes to build new knowledge by relying on new mental processes.

It is worth mentioning that the theories made in favour of this issue led to create a new thinking of this research and test the hypotheses on which I formulated my experiment on Algerian University students. Thus, my support to the relevance of schema theory, as advocated by Yule (1985), Cook (1989) and many others, was tested in Mostaganem University context.

By undertaking the first part of the experiment, a description of Master students' behaviour vis-à-vis literature was clarified. Particularly, conducting observation sessions has facilitated the depiction of these students in EFL context. As a result, it was noticed that such students expressed a quite considerable enthusiasm when more than half of them were engaged in literature classes with the proposed literary genres. As a result, these observations revealed that the students seemed interested in both short fictions, *The Boarding House* and *The Lottery*. However, in driving a discussion session before reading, they manifested more enthusiasm about the first short fiction than the latter. Hitherto, this result shows their preference to the first topic of the fiction rather than the second one. In this light, the students held that the topic of *The Boarding House* is closer to their culture than *The Lottery*. Hence, this is important evidence that the fact of sharing the same cultural background with the target culture of the text fosters the students' reading comprehension. But, it is important to note that the fact of not sharing the same cultural behaviour with *The Lottery* fiction prevented them from getting involved in the story discussion; they were simply more enthusiastic on the former than the latter.

In addition to the remarks noticed in the observations, another parameter which was also experienced in this study is the student's profile or his/her socio-cultural background. As to the assumption which was formulated at the beginning of this study is the impact of the learners' sociocultural background that is manifested mainly through their religion and socio-cultural attitude. The questionnaires of the informants of this study demonstrated that the topic implicated in *The Boarding House* is more familiar and close to them in terms of cultural and social habits. This is because it deals with the topic of 'marriage' which is viewed as holy institution for both countries. However, they held that the cultural behaviour conveyed in *The Lottery* is distant from their own culture. In the case of these informants, as Algerian learners, their Muslim religious background did allow them to

General Conclusion

empathise with *The Lottery* because of the cruelty of the practice of stoning ‘the victim’ until death, as most of them asserted. Moreover, the fact of practising the lottery is unacceptable by the Islamic religion since it was clearly mentioned in the Islamic holy book ‘Coran’. This claim implies that it is a sort of gambling, i.e. easy money; something which is not allowed by such religion. Therefore, this reveals that there are more affinities and appreciation towards the first short story rather than the second one. Despite the fact that this conclusion was exalted by scholars like Cook (1989), this raised the critics of many scholars and even me as a researcher. Surprisingly, the results obtained from the questionnaires showed the opposite of such vision.

Following the same light, the results of the questionnaires demonstrated that the population of literature master students showed the same level of comprehension for both short fictions. Put differently, the informants’ responses to the different questions of the questionnaires reflected their comprehension of both fictions. Thus, this result disconfirms the previous claim, which holds that the learner’s background knowledge is essential in the understanding of new one. As a conclusion to this controversy, by referring to Cook’s (1989) claim about the relevance of schemata in reading, I can deduce from these results that the learner does not necessarily require being familiar with the foreign topics of the proposed literary text. Then, s/he activates mental processes that enable him/her to comprehend a new foreign text. By drawing such a conclusion, I deny the first assumption I mentioned at the beginning of this work, and I hold that schema theory is not relevant for the Algerian master students.

Contrary to the results’ of the students’ questionnaire, the data collected from the teachers’ answers demonstrated that they take into account the students’ cultural background in the selection of literary texts to be taught. However, it is important to stress that in spite of the fact that the teachers were aware of the advanced level in EFL of the population selected for this study, they claimed that the consideration of schema theory in their teaching of literature for master students is essential. In addition, it is also relevant to highlight that though schema theory is not instructed in the Literature Master curriculum, it is applied by all the teachers of the sample. In this light, by comparing such findings to that of the students’ answers to both familiar and unfamiliar texts, I would say that, in the case of advanced EFL students, the cultural background is not relevant. To put it differently, schema theory is irrelevant in the reading comprehension of literary texts. Hence, it is

General Conclusion

unnecessary for teachers of literature to ask their master students to read fictions that are close or familiar to their culture. This can be explained by their precondition to learn English as a foreign language which incites them to be more open to others' culture.

Following the same path, the informants' tolerance and empathy towards the foreign literary texts was different. Regarding the first text, *The Boarding House*, all the informants expressed their tolerance and empathy towards the topic of the text. In other words, they were more empathetic because of the closeness of their sociocultural behaviour to that of the text, i.e. the importance of marriage and the family, and the paralysis of the Irish society. Thus, this closeness or familiarity that the Algerian master students draw by their reading of the foreign literary text is manifested through their empathy towards its culture. Unlike the first fiction, *The Lottery* was seen as being distant from the students' culture because of the cultural behaviour expressed in the text. The latter depicts an American local celebration that opposes the Algerian customs and religion. Therefore, this leads to the informants' intolerance and non-empathy vis-à-vis the target culture. In fact, this denies the already formulated the assumption which holds that the teacher should select literary fictions that correspond to the students' culture.

Although the students were neither tolerant nor empathetic towards *The Lottery* fiction, this did not hinder their reading comprehension. In their interpretation of the story through their answers of the proposed questionnaires, I noticed that the students have well comprehended and succeeded to interpret correctly most of the answers. At this stage, through the analysis of their answers, most of the informants were able to identify the different literary elements. In that, they could identify the different personae of the characters of both fictions as well as the plots. Moreover, they also succeeded to highlight the various images expressed by the authors and the aim behind mentioning them in the story. Thus, regardless of the cultural distance between their culture and the target one, their literary competence in interpreting short stories seems to be acceptable and quite satisfactory with regard to their level.

As to the linguistic competence of the Algerian master students of this research, their mastery of the language seemed to be quite unsatisfactory as to their level. The latter is supposed to be advanced since it is their fourth year of studying English at the university; their mastery of the language should be more than satisfactory. As it was already mentioned in chapter 5, many language mistakes have been identified that are:

General Conclusion

structural, syntactic, grammatical and semantic. It is important to mention that these mistakes can be considered as errors for the learner him/herself, i.e. s/he is aware of such faults, but commits these mistakes unconsciously. Despite these students' mistakes or errors, the meaning could be extracted in analysing them. In other words, in spite of their various language mistakes, it did not hinder extracting the meaning of their interpretation of the textual content.

Furthermore, all the teachers involved in the current study claimed the importance of inciting students to improve their EFL writing by using different techniques. Among the latter are: pre-reading activities which help them to explain the meaning of the different difficult words of the literary texts, instructing extensive reading, etc. Therefore, the students' mastery of the foreign language seems to be inappropriate concerning their level which is presumed to be advanced and their writing which is supposed to be highly elaborate since they are master students in the Didactics of literature. Yet, this deficiency does not create obstacles for well interpreting their thoughts about the foreign language appropriately.

It is also relevant to shed light on the fact that master students admit their limited reading skills. They asserted that the reading deficiencies are due to restricted reading. Moreover, they are also aware of their unsatisfactory mastery of the English language skills for the same reason. These facts of being conscious of the students' reasons behind facing some deficiencies in literature reading comprehension as well as in their interpretation reveal their desire to improve them regardless of the canonicity of the foreign culture conveyed in the literary text.

Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

In light of the results obtained from this investigation, some pedagogical implications could be useful for both the learning and the teaching of reading foreign literary texts. First of all, for the teachers of literature, I suggest that the notion of schema theory can be one of the alternative ways in teaching literary fiction. To put it otherwise, it is not necessary or obligatory to take into account the students' background in selecting literary texts to be read. The findings have demonstrated that, in the case of master students in EFL context, schema theory is irrelevant since they are presumed to be open to

General Conclusion

comprehend any foreign text, and their high proficiency level in the target language. Therefore, it is not significant to apply schema theory for such type of students. By disregarding the cultural parameter in reading foreign literary texts, as advocated by Cook (1989), stimulate or activate new mental processes that facilitate the understanding of unfamiliar culture-based texts.

Second, it has been found that the students' tolerance towards some foreign cultural issues is low as in *The Lottery*. Such manifestation can merely imply that intolerance and non-empathy are present in the reading process. In fact, active factors such as teachers and curriculum designers are responsible to assist the learners in their openness vis-à-vis the reading about foreign cultures. The results showed that despite the informants' intolerance, they succeeded to well comprehend and interpret the foreign literary text. Thus, it would be preferable for the teachers to encourage their students to be aware of foreign cultures. This is because the students are learning a foreign language; they are, then, required to be taught how to be more tolerant, open and empathetic towards alien literary texts.

Third, it would be also beneficial for the teachers of literature to equip their students with the necessary literary tools. In other words, teachers of literature are supposed to teach their students the necessary literary elements that are specific for each literary genre. In the case of short fiction, as was investigated in this thesis, it is important to teach them how to identify and analyse the main and secondary characters, setting, plot, themes, images used by authors, etc. In this light, the learners will be prepared to analyse appropriately fiction and will be aware of the literary procedures to be followed in doing so. Moreover, they will be more comfortable, confident and enthusiastic in their literature classrooms (Williams and Burden, 1997).

Fourth, to what regards the students' linguistic competence, I suggest that extensive reading is an appropriate strategy to improve the learners' language skills in EFL context. As it was already elicited in the questionnaires' findings, both literature teachers and students admitted that extensive reading contributes in enhancing the students' language learning as well as their openness towards other topics; i.e. they become more dynamic in their learning. Since literature is considered as a vehicle of culture, it reflects to the readers the use of the target language in different contexts. I think that this can drive them to learn more efficiently and familiarise themselves with the foreign language vocabulary and to

General Conclusion

learn how to use it appropriately. Therefore, I suggest that it is paramount to incite students to embark upon extensive reading in order to enrich their linguistic repertoire and skills.

To sum up, these recommendations are meant to enable Algerian master students to become better readers by relying on their mental processes in reading literary texts. In this process, the present work ends up by highlighting that schema theory can be used as a motive for the students' reading comprehension of literary texts. However, it is not necessary to be taken into account for advanced EFL learners because they should deal with any foreign text since they are presumed to learn a foreign language, then a foreign culture. Finally, it is wished that further researches be conducted with other strategies and methods on reading comprehension.

Bibliography

Bibliography

- Abu-Rabia, S. (1998). Social and Cognitive Factors Influencing the Reading Comprehension of Arab Students Learning Hebrew as a Second Language in Israel. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 21/3, 201-212.
- Abrahams, R. D. (1970a). *Deep Down in the Jungle*. Chicago, IL: Aldine.
- Abrahamson, R. F., & Conlon, A. (1988). Books for Adolescents: Quality Young Adult Titles for Reluctant Readers.
- Adams, M. J., & Collins, A. (1977). A Schema-Theoretic View of Reading. Technical Report No. 32.
- Ajideh, P. (2006). Schema-Theory Based Considerations on Pre-Reading Activities in ESP Textbooks. *Asian EFL Journal*, 16, 1-13.
- Agar, M. (1994). *Language shock: Understanding the Culture of Conversation*. William Morrow & Company.
- Alderson, J. C. and Urquhart, A. H. (1988). This Test is Unfair: I'm Not an Economist. In Carrell, P. et al. (Eds.). *Interactive Approaches to Second Language Reading* (pp.168-182). Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Allport, G. W. (1954). The Nature of Prejudice. *New York: Addison*.
- Anderson, R.C. (1977). The Notion of Schemata and the Education Enterprise: General Discussion of the Conference. In Anderson, R., Spiro, R., and Montague, W. (Eds.). *Schooling and the Acquisition of Knowledge* (pp. 415-431). Hillsdale, NJ, Erlbaum.
- Anderson, R. C. (1978). Schema-Directed Processes in Language Comprehension. In *Cognitive Psychology and Instruction* (pp. 67-82). Springer US.
- Anderson, R. C., & Pearson, P. D. (1984). A Schema-Theoretic View of Basic Processes in Reading Comprehension. *Handbook of reading research*, 1, 255-291.
- Anderson, R. C., Reynolds, R. E., Schallert, D. L., & Goetz, E. T. (1977). Frameworks for Comprehending Discourse. *American Educational Research Journal*, 14(4), 367-381.
- Alderson, J. C., & Urquhart, A. H. (1984). *Reading in a foreign language*. Longman Pub Group.

Bibliography

- Atkinson, D. (1999). TESOL and Culture. *TESOL Quarterly*, 33, 625-654.
- Atkinson, D. (2000). The Author Responds ... *TESOL Quarterly*, 34, 752-752.
- Au, K. H. P. (1979). Using the Experience-Text-Relationship Method with Minority Children. *The Reading Teacher*, 32(6), 677-679.
- Auerbach, E. R., & Paxton, D. (1997). "It's Not the English Thing": Bringing Reading Research Into the ESL Classroom. *Tesol Quarterly*, 31(2), 237-261.
- Bamford, J., & Day, R. R. (1998). Teaching Reading. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 18, 124-141.
- Bardovi-Harlig, K., & Dörnyei, Z. (1998). Do Language Learners Recognize Pragmatic Violations? Pragmatic Versus Grammatical Awareness in Instructed L2 Learning. *Tesol Quarterly*, 32(2), 233-259.
- Bartlett, F. (1932). *Remembering*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Barrios Espinosa, M. E. (2005). La Investigación en Torno a la Cognición Del Profesor de L2/LE. *Cauce*, 2005,(28): 33-54.
- Beach, R. (1994). Students' resistance to engagement with multicultural literature. In Rogers, T. and Soter, A. (Eds.) *Reading across cultures: Teaching literature in a diverse society* (pp.69-94). New York, Teachers College Press, Columbia University.
- Beck, I. L. (1981). Reading problems and instructional practices. *Reading research: Advances in theory and practice*, 2, 53-95. New York: Academic Press.
- Bedjaoui, A. (2014). *Cinéma et guerre de libération: Algérie, des batailles d'images*. Éditions Chihab.
- Benedict, R. (1935). *Patterns of Culture*. London, Routledge and Sons Ltd.
- Benseddik, B. (2015). *Shaking Cross Cultural Values Through Literature Teaching*. University of Sidi Bel Abbas.
- Bernhardt, V. L. (2003). Using Data to Improve Student Learning in Elementary Schools. Eye on Education.

Bibliography

- Bernhardt, E. (2005). Progress and procrastination in second language reading. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 25, 133-150. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Berg, C. (2003). The Role of Grounded Theory and Collaborative Research. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 38, 105-111.
- Berg, L. D., & Longhurst, R. (2003). Placing Masculinities and Geography. *Gender, Place and Culture*, 10(4), 351-360. Taylor & Francis
- Berry, J. (2009). A Critique of Critical Acculturation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 33, 361-371.
- Bransford, J. D., & Johnson, M. K. (1972). Contextual Prerequisites for Understanding: Some Investigations of Comprehension and Recall. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior*, 11(6), 717-726.
- Brantmeier, C. (2004). Gender, Violence-Oriented Passage Content and Second Language Reading Comprehension. *The Reading Matrix*, 4(2).
- Brown, H. D. (1980). The Optimal Distance Model of Second Language Acquisition. *Tesol Quarterly*, 157-164. JSTOR
- Brown, H. D. (1986). Learning a Second Culture. In Valdes, J. (Ed). *Culture Bound. Bridging the Cultural Gap in Language Teaching* (pp. 33-47). Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, G., Anderson, A., Shillcock, R., & Yule, G. (1985). *Teaching talk: Strategies for production and assessment*. Cambridge University Press.
- Brumfit, C. J. (1979). *The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Brumfit, C., & Carter, R. (Eds.). (1986). *Literature and Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brummitt-Yale, J. (2011). Persuading the Principal: Writing Persuasive Letters About School Issues. IRA/NCTE
- Byram, M. (1981). Language Teaching within a Framework. *Curriculum*, 2, 11-14.

Bibliography

Byram, M. (1986). Cultural Studies in Foreign Language Teaching. *Language Teaching*, 19, 322-336. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Byram, M. (1988). Foreign Language Education and Cultural Studies. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 1, 15-31. Taylor & Francis

Byram, M. (1989a). Intercultural Education and Foreign Language Teaching. *World Studies Journal*, 7, 4-7.

Byram, M. (1989b). *Cultural Studies in Foreign Language Education*. Clevedon, Multilingual Matters.

Byram, M. (1997). *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*. Clevedon, Multilingual Matters.

Byram, M. (2000a). Intercultural Communicative Competence: the Challenge for Language Teacher Training. In Mountford, A. and Wadham-Smith, N. (Eds). *British Studies: Intercultural Perspectives* (pp. 95-102). London, Longman in association with The British Council.

Byram, M. (Ed.). (2000b). *Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Learning and Teaching*. London, Routledge.

Byram, M. (2008). *From Foreign Language Education to Education for Intercultural Citizenship: Essays and Reflections* (Vol. 17). Multilingual Matters.

Byram, M. (2009). Intercultural Competence in Foreign Languages: The Intercultural Speaker and the Pedagogy of Foreign Language Education. *The Sage Handbook of Intercultural Competence*, 321-332.

Byram, M., Alred, G., & Fleming, M. (2003). Intercultural Experience and Education. *Languages for Intercultural Communication and Education*.

Byram, M. and Grundy, P. (2003). *Context and Culture in Language Teaching and Learning*. Clevedon, Multilingual Matters.

Byram, M. and Morgan, C. (1994). *Teaching-and-Learning Language-and-Culture*. Clevedon, Multilingual Matters.

Bibliography

- Byram, M., & Risager, K. (1999). *Language teachers, politics and cultures*. Multilingual Matters.
- Byram, M., & Zarate, G. (1997). *The Sociocultural and Intercultural Dimension of Language Learning and Teaching (Vol. 2)*. Council of Europe.
- Canclini, N. G. (2005). *Hybrid cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Canclini, N. G. (2006). Hybrid cultures, Oblique Powers. *Media and Cultural Studies*, 73, 422.
- Canagarajah, S. (1995). Review. *Language in Society*, 24, 590-594. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Carrell, P. (1984c). The Effects of Rhetorical Organization on ESL Readers. *TESOL Quarterly*, 18, 441-469.
- Carrell, P. L., & Eisterhold, J. C. (1983). Schema Theory and ESL Reading Pedagogy. *TESOL Quarterly*, 17(4), 553-573.
- Carrell, P. L. (1988). Some Causes of Text-Boundedness and Schema Interference in ESL Reading. *Interactive Approaches to Second Language Reading*, 101-113.
- Carter, R. (1987). *The Web of Words*. Cambridge University Press.
- Carter, R. (2010). Issues in Pedagogical Stylistics: A Coda. *Language and Literature*, 19, 115-122. SAGE Publications Sage UK: London, England
- Carter, R. A., & Long, M. N. (1991). *Teaching Literature*. Addison-Wesley Longman Limited.
- Celce-Murcia, M. (1995). Discourse Analysis and the Teaching of Listening. *Principle and Practice in Applied Linguistics: Studies in Honor of HG Widdowson*, 363-377.
- Chang, Y. (2006). On the Use of the Immediate Recall Task as a Measure of Second Language Reading Comprehension. *Language Testing*, 23/4, 520-543.
- Chastain, K. (1988). Developing Second Language Skills. *Theory and Practice*, 3.

Bibliography

- Chapelle, C., & Roberts, C. (1986). Ambiguity Tolerance and Field Independence as Predictors of Proficiency in English as a Second Language. *Language Learning*, 36(1), 27-45. Wiley Online Library.
- Chen, H. (2005). The Rationale for Critical Pedagogy in Facilitating Cultural Identity Development . In Slater Stern, B. (Ed.). *Curriculum and Teaching Dialogue*, 7, 11-22. Information Age Publishing.
- Chia, H. L. (2001). Reading Activities for Effective Top-Down Processing. In *Forum* (Vol. 39, No. 1, p. n1). <http://exchanges.state.gov/forum/>.
- COUNCIL, O. E. (2001). Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching. *Assessment*.
- Clarke, D. F. (1989). Communicative Theory and its Influence on Materials Production. *Language Teaching*, 22(2), 73-86. Wiley Online Library.
- Clarke, M. (1976). Second Language Acquisition as a Clash of Consciousness. *Language Learning*, 26, 377-389. Wiley Online Library.
- Clarke, M. et al. (1984). Linguistic Relativity and Sex/Gender Studies: Epistemological and Methodological Considerations, *Language Learning*, 34, 47-67. Wiley Online Library.
- Cohen, L. M., & Manion, L. (2000). L. and Morrison. *Research Methods in Education*, 5.
- Cohen, A. D. et al. (1988). Reading English for Specialized Purposes: Discourse Analysis and the Use of Student Informants. In Carrell et al. (Eds.) *Interactive Approaches to Second Language Reading* (pp. 152-167). Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Collie, J. and S. Slater. 1991. *Literature in the Language Classroom: A Resource Book of Ideas and Activities*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Collins, A., Brown, J. S., & Larkin, K. M. (1980). Inference in Text Understanding. In R. J. Spiro, B. C. Bruce, & W. F. Brewer (Eds.), *Theoretical Issues in Reading Comprehension*. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Erlbaum.
- Cook, G. (1994). *Discourse and literature: The Interplay of Form and Mind*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bibliography

- Cook, G. (1989). *Discourse in Language Teaching: A Scheme for Teacher Education*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Danks, C., & Rabinsky, L. B. (1999). *Teaching for a Tolerant World, Grades 9-12. Essays and Resources*. National Council of Teachers of English, 1111 W. Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801-1096.
- DeCoursey, C. (Ed.). (2012). *Language Arts in Asia: Literature and Drama in English, Putonghua and Cantonese*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Demircioğlu, H. (2008). *Developing Instructional Materials about the Topic of States of Matter based on the Context based Approach for Primary Students Teachers and Probing their Effectiveness*. Doctoral Dissertation. Karadeniz Technical University: Trabzon, Turkey.
- Damisch, H., & Goodman, J. (1994). *L'origine de la Perspective* (p. 53). Cambridge, MA: Mit Press.
- Derrida, J. (1994). *Specters of Marx*, trans. Peggy Kamuf. *London and New York: Routledge*.
- Derrida, J. (1994). *Force de Loi: Le "Fondement Mystique de l'Autorité"*. Paris: Galilée.
- Deyuan & Gao, B. (2006). Reading in Three Stages. *Celea Journal*. Vol29, No,4.
- Dlaska, A. (2003). Language Learning in the University: Creating Content and Community in Non-Specialist Programmes. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 8, 109-116. Taylor & Francis Group.
- Doctorow, et. al. (1978). Generative Processes in Reading Comprehension. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 70,109-188. American Psychological Association
- Doyé, P. (1999). *The Intercultural Dimension: Foreign Language Education in the Primary School*. Cornelsen.
- El-Koumy, A. S. A. (2000). Effects of Overall, Selective, and No Error Correction on the Quality and Quantity of EFL Students' Writing. (ERIC_NO: ED449664)

Bibliography

- Ellis, G., McRae, J. 1991. *The Extensive Reading Handbook for Secondary Teachers*. Penguin English.
- Ely, C. M. (1989). Tolerance of Ambiguity and Use of Second Language Strategies. *Foreign Language Annals*, 22(5), 437-445.
- Erkaya, O. R. (2005). Benefits of Using Short Stories in the EFL Context. *Online Submission*, 8. ERIC
- Erten, İ. H., & Razi, S. (2009). The Effects of Cultural Familiarity on Reading Comprehension. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 21(1), 60-77. ERIC
- Fish, S. (1970). Literature in the Reader: Affective stylistics. *New Literary History*, 2(1), 123-162. JSTOR
- Fleming, M. P. (2003). *Intercultural Experience and Education* (Vol. 2). Multilingual Matters.
- Floyd, P., & Carrell, P. L. (1987). Effects on ESL reading of Teaching Cultural Content Schemata. *Language Learning*, 37(1), 89-108. Wiley Online Library
- Gadamer, H. G. (1992). *L'Actualité du Beau*, trad. Poulain, Alinéa.
- Gaffney, J. S., & Anderson, R. C. (2000). Trends in Reading Research in the United States: Changing Intellectual Currents over Three Decades. *Handbook of reading research*, 3, 53-74.
- Gasché, R. (1994). *Inventions of Difference: on Jacques Derrida*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
- Geertz, C. (1974). From the Native's Point of View: On the Nature of Anthropological Understanding. *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 26-45.
- Genetsch, M. (2007). *The Texture of Identity*. Toronto, TSAR Publications.
- Gilner, L., & Morales, F. (2010). Functional load: Transcription and Analysis of the 10,000 most Frequent Words in Spoken English. *The Buckingham Journal of Language and Linguistics*, 3, 135-162.

Bibliography

- Goetz, E. T., Schallert, D. L., Reynolds, R. E., & Radin, D. I. (1983). Reading in Perspective: What Real Cops and Pretend Burglars Look for in a Story. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 75(4), 500.
- Goodman, K. (1970). Reading as a Psychologistic Guessing Game. In H. Singer and R. b. Ruddell . (Eds). *Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading*. Newark, N.J.: International Reading Association.
- Goodman, L. A. (1973). The Analysis of Multidimensional Contingency Tables when Some Variables are Posterior to Others: A Modified Path Analysis Approach. *Biometrika*, 179-192. JSTOR
- Goodman, Y. M., & Goodman, K. S. (1994). To Err is Human: Learning about Language Processes by Analyzing Miscues. In R. B. Ruddell, M. R. Ruddell, & H. Singer (Eds.), *Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading* (4th ed., pp. 104-123). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Grabe, W. (1991). Current Developments in Second Language Reading Research. *TESOL Quarterly*, 25(3), 375-406. Wiley Online Library
- Hammadou, J. (1991). Interrelationships among Prior Knowledge, Inference, and Language Proficiency in Foreign Language Reading. *The Modern Language Journal*, 75/1, 27-38.
- Handford, M. (2002). Developing Sociocultural Competence in the ESL Classroom. *The Nottingham Linguistic Circular*, (17), 1-16.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1978). *Language as Social Semiotic*. Arnold: London.
- Harker, J. O., Hartley, J. T., & Walsh, D. A. (1982). Understanding Discourse: A life-Span Approach. *Advances in Reading/Language Research*. JAI Press, Inc
- Hedge, T. (1985). *Using Readers in Language Teaching*. London: Macmillan.
- Heinz, P. (2004). Towards Enhanced Second Language Comprehension Assessment: Computerized versus Manual Scoring of Written Recall Protocols. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 16/2, 97-124. University of Hawaii: National Foreign Language Resource Center
- Hemphill, L., Picardi, N., & Tager-Flusberg, H. (1991). Narrative as an Index of Communicative Competence in Mildly Mentally Retarded Children. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 12(3), 263-279. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bibliography

- Hill, D. R. (2001). Survey. Graded Readers. *ELT journal*, 55(3), 300-324. CiteSeerx
- Hill, D. R., & Thomas, H. R. (1988). Survey Review: Graded Readers (Part 1). *ELT Journal*, 42(1), 44-52.
- Hsui, V. Y. (2000). Guided Independent Reading (GIR): A Programme to Nurture Lifelong. *Teaching and Learning*, 20(2), 31-39. Wiley Online Library.
- Hudson, T. (1982). The Effects of Induced Schemata on the “Short Circuit” in L2 Reading: Non-Decoding Factors in L2 Reading Performance. *Language learning*, 32(1), 1-33. Wiley Online Library
- Hymes, D. (1964). Toward Ethnomethodologies of Communication: The Analysis of Communicative Events. In Giglioli, P. (Ed.) (1972). *Language and Social Context. Selected Readings*. London, England.
- Hymes, D. (1967). Models of the Interaction of Language and Social Setting. *Journal of Social Issues*, XXIII/2, 8-28.
- Holland, D., Lachicotte, W., Skinner, D., & Cain, C. (1998). *Agency and Identity in Cultural Worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Jarvis, J., & Robinson, M. (1997). Analysing Educational Discourse: An Exploratory Study of Teacher Response and Support to Pupils' Learning¹. *Applied Linguistics*, 18(2), 212-228. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Jeffries, L. (2001). Schema Affirmation and White Asparagus: cultural Multilingualism among Readers of Texts. *Language and Literature*, 10/4, 325-343. Sage publications.
- Jensen, K. (1995). *The Social Semiotics of Mass Communication*. London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif. : Sage Pubs.
- Johnson, P. (1982). Effects on Reading Comprehension of Building Background Knowledge. *TESOL Quarterly*, 16 (4): 503-16. Wiley Online Library.
- Jokikokko, K. (2005). Interculturally Trained Finnish Teachers' Conceptions of Diversity and Intercultural Competence. *Intercultural Education*, 16(1), 69-83. Taylor & Francis Group.

Bibliography

- Just, M. A., & Carpenter, P. A. (1980). A Theory of Reading: From Eye fixations to Comprehension. *Psychological Review*, 87(4), 329. American Psychological Association.
- Kaikkonen, P. (2001). Intercultural learning through foreign language education. *Experiential learning in foreign language education*, 61-105. Pearson Education London.
- Kant, I. (1929). *Critique of pure reason*. New York, St. Martin's Press (Original work published in 1781).
- Kasper, G., & Rose, K. R. (Eds.). (2001). *Pragmatics in language teaching*. Ernst Klett Sprachen.
- Katz, D., & Braly, K. (1933). Racial stereotypes of one hundred college students. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 28(3), 280. American Psychological Association.
- Keshavarz, M. H., & Assar, M. (2009). Reading Comprehension Ability and Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among High, Mid and Low Ambiguity Tolerance EAP Students. *Iranian Journal of Applied Language Studies*, 1(2), 71-108.
- Kintsch, W. and van Dijk, T. (1978). Toward a Model of Text Comprehension and Production. *Psychological Review*, 85, 363-394. American Psychological Association.
- Kramsch, C. (1993). *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Kramsch, C. (1995). The cultural Component of Language Teaching. *Language, Culture, and Curriculum*, 8, 83-92. Taylor & Francis.
- Kramsch, C. (1998). *Language and Culture*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Kramsch, C. (Ed.). (2003). *Language Acquisition and Language Socialization: Ecological Perspectives*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Kramsch, C. (2007). Classic Book Review. Re-reading Robert Lado, 1957. *Linguistics Across Cultures. Applied Linguistics for Language Teachers. International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 17/2, 241-247.

Bibliography

- Kramersch, C. J., McConnell-Ginet, S., & Ginet-McConnell, S. (1992). *Text and Context: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives on Language Study*. DC Heath & Co.
- Kintsch, W., & Van Dijk, T. A. (1975). Comment on se Rappelle et On Résume des Histoires. *Langages*, (40), 98-116. JSTOR
- Kuo, K. C. H. (2003). A Euphoria of Transcultural Hybridity: Is Multiculturalism Possible?. *Postcolonial Studies: Culture, Politics, Economy*, 6(2), 223-235. Taylor & Francis.
- Kress, G. (1988). Textual Matters: The Social Effectiveness of Style. *Birch and O'Toole (eds)*, 126-41.
- LaBerge, D., & Samuels, S. J. (1974). Toward a Theory of Automatic Information Processing in Reading. *Cognitive Psychology*, 6(2), 293-323. Elsevier.
- Lado, R. (Ed.) (1957). *Linguistics Across Cultures*. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press.
- Lantolf, J. P. (Ed.). (2000). *Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning*. Oxford University Press.
- Langer, J. A. (1981). From Theory to Practice: A Prereading Plan. *Journal of Reading*, 25(2), 152-156. JSTOR
- Larzén, E. (2005). In Pursuit of an Intercultural Dimension in EFL-Teaching: Exploring Cognitions among Finland-Swedish Comprehensive School Teachers. Abo Akademi University Press.
- Lillegard, W. A., Brown, E. W., Wilson, D. J., Henderson, R., & Lewis, E. (1997). Efficacy of Strength Training in Prepubescent to early Postpubescent Males and Females: Effects of Gender and Maturity. *Pediatric Rehabilitation*, 1(3), 147-157. Taylor & Francis.
- Littlewood, W. (2000). Do Asian Students Really Want to Listen and Obey?. *ELT Journal*, Volume 54, Issue 1, 31–36. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Lustig, M.W. and Koester, J. (1999), *Intercultural Competence: Interpersonal Communication across Cultures*, Addison Wesley Longman, Harlow.

Bibliography

- Lye, J. (1996). Deconstruction: Some Assumptions. *Brock University, Department of English Language & Literature*.
- Lazar, G. (1993). *Literature and Language Teaching: A Guide for Teachers and Trainers*. Ernst Klett Sprachen.
- Mandler, J. M. (1978). A Code in the Node: The Use of a Story Schema in Retrieval. *Discourse Processes, 1*(1), 14-35. Taylor & Francis.
- Malinowski, B. (1923). The problem of meaning in primitive languages. Supplement 1. In Ogden, C., and Richards, I. (Eds.). *The meaning of meaning*. London, Kegan Paul.
- Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P. (1993). The Intelligence of Emotional Intelligence. *Intelligence, 17*(4), 433-442. Elsevier.
- Maloof, V. M., Rubin, D., and Neville Miller, A. (2006). Cultural Competence and Identity in Cross-cultural Adaptation: The Role of a Vietnamese Heritage Language School. *The International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 9*, 255-273. Taylor & Francis.
- McCarthy, B. (1996). About Learning. Barrington, Illinois: Excel.
- McCarthy, M., & Carter, R. (1994). Language as Discourse Perspectives/or Language Teachers. *New York Longman*.
- McCarthy, S. and Moje, E. (2002). Conversations: Identity Matters. *Reading Research Quarterly, 37*, 228-238. Wiley Online Library.
- McVee, M., Dunsmore, K., and Gavelek, J. (2005). Schema Theory Revisited. *Review of Educational Research, 75*/4, 531-566. Sage Publications Sage CA: Thousand Oaks, CA.
- McRae, J. (1991). *Extensive Reading Handbook: for Secondary Teachers*. Penguin English.
- Meyer, B. J. (1981). Basic Research on Prose Comprehension: A Critical Review. *Comprehension and the Competent Reader: Inter-Specialty Perspectives*. New York: Praeger.

Bibliography

- Minsky, M. (1975). A Framework for Representing Knowledge. In Winston, P. (Ed.). *The Psychology of Computer Vision*. New York, McGraw-Hill.
- Mountford, A. and Wadham-Smith, N. (Eds.). (2000). *British Studies: Intercultural Perspectives*. London, Longman.
- Moreiras, A. (1991). *Interpretación y Diferencia*. Madrid, Visor.
- Nodoushan, M. A. S. (2014). Cognitive Versus Learning Styles: Emergence of the Ideal Education Model (IEM). *i-Manager's Journal on Educational Psychology*, 8(2), 31.
- Norton, R. W. (1975). Measurement of Ambiguity Tolerance. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 39(6), 607-619. Taylor & Francis Groups.
- Norton, B., & Toohey, K. (2001). Changing Perspectives on Good Language Learners. *TESOL Quarterly*, 35(2), 307-322. Wiley Online Library
- O'Donoghue, T., & Punch, K. (Eds.). (2003). *Qualitative Educational Research in Action: Doing and Reflecting*. Routledge.
- Ono. L , Day.R ,& Harsch.K. (2004) *Tips for Reading Extensively*. English Teaching Forum Vol. 42 No. 4 <http://exchanges.state.gov/forum/vols/vol42/no4/p12.htm#app>. Retrieved on 27/2/08.
- Ortony, A. (1980). 'Metaphor'. In Spiro, R. J., Bruce, B. C. & Brewer, W. E. (eds.). *Theoretical Issues in Reading Comprehension*. Hillsdale, N. J.:Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Oxford, R. L. (1990). Language Learning Strategies and Beyond: A Look at Strategies in the Context of Styles. *Shifting the Instructional Focus to the Learner*, 35-55.
- Oxford, R. L., & Scarcella, R. C. (1994). Second Language Vocabulary Learning among Adults: State of the Art in Vocabulary Instruction. *System*, 22(2), 231-243. Elsevier.
- Paran, A. (1996). Reading in EFL: Facts and Fictions. *ELT Journal*, 50(1), 25-34. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pardede, P. (2010). Short Stories Use in Language Skills Classes: Students' Interest and Perception. In *Proceedings of the 4th International Seminar. Bringing Linguistics and Literature into EFL Classrooms* (pp. 1-17).

Bibliography

- Paris, S. G., & Myers, M. (1981). Comprehension Monitoring, Memory, and Study Strategies of Good and Poor Readers. *Journal of Reading Behavior*, 13(1), 5-22. SAGE Publications Sage CA: Los Angeles, CA.
- Pearson, P. D., & Stephens, D. (1994). Learning about Literacy: A 30-year Journey. In R. B. Ruddell, M. R. Ruddell, & H. Singer (Eds.), *Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading* (4th ed., pp. 22-42). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Peirce, B. N. (1995). Social Identity, Investment, and Language Learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29(1), 9-31.
- Piaget, J. (1952). *The Origins of Intelligence in Children*. New York, International Universities Press.
- Plastina, A. F. (1997). MA in Linguistics (TESOL) University of Surrey. *UK Unpublished*.
- Prodromou, L. (2000). *From Mother Tongue to Other Tongue*. Greece: British Council.
- Reiss, M. A. (1985). The Good Language Learner: Another Look. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 41(3), 511-23. ERIC
- Reutzel, D. R. (1985). Story Maps Improve Comprehension. *The Reading Teacher*, 38(4), 400-404. JSTOR
- Reynolds, R. E., Taylor, B. M., Steffensen, M. S., Shirley, L. and Anderson, R. C. (1982). 'Cultural Schemata and Reading Comprehension.' *Reading Research Quarterly*, 17,353-366. JSTOR.
- Rice, E. (1980). On Cultural Schemata. *American Ethnologist*, 7/1, 152-171. Wiley Online Library.
- Rigg, P. (1988). The Miscue-ESL Project. In Carrell, P. et al. (Eds.). *Interactive Approaches to Second Language Reading*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Ringler, L. H., & Weber, C. K. (1984). *A Language-Thinking Approach to Reading: Diagnosis and Teaching*. Harcourt.
- Risager, K. (2006). *Language and Culture: Global Flows and Local Complexity*. Multilingual Matters.

Bibliography

Roberts, J. T. (1998). Humanistic Approaches. Johnson. K. and Johnson H.(eds) Encyclopedic Dictionary of Applied Linguistics.

Robins, S. and Mayer, R. (1993). Schema Training in Analogical Reasoning. *Journal of Educational Psychology*.

Rogers, C. R. (1969). *Freedom to Learn*. Merrill Publishing Company.

Rooy, S. C. V. (2002). Cultural Identity Profiles of Afrikaans and Southern Sotho Learners of English: Resource or Hazard?. *World Englishes*. Wiley Online Library.

Rosaldo, R. (1993). *Culture and Truth. The Remaking of Social Analysis. With a new Introduction*. Boston, Beacon Press.

Rose, K. R. (1999). Teachers and Students Learning about Request in Hong Kong. In *Culture in Second Language Teaching and Learning*, Eli, (pp. 167-180). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1985). Viewpoints: Transaction versus Interaction: A Terminological Rescue Operation. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 96-107. JSTOR

Rosenblatt, L. M. (2004). The Transactional Theory of Reading and Writing. In Ruddell, R. and Unrau, N. (Eds). *Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading. Fifth Edition* (pp.1363-1398). Newark, Delaware, International Reading Association Inc.

Rumelhart, D.E. (1975). Notes on a Schema for Stories. In Bobrow, D. and Collins, A. (Eds.). *Representation and Understanding: Studies in Cognitive Science* (pp. 211-235). NewYork, Academic Press.

Rumelhart, D. E. (1977). *Introduction to Human Information Processing*. John Wiley & Sons.

Rumelhart, D.E. (1980). Schemata: The Building Blocks of Cognition. In Spiro, R., Bruce, B., and Brewer, W. (Eds). *Theoretical Issues in Reading Comprehension* (pp.35-58). Hillsdale, NJ, Erlbaum.

Rumelhart, D. E. and Ortony, A. (1977). The Representation of Knowledge in Memory. In Anderson, R., Spiro, R., and Montague, W. (Eds). *Schooling and the acquisition of knowledge* (pp.99-135). Hillsdale, NJ, Erlbaum.

Bibliography

- Sadoski, M., Paivio, A., & Goetz, E. T. (1991). Commentary: A Critique of Schema Theory in Reading and a Dual Coding Alternative. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 463-484.
- Sarroub, L. (2002). 'In-betweenness': Religion and Conflicting Visions of Literacy. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 37, 130-148.
- Savvidou, C. (2004). An Integrated Approach to Teaching Literature in the EFL Classroom. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 10(12), 1-6.
- Schank, R. (1982). *Dynamic Memory*. Cambridge, England, Cambridge University Press.
- Schank, R., and Abelson, R. (1977). *Scripts, Plans, Goals, and Understanding*. Hillsdale, NJ, Erlbaum.
- Schmidt, J. A. (2010). Flow in Education. In P. Peterson, E. B. E. Baker, & B. McGaw (Eds.), *International Encyclopedia of Education* (3rd ed. [pp. 605–611]).
- Seelye, J. (1988). Charles Brockden Brown and Early American Fiction. *The Columbia Literary History of the United States*. Ed. Emory Elliott. New York: Columbia UP, 168-186.
- Shah, S. (2004). The Researcher/Interviewer in Intercultural Context: A Social Intruder! *British Educational Research Journal*, 30, 549-575.
- Sharifian, F. (2001). Schema-based Processing in Australian Speakers of Aboriginal English. *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 1, 120-134.
- Sharifian, F. (2002). Conceptual-Associative System in Aboriginal English: A Study of Aboriginal Children Attending Primary Schools in Metropolitan Perth. PhD thesis, Edith Cowan University.
- Sharifian, F. (2003). On Cultural Conceptualisations. *Journal of Cognition and Culture*, 3/3, 187-207.
- Sharifian, F. (2004). Cultural Schemas and Intercultural Communication: A Study of Persian. In Leigh, J., and Loo, E. (Eds). *Outer Limits: A Reader in Communication and Behavior across Cultures* (pp.129-130). Melbourne, Language Australia.

Bibliography

- Sharifian, F. (2006). A Cultural-Conceptual Approach and World Englishes: The Case of Aboriginal English. *World Englishes*, 25/1, 11-22.
- Sharifian, F., Rochecouste, J. and Malcolm, G. (2004). 'But it was all A Bit Confusing...': Comprehending Aboriginal English Texts. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 17, 203-228. Taylor & Francis.
- Sharp, A. (2002). Chinese L1 Schoolchildren Reading in English: The Effects of Rhetorical Patterns. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 14/2, 116-135. University of Hawaii, National Foreign Language Resource Center.
- Simensen, A. M. (1987). Adapted readers: How are they adapted. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 4(1), 41-57.
- Slater, S., & Collie, J. (1987). Literature in the Language Classroom. *Cambridge: Cambridge UP*.
- Spack, R. (1985). Literature, Reading, Writing, and ESL: Bridging the Gaps. *Tesol Quarterly*, 19(4), 703-725. Wiley Online Library
- Spiro, R. J. (1980). Constructive Processes in Prose Comprehension and Recall. *Theoretical Issues in Reading Comprehension*, 245, 278. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum
- Spiro, R. J., Bruce, B. C., & Brewer, W. F. (1980). Theoretical Issues in Reading Comprehension. *LEA: Hills., New Jersey*.
- Spiro, R. J., & Tirre, W. C. (1979). Individual Differences in Schema Utilization during Discourse Processing. Technical Report No. 111. American Psychological Association.
- Starkey, H. (2007). Language Education, Identities and Citizenship: Developing Cosmopolitan Perspectives. *Language and Intercultural Communication*. Taylor & Francis Group.
- Steffensen, M. (1988). Changes in Cohesion in the Recall of Native and Foreign Texts. In Carrell, P. et al. (Eds.). *Interactive Approaches to Second Language Reading* (pp.140-151). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Steffensen, M., Joag-Dev, C. and Anderson, R. (1979). A Cross-Cultural Perspective on Reading Comprehension. *Reading Research Quarterly*, XV. JSTOR
- Stern, H. H. (1992). *Issues and Options in Language Teaching*. Oxford University Press.

Bibliography

- Stevick, E. W. (1976). Memory, Meaning and Method: Some Psychological Perspectives on Language Learning. ERIC.
- Swaffar, J. K., Arens, K., & Byrnes, H. (1991). *Reading for Meaning: An Integrated Approach to Language Learning*. Pearson College Division.
- Taylor, J. G. (1979). *From Modernization to Modes of Production: A Critique of the Sociologies of Development and Underdevelopment*. Springer.
- Tong, V., Huang, C., and McIntyre, T. (2006). Promoting a Positive Cross-Cultural Identity: Reaching Immigrant Students. *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, 14, 203-208. Starr Global Learning Network.
- Tonnies, F. (1957). *Community and Society*, translated. Charles P. Loomis. New York: Harper & Row.
- Tsui, A. (2007). Complexities of Identity Formation: A Narrative Inquiry of an EFL Teacher. *TESOL Quarterly*, 41, 657-680. Wiley Online Library
- Tsui, A. S., Nifadkar, S. S., & Ou, A. Y. (2007). Cross-national, Cross-Cultural Organizational Behavior Research: Advances, Gaps, and Recommendations. *Journal of Management*, 33(3), 426-478. Sage Publications Sage CA: Los Angeles, California.
- Ur, P. (1996). *A Course in Language Teaching: Practice and Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Van der Veer, R. (2001). Remembering Bartlett. *Culture and Psychology*, 7/2, 223-229. Sage Publications London, Thousand Oaks, CA and New Delhi.
- Van Hell, J. G., Bosman, A. M., Wiggers, I., & Stoit, J. (2003). Children's Cultural Background Knowledge and Story Elling Performance. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 7(3), 283-303. SAGE Publications Sage UK: London, England.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wallace, G. K. (1992). The JPEG Still Picture Compression Standard. *IEEE Transactions on Consumer Electronics*, 38(1), xviii-xxxiv.
- Waring, R. (1997). Graded and Extensive Reading-Questions and Answers. *LANGUAGE TEACHER-KYOTO-JALT-*, 21, 9-12.

Bibliography

- Waring, R. (2006). Why Extensive Reading Should Be an Indispensable Part of all Language Programs. *The Language Teacher*, 30(7), 44-47.
- Welch, R. (1997). Introducing Extensive Reading. *The Language Teacher*, 21 (5), 51-53.
- Widdowson, H. G. (1979). The Authenticity of Language Data. *Explorations in Applied Linguistics*, 163-172.
- Widdowson, H. G. (1979). The Deep Structure of Discourse and the Use of Translation. *Widdowson, HG Explorations in applied linguistics*, 101-111.
- Widdowson, H. G. (1984). *Explorations in Applied Linguistics* (Vol. 2). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Widdowson, H. G. (1992). *Practical Stylistics: An Approach to Poetry*. Oxford University Press.
- Widdowson, H. G. (2000). On the Limitations of Linguistics Applied. *Applied Linguistics*, 21(1), 3-25. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Widdowson, H. G. (2007). *Discourse Analysis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Williams, E. (1987). Classroom Reading through Activating Content-based Schemata. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 4(1), 1-7.
- Williams, J. P., Hall, K. M., & Lauer, K. D. (2004). Teaching Expository Text Structure to Young at-risk Learners: Building the Basics of Comprehension Instruction. *Exceptionality*, 12(3), 129-144.
- Wodinsky, M., & Nation, P. (1988). Learning from Graded Readers. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 5(1), 155-161.
- Wright, R. and Rosenberg, S. (1993). Knowledge of Text Coherence and Expository Writing: A Developmental Study. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. American Psychological Association
- Yarlas, S. and Gelman, R. (1998). Learning as a Predictor of Situational Interest. Paper Presented at the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, USA.
- Zimmerman, C. B. (1997). Historical Trends in Second Language Vocabulary Instruction. *Second Language Vocabulary Acquisition*, 5-19.

Appendices

Appendix 1 : Students' Biographical Information

Name
Gender	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Practicing Muslim	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Trips abroad	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Social origin	Rural <input type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/>
Contact with foreigners (Internet)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

* The following questions are important in identifying the objectives of the present study. Your cooperation to answer is requested.

1. Which of the short stories were you interested in?

a/ The Boarding House Yes No

b/ The Lottery Yes No

Why?

.....
.....

Appendix 2: Difficulties Experienced in Reading English Literary Texts

Instruction: Please specify your answer with a tick (✓) in the space provided.

Difficulties experienced in reading English literary texts

None

Lexical

Stylistic

Structural

Cultural

Appendix 3: Strategies to Become a Better Reader

Instruction: Please specify your answer with a tick (✓) in the space provided.

Strategies to become a better reader

Study vocabulary Yes No

Study style Yes No

Read more (Extensive reading) Yes No

Attending extra courses of English Yes No

Appendix 4: Purposes of Reading in English

Instruction: please specify your answer with a tick (√) in the space provided.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Academic purposes				
Work				
Information				
Being up to date				
Pleasure				
Curiosity				

Appendix 5: The Student's Questionnaire of Reading 'The Boarding House'

1. Pre-reading Phase

1/ How can the Irish society be depicted during the early 20th century?

.....
.....
.....

2/ During that period, was there any relation between marriage and social class?

.....
.....
.....

3/ Is religion important for the country?

Yes

No

2. The While-Reading Phase: Comprehension questions

Please, read the short story and answer the following questions!

1. What are the main themes and issues of this story?

.....
.....

2. How is religious hegemony represented in this story?

.....
.....

3. What is Joyce's attitude to marriage in this story?

.....
.....

4. How do you fathom the relationship between the mother and her daughter?

.....
.....

5. Are Mr. Doran and Polly well suited with regard to the eye of their society?

.....
.....

Appendix 5: The Student's Questionnaire of Reading 'The Boarding House'

6. What are the main themes and issues of the short story?

.....
.....
.....

7. How would you categorise the Irish society through this story?

.....
.....
.....

3. The Post- Reading Questions

1/ What values has the author focused on in this short story?

.....
.....

2/ How can you compare Ireland during the early 20th century and contemporary Algeria?

.....
.....

The Pre-reading Questions:

Item 1: As Algerian EFL learners, how would you define the term 'lottery'?

.....
.....

Item 2: Is a lottery usually a positive or negative experience?

Yes

No

Why?

.....
.....

While Reading Questions:

1. What is the setting of 'The Lottery'?

.....
.....

2. How is the mood/tone at the beginning of the story, and how does it change at the end?

.....
.....

3. At what point in this story did you start to think about "the lottery" in a different way?
(Be specific)

.....

4. How are men and women depicted at the beginning of the short story?

.....

5. How do the villagers treat the black box in the story?

.....

6. How do the villagers treat the black box in the story?

.....

7. Why did Mr. Summers use paper slips instead of wooden chips in the lottery?

.....

8. How is the lottery different and how it used to be in the story?

.....

9. What was Mrs. Hutchinson doing before she came to the town meeting? Is this important?

.....

Appendix 6: The Student's Questionnaire of Reading 'The Lottery'

10. Who is Old Man Warner? What attitude does he represent?

.....

11. Why did people practise the lottery?

.....

12. Do you think that people believe that they have the choice to practise the lottery? Why or why not?

.....

Post -reading questions:

1/ How would you react if this lottery tradition was part of your culture?

.....

.....

2/ Does the lottery resemble one of your cultural habit? (Mention it/ them)

.....

.....

3/ Is this story difficult to be read and comprehended? Why? Why not?

.....

.....

Appendix 7: Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teacher,

I would be very grateful to you if you could find the time to complete the questionnaire bellow.

Instruction: Please put a tick (✓) in the appropriate box whenever necessary to answer the questions.

Section A:

Teaching Literature

1.1 How long have you been teaching literature?

Years

1.2 Have you been trained before teaching literature?

Yes No

1.3 What are your objectives behind teaching literature?

* Developing your learners' linguistic competence Yes No

* Accessing your learners' cultural background Yes No

* Developing learners' interpretative and critical literary ability Yes No

* Others. Specify please!

.....
.....
.....

1.4 What obstacles do you generally face in teaching literature?

.....
.....
.....

1.5 Which kind of difficulties do your learners generally face in the reading comprehension of literary texts?

.....
.....
.....

1.6 Is schema theory involved in the curriculum?

Yes No

1.7 Do you take into account the learners' cultural background in selecting literary texts to be read?

Yes No

Appendix 7: Teachers' Questionnaire

1.8 What strategies do you use to solve cultural difficulties that learners' may encounter in reading literary texts?

.....

1.9 Do you use specific techniques to improve EFL learners' literary competence?

Yes No

If yes, how?

.....

1.10 How would you score your learners' literary competence?

* Good

* Acceptable

* Not very good

1.11 In teaching literature, which of the following do you think it can bring changes to the learners' background knowledge?

- A. Reading literary texts helps the learner to draw the difference between his/her life from the foreign one.
- B. Students often notice the similarities between events in literature and their own lives.
- C. Students are involved in the characters of the literary work.
- D. The learners are influenced by the text which pushes them to change the way they live.
- E. When students seem to comprehend the literary text, it is because they've been able to relate it to their own concerns about life.

	Yes	No
A.		
B.		
C.		
D.		
E.		

1.12 Empathy: this factor indicates the reader's ability to make the characters seem real.

To what extent are the learners involved with the taught short story?

-Not at all - Somewhat -Very often
 - A little - Quite a lot

Section B:

Teaching short Stories

2.1 What kind of problems do your learners encounter when reading short stories?

- Understanding the characters Yes No
- Understanding language Yes No
- Lack of confidence to make their own interpretation Yes No
- Comprehending with ambiguity Yes No
- Understanding the cultural background of the story (empathy) Yes No

2.2 Which kind of activities do you usually use in teaching a short story?

* Pre- reading:

.....
.....

* While- reading:

.....
.....

* Post- reading:

.....
.....

2.3 What do you propose to enable your learners better read and understand the short story?

.....
.....
.....

2.4 What strategies do you use in teaching short stories to your students?

- I help them read for plot and character relationship Yes No
- I help them to analyse the language Yes No
- I make them to be aware of the short story's non verbal Yes No

Others ? Please, specify!

.....
.....

2.5 On which basis do you select a short story in order to be fully exploited in your class?

Appendix 7: Teachers' Questionnaire

.....

.....

2.6 In teaching students how to interpret a short story, you focus on:

	Often	Sometimes	Never
• Linguistic competence (Vocabulary and syntax)			
• Themes			
• Images			
• Symbols			
• The target culture			

2.7 Extensive Reading: this factor requires reading much, for different reasons, to enhance the learners' reading comprehension of short stories.

	Completely	Partly	Not at all
- Does extensive reading in literature enhance reading comprehension?			
- Do you always instruct extensive reading of literary texts?			

2.8 How often do you teach short stories in your class?

Often

Sometimes

Never

Appendix 8: The Boarding House Short story

The Boarding House James Joyce MRS. MOONEY was a butcher's daughter. She was a woman who was quite able to keep things to herself: a determined woman. She had married her father's foreman and opened a butcher's shop near Spring Gardens. But as soon as his father-in-law was dead Mr. Mooney began to go to the devil. He drank, plundered the till, ran headlong into debt. It was no use making him take the pledge: he was sure to break out again a few days after. By fighting his wife in the presence of customers and by buying bad meat he ruined his business. One night he went for his wife with the cleaver and she had to sleep a neighbour's house. After that they lived apart. She went to the priest and got a separation from him with care of the children. She would give him neither money nor food nor house-room; and so he was obliged to enlist himself as a sheriff's man. He was a shabby stooped little drunkard with a white face and a white moustache, white eyebrows, pencilled above his little eyes, which were veined and raw; and all day long he sat in the bailiff's room, waiting to be put on a job. Mrs. Mooney, who had taken what remained of her money out of the butcher business and set up a boarding house in Hardwicke Street, was a big imposing woman. Her house had a floating population made up of tourists from Liverpool and the Isle of Man and, occasionally, artistes from the music halls. Its resident population was made up of clerks from the city. She governed the house cunningly and firmly, knew when to give credit, when to be stern and when to let things pass. All the resident young men spoke of her as The Madam. Mrs. Mooney's young men paid fifteen shillings a week for board and lodgings (beer or stout at dinner excluded). They shared in common tastes and occupations and for this reason they were very chummy with one another. They discussed with one another the chances of favourites and outsiders. Jack Mooney, the Madam's son, who was clerk to a commission agent in Fleet Street, had the reputation of being a hard case. He was fond of using soldiers' obscenities: usually he came home in the small hours. When he met his friends he had always a good one to tell them and he was always sure to be on to a good thing-that is to say, a likely horse or a likely artiste. He was also handy with the mits and sang comic songs. On Sunday nights there would often be a reunion in Mrs. Mooney's front drawing-room. The music-hall artistes would oblige; and Sheridan played waltzes and polkas and vamped accompaniments. Polly Mooney, the Madam's daughter, would also sing. She sang: I'm a ... naughty girl. You needn't sham: You know I am. Polly was a slim girl of nineteen; she had light soft hair and a small full mouth. Her eyes, which were grey with a shade of green through them, had a habit of glancing upwards when she spoke with anyone, which made her look like a little perverse madonna. Mrs. Mooney had first sent her daughter to be a

Appendix 8: The Boarding House Short story

typist in a corn-factor's office but, as a disreputable sheriff's man used to come every other day to the office, asking to be allowed to say a word to his daughter, she had taken her daughter home again and set her to do housework. As Polly was very lively the intention was to give her the run of the young men. Besides young men like to feel that there is a young woman not very far away. Polly, of course, flirted with the young men but Mrs. Mooney, who was a shrewd judge, knew that the young men were only passing the time away: none of them meant business. Things went on so for a long time and Mrs. Mooney began to think of sending Polly back to typewriting when she noticed that something was going on between Polly and one of the young men. She watched the pair and kept her own counsel. Polly knew that she was being watched, but still her mother's persistent silence could not be misunderstood. There had been no open complicity between mother and daughter, no open understanding but, though people in the house began to talk of the affair, still Mrs. Mooney did not intervene. Polly began to grow a little strange in her manner and the young man was evidently perturbed. At last, when she judged it to be the right moment, Mrs. Mooney intervened. She dealt with moral problems as a cleaver deals with meat: and in this case she had made up her mind. It was a bright Sunday morning of early summer, promising heat, but with a fresh breeze blowing. All the windows of the boarding house were open and the lace curtains ballooned gently towards the street beneath the raised sashes. The belfry of George's Church sent out constant peals and worshippers, singly or in groups, traversed the little circus before the church, revealing their purpose by their self-contained demeanour no less than by the little volumes in their gloved hands. Breakfast was over in the boarding house and the table of the breakfast-room was covered with plates on which lay yellow streaks of eggs with morsels of bacon-fat and bacon-rind. Mrs. Mooney sat in the straw arm-chair and watched the servant Mary remove the breakfast things. She mad Mary collect the crusts and pieces of broken bread to help to make Tuesday's bread- pudding. When the table was cleared, the broken bread collected, the sugar and butter safe under lock and key, she began to reconstruct the interview which she had had the night before with Polly. Things were as she had suspected: she had been frank in her questions and Polly had been frank in her answers. Both had been somewhat awkward, of course. She had been made awkward by her not wishing to receive the news in too cavalier a fashion or to seem to have connived and Polly had been made awkward not merely because allusions of that kind always made her awkward but also because she did not wish it to be thought that in her wise innocence she had divined the intention behind her mother's tolerance. Mrs. Mooney glanced instinctively at the little gilt clock on

the mantelpiece as soon as she had become aware through her reverie that the bells of George's Church had stopped ringing. It was seventeen minutes past eleven: she would have lots of time to have the matter out with Mr. Doran and then catch short twelve at Marlborough Street. She was sure she would win. To begin with she had all the weight of social opinion on her side: she was an outraged mother. She had allowed him to live beneath her roof, assuming that he was a man of honour and he had simply abused her hospitality. He was thirty-four or thirty-five years of age, so that youth could not be pleaded as his excuse; nor could ignorance be his excuse since he was a man who had seen something of the world. He had simply taken advantage of Polly's youth and inexperience: that was evident. The question was: What reparation would he make? There must be reparation made in such case. It is all very well for the man: he can go his ways as if nothing had happened, having had his moment of pleasure, but the girl has to bear the brunt. Some mothers would be content to patch up such an affair for a sum of money; she had known cases of it. But she would not do so. For her only one reparation could make up for the loss of her daughter's honour: marriage. She counted all her cards again before sending Mary up to Doran's room to say that she wished to speak with him. She felt sure she would win. He was a serious young man, not rakish or loud-voiced like the others. If it had been Mr. Sheridan or Mr. Meade or Bantam Lyons her task would have been much harder. She did not think he would face publicity. All the lodgers in the house knew something of the affair; details had been invented by some. Besides, he had been employed for thirteen years in a great Catholic winemerchant's office and publicity would mean for him, perhaps, the loss of his job. Whereas if he agreed all might be well. She knew he had a good screw for one thing and she suspected he had a bit of stuff put by. Nearly the half-hour! She stood up and surveyed herself in the pier-glass. The decisive expression of her great florid face satisfied her and she thought of some mothers she knew who could not get their daughters off their hands. Mr. Doran was very anxious indeed this Sunday morning. He had made two attempts to shave but his hand had been so unsteady that he had been obliged to desist. Three days' reddish beard fringed his jaws and every two or three minutes a mist gathered on his glasses so that he had to take them off and polish them with his pocket-handkerchief. The recollection of his confession of the night before was a cause of acute pain to him; the priest had drawn out every ridiculous detail of the affair and in the end had so magnified his sin that he was almost thankful at being afforded a loophole of reparation. The harm was done. What could he do now but marry her or run away? He could not brazen it out. The affair would be sure to be talked of and his employer would be

certain to hear of it. Dublin is such a small city: everyone knows everyone else's business. He felt his heart leap warmly in his throat as he heard in his excited imagination old Mr. Leonard calling out in his rasping voice: "Send Mr. Doran here, please." All his long years of service gone for nothing! All his industry and diligence thrown away! As a young man he had sown his wild oats, of course; he had boasted of his free-thinking and denied the existence of God to his companions in public-houses. But that was all passed and done with... nearly. He still bought a copy of Reynolds's Newspaper every week but he attended to his religious duties and for nine-tenths of the year lived a regular life. He had money enough to settle down on; it was not that. But the family would look down on her. First of all there was her disreputable father and then her mother's boarding house was beginning to get certain fame. He had a notion that he was being had. He could imagine his friends talking of the affair and laughing. She was a little vulgar; sometimes she said "I seen" and "If I had've known." But what would grammar matter if he really loved her? He could not make up his mind whether to like her or despise her for what she had done. Of course he had done it too. His instinct urged him to remain free, not to marry. Once you are married you are done for, it said. While he was sitting helplessly on the side of the bed in shirt and trousers she tapped lightly at his door and entered. She told him all, that she had made a clean breast of it to her mother and that her mother would speak with him that morning. She cried and threw her arms round his neck, saying: "O Bob! Bob! What am I to do? What am I to do at all?" She would put an end to herself, she said. He comforted her feebly, telling her not to cry, that it would be all right, never fear. He felt against his shirt the agitation of her bosom. It was not altogether his fault that it had happened. He remembered well, with the curious patient memory of the celibate, the first casual caresses her dress, her breath, her fingers had given him. Then late one night as he was undressing for she had tapped at his door, timidly. She wanted to relight her candle at his for hers had been blown out by a gust. It was her bath night. She wore a loose open combing-jacket of printed flannel. Her white instep shone in the opening of her furry slippers and the blood glowed warmly behind her perfumed skin. From her hands and wrists too as she lit and steadied her candle a faint perfume arose. On nights when he came in very late it was she who warmed up his dinner. He scarcely knew what he was eating feeling her beside him alone, at night, in the sleeping house. And her thoughtfulness! If the night was anyway cold or wet or windy there was sure to be a little tumbler of punch ready for him. Perhaps they could be happy together.... They used to go upstairs together on tiptoe, each with a candle, and on the third landing exchange reluctant goodnights. They used to kiss. He

remembered well her eyes, the touch of her hand and his delirium.... But delirium passes. He echoed her phrase, applying it to himself: "What am I to do?" The instinct of the celibate warned him to hold back. But the sin was there; even his sense of honour told him that reparation must be made for such a sin. While he was sitting with her on the side of the bed Mary came to the door and said that the missus wanted to see him in the parlour. He stood up to put on his coat and waistcoat, more helpless than ever. When he was dressed he went over to her to comfort her. It would be all right, never fear. He left her crying on the bed and moaning softly: "O my God!" Going down the stairs his glasses became so dimmed with moisture that he had to take them off and polish them. He longed to ascend through the roof and fly away to another country where he would never hear again of his trouble, and yet a force pushed him downstairs step by step. The implacable faces of his employer and of the Madam stared upon his discomfiture. On the last flight of stairs he passed Jack Mooney who was coming up from the pantry nursing two bottles of Bass. They saluted coldly; and the lover's eyes rested for a second or two on a thick bulldog face and a pair of thick short arms. When he reached the foot of the staircase he glanced up and saw Jack regarding him from the door of the return-room. Suddenly he remembered the night when one of the music-hall artistes, a little blond Londoner, had made a rather free allusion to Polly. The reunion had been almost broken up on account of Jack's violence. Everyone tried to quiet him. The music-hall artiste, a little paler than usual, kept smiling and saying that there was no harm meant: but Jack kept shouting at him that if any fellow tried that sort of a game on with his sister he'd bloody well put his teeth down his throat, so he would. Polly sat for a little time on the side of the bed, crying. Then she dried her eyes and went over to the looking-glass. She dipped the end of the towel in the water-jug and refreshed her eyes with the cool water. She looked at herself in profile and readjusted a hairpin above her ear. Then she went back to the bed again and sat at the foot. She regarded the pillows for a long time and the sight of them awakened in her mind secret, amiable memories. She rested the nape of her neck against the cool iron bed-rail and fell into a reverie. There was no longer any perturbation visible on her face. She waited on patiently, almost cheerfully, without alarm. Her memories gradually giving place to hopes and visions of the future. Her hopes and visions were so intricate that she no longer saw the white pillows on which her gaze was fixed or remembered that she was waiting for anything. At last she heard her mother calling. She started to her feet and ran to the banisters. "Polly! Polly!" "Yes, mamma?" "Come down, dear. Mr. Doran wants to speak to you." Then she remembered what she had been waiting for.

Appendix 9: The Lottery Short Story

The morning of June 27th was clear and sunny, with the fresh warmth of a full-summer day; the flowers were blossoming profusely and the grass was richly green. The people of the village began to gather in the square, between the post office and the bank, around ten o'clock; in some towns there were so many people that the lottery took two days and had to be started on June 2th. But in this village, where there were only about three hundred people, the whole lottery took less than two hours, so it could begin at ten o'clock in the morning and still be through in time to allow the villagers to get home for noon dinner.

The children assembled first, of course. School was recently over for the summer, and the feeling of liberty sat uneasily on most of them; they tended to gather together quietly for a while before they broke into boisterous play. And their talk was still of the classroom and the teacher, of books and reprimands. Bobby Martin had already stuffed his pockets full of stones, and the other boys soon followed his example, selecting the smoothest and roundest stones; Bobby and Harry Jones and Dickie Delacroix-- the villagers pronounced this name "Dellacroy"--eventually made a great pile of stones in one corner of the square and guarded it against the raids of the other boys. The girls stood aside, talking among themselves, looking over their shoulders at rolled in the dust or clung to the hands of their older brothers or sisters.

Soon the men began to gather surveying their own children, speaking of planting and rain, tractors and taxes. They stood together, away from the pile of stones in the corner, and their jokes were quiet and they smiled rather than laughed. The women, wearing faded house dresses and sweaters, came shortly after their menfolk. They greeted one another and exchanged bits of gossip as they went to join their husbands. Soon the women, standing by their husbands, began to call to their children, and the children came reluctantly, having to be called four or five times. Bobby Martin ducked under his mother's grasping hand and ran, laughing, back to the pile of stones. His father spoke up sharply, and Bobby came quickly and took his place between his father and his oldest brother.

The lottery was conducted--as were the square dances, the teen club, the Halloween program--by Mr. Summers. who had time and energy to devote to civic activities. He was a round-faced, jovial man and he ran the coal business, and people were sorry for him. because he had no children and his wife was a scold. When he arrived in the square, carrying the black wooden box, there was a murmur of conversation among the villagers, and he waved and called: "Little late today, folks." The postmaster, Mr. Graves, followed him, carrying a three- legged stool, and the stool was put in the center of the square and

Appendix 9: The Lottery Short Story

Mr. Summers set the black box down on it. The villagers kept their distance, leaving a space between themselves and the stool and when Mr. Summers said, "Some of you fellows want to give me a hand?" there was a hesitation before two men. Mr. Martin and his oldest son, Baxter came forward to hold the box steady on the stool while Mr. Summers stirred up the papers inside it.

The original paraphernalia for the lottery had been lost long ago, and the black box now resting on the stool had been put into use even before Old Man Warner, the oldest man in town, was born. Mr. Summers spoke frequently to the villagers about making a new box, but no one liked to upset even as much tradition as was represented by the black box. There was a story that the present box had been made with some pieces of the box that had preceded it, the one that had been constructed when the first people settled down to make a village here. Every year, after the lottery, Mr. Summers began talking again about a new box, but every year the subject was allowed to fade off without anything's being done. The black box grew shabbier each year: by now it was no longer completely black but splintered badly along one side to show the original wood color, and in some places faded or stained.

Mr. Martin and his oldest son, Baxter, held the black box securely on the stool until Mr. Summers had stirred the papers thoroughly with his hand. Because so much of the ritual had been forgotten or discarded, Mr. Summers had been successful in having slips of paper substituted for the chips of wood that had been used for generations. Chips of wood, Mr. Summers had argued, had been all very well when the village was tiny, but now that the population was more than three hundred and likely to keep on growing, it was necessary to use something that would fit more easily into the black box. The night before the lottery, Mr. Summers and Mr. Graves made up the slips of paper and put them in the box, and it was then taken to the safe of Mr. Summers' coal company and locked up until Mr. Summers was ready to take it to the square next morning. The rest of the year, the box was put away, sometimes one place, sometimes another; it had spent one year in Mr. Graves's barn and another year underfoot in the post office and sometimes it was set on a shelf in the Martin grocery and left there.

There was a great deal of fussing to be done before Mr. Summers declared the lottery open. There were the lists to make up--of heads of families, heads of households in each family, members of each household in each family. There was the proper swearing-in of Mr. Summers by the postmaster, as the official of the lottery; at one time, some people remembered, there had been a recital of some sort, performed by the official of the lottery,

Appendix 9: The Lottery Short Story

a perfunctory, tuneless chant that had been rattled off duly each year; some people believed that the official of the lottery used to stand just so when he said or sang it, others believed that he was supposed to walk among the people, but years and years ago this part of the ritual had been allowed to lapse. There had been, also, a ritual salute, which the official of the lottery had had to use in addressing each person who came up to draw from the box, but this also had changed with time, until now it was felt necessary only for the official to speak to each person approaching. Mr. Summers was very good at all this; in his clean white shirt and blue jeans with one hand resting carelessly on the black box. He seemed very proper and important as he talked interminably to Mr. Graves and the Martins.

Just as Mr. Summers finally left off talking and turned to the assembled villagers, Mrs. Hutchinson came hurriedly along the path to the square, her sweater thrown over her shoulders, and slid into place in the back of the crowd. "Clean forgot what day it was," she said to Mrs. Delacroix, who stood next to her, and they both laughed softly. "Thought my old man was out back stacking wood," Mrs. Hutchinson went on. "And then I looked out the window and the kid was gone, and then I remembered it was the twenty seventh and came a-running." She dried her hands on her apron, and Mrs. Delacroix said, "You're in time, though. They're still talking away up there."

Mrs. Hutchinson craned her neck to see through the crowd and found her husband and children standing near the front. She tapped Mrs. Delacroix on the arm as a farewell and began to make her way through the crowd. The people separated good-humoredly to let her through: two or three people said, in voices just loud enough to be heard across the crowd, "Here comes your, Missus, Hutchinson," and "Bill, she made it after all." Mrs. Hutchinson reached her husband, and Mr. Summers, who had been waiting, said cheerfully: "Thought we were going to have to get on without you, Tessie." Mrs. Hutchinson said, grinning, "Wouldn't have me leave m'dishes in the sink, now, would you. Joe?," and soft laughter ran through the crowd as the people stirred back into position after Mrs. Hutchinson's arrival.

"Well, now." Mr. Summers said soberly, "guess we better get started, get this over with, so's we can go back to work. Anybody ain't here?"

"Dunbar." several people said. "Dunbar. Dunbar."

Mr. Summers consulted his list. "Clyde Dunbar." he said. "That's right. He's broke his leg, hasn't he? Who's drawing for him?"

"Me. I guess," a woman said. and Mr. Summers turned to look at her. "Wife draws for her husband." Mr. Summers said. "Don't you have a grown boy to do it for you, Janey?"

Appendix 9: The Lottery Short Story

Although Mr. Summers and everyone else in the village knew the answer perfectly well, it was the business of the official of the lottery to ask such questions formally. Mr. Summers waited with an expression of polite interest while Mrs. Dunbar answered.

"Horace's not but sixteen vet." Mrs. Dunbar said regretfully. "Guess I gotta fill in for the old man this year."

"Right." Sr. Summers said. He made a note on the list he was holding. Then he asked, "Watson boy drawing this year?"

A tall boy in the crowd raised his hand. "Here," he said. "I'm drawing for my mother and me." He blinked his eyes nervously and ducked his head as several voices in the crowd said things like "Good fellow, lack." and "Glad to see your mother's got a man to do it."

"Well," Mr. Summers said, "guess that's everyone. Old Man Warner make it?"

"Here," a voice said and Mr. Summers nodded.

A sudden hush fell on the crowd as Mr. Summers cleared his throat and looked at the list. "All ready?" he called. "Now, I'll read the names--heads of families first--and the men come up and take a paper out of the box. Keep the paper folded in your hand without looking at it until everyone has had a turn. Everything clear?"

The people had done it so many times that they only half listened to the directions: most of them were quiet, wetting their lips not looking around. Then Mr. Summers raised one hand high and said, "Adams." A man disengaged himself from the crowd and came forward. "Hi. Steve." Mr. Summers said, and Mr. Adams said. "Hi. Joe." They grinned at one another humorlessly and nervously. Then Mr. Adams reached into the black box and took out a folded paper. He held it firmly by one corner as he turned and went hastily back to his place in the crowd, where he stood a little apart from his family not looking down at his hand.

"Allen." Mr. Summers said. "Anderson.... Bentham."

"Seems like there's no time at all between lotteries any more." Mrs. Delacroix said to Mrs. Graves in the back row.

"Seems like we got through with the last one only last week." "Time sure goes fast.-- Mrs. Graves said.

"Clark.... Delacroix"

"There goes my old man." Mrs. Delacroix said. She held her breath while her husband went forward.

"Dunbar," Mr. Summers said, and Mrs. Dunbar went steadily to the box while one of the women said. "Go on. Janey," and another said, "There she goes."

Appendix 9: The Lottery Short Story

"We're next." Mrs. Graves said. She watched while Mr. Graves came around from the side of the box, greeted Mr. Summers gravely and selected a slip of paper from the box. By now, all through the crowd there were men holding the small folded papers in their large hand turning them over and over nervously Mrs. Dunbar and her two sons stood together, Mrs. Dunbar holding the slip of paper.

"Harburt.... Hutchinson."

"Get up there, Bill," Mrs. Hutchinson said and the people near her laughed.

"Jones."

"They do say," Mr. Adams said to Old Man Warner, who stood next to him, "that over in the north village they're talking of giving up the lottery."

Old Man Warner snorted. "Pack of crazy fools," he said. "Listening to the young folks, nothing's good enough for them. Next thing you know, they'll be wanting to go back to living in caves, nobody work any more, live that way for a while. Used to be a saying about 'Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon.' First thing you know, we'd all be eating stewed chickweed and acorns. There's always been a lottery," he added petulantly. "Bad enough to see young Joe Summers up there joking with everybody."

"Some places have already quit lotteries." Mrs. Adams said.

"Nothing but trouble in that," Old Man Warner said stoutly. "Pack of young fools."

"Martin." And Bobby Martin watched his father go forward. "Overdyke.... Percy."

"I wish they'd hurry," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son. "I wish they'd hurry."

"They're almost through," her son said.

"You get ready to run tell Dad," Mrs. Dunbar said.

Mr. Summers called his own name and then stepped forward precisely and selected a slip from the box. Then he called, "Warner."

"Seventy-seventh year I been in the lottery," Old Man Warner said as he went through the crowd. "Seventy-seventh time."

"Watson" The tall boy came awkwardly through the crowd. Someone said, "Don't be nervous, Jack," and Mr. Summers said, "Take your time, son."

"Zanini."

After that, there was a long pause, a breathless pause, until Mr. Summers, holding his slip of paper in the air, said, "All right, fellows." For a minute, no one moved, and then all the slips of paper were opened. Suddenly, all the women began to speak at once, saying. "Who is it?", "Who's got it?", "Is it the Dunbars?", "Is it the Watsons?" Then the voices began to say, "It's Hutchinson. It's Bill," "Bill Hutchinson's got it."

Appendix 9: The Lottery Short Story

"Go tell your father," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son.

People began to look around to see the Hutchinsons. Bill Hutchinson was standing quiet, staring down at the paper in his hand. Suddenly, Tessie Hutchinson shouted to Mr. Summers. "You didn't give him time enough to take any paper he wanted. I saw you. It wasn't fair!"

"Be a good sport, Tessie." Mrs. Delacroix called, and Mrs. Graves said, "All of us took the same chance." "Shut up, Tessie," Bill Hutchinson said.

"Well, everyone," Mr. Summers said, "that was done pretty fast, and now we've got to be hurrying a little more to get done in time." He consulted his next list. "Bill," he said, "you draw for the Hutchinson family. You got any other households in the Hutchinsons?"

"There's Don and Eva," Mrs. Hutchinson yelled. "Make them take their chance!"

"Daughters draw with their husbands' families, Tessie," Mr. Summers said gently.

"You know that as well as anyone else." "It wasn't fair," Tessie said.

"I guess not, Joe." Bill Hutchinson said regretfully. "My daughter draws with her husband's family; that's only fair. And I've got no other family except the kids."

"Then, as far as drawing for families is concerned, it's you," Mr. Summers said in explanation, "and as far as drawing for households is concerned, that's you, too. Right?"

"Right," Bill Hutchinson said.

"How many kids, Bill?" Mr. Summers asked formally.

"Three," Bill Hutchinson said.

"There's Bill, Jr., and Nancy, and little Dave. And Tessie and me."

"All right, then," Mr. Summers said. "Harry, you got their tickets back?"

Mr. Graves nodded and held up the slips of paper. "Put them in the box, then," Mr. Summers directed. "Take Bill's and put it in."

"I think we ought to start over," Mrs. Hutchinson said, as quietly as she could. "I tell you it wasn't fair. You didn't give him time enough to choose. Everybody saw that."

Mr. Graves had selected the five slips and put them in the box and he dropped all the papers but those onto the ground, where the breeze caught them and lifted them off.

"Listen, everybody," Mrs. Hutchinson was saying to the people around her.

"Ready, Bill?" Mr. Summers asked and Bill Hutchinson, with one quick glance around at his wife and children nodded.

"Remember," Mr. Summers said: "take the slips and keep them folded until each person has taken one. Harry, you help little Dave." Mr. Graves took the hand of the little boy, who came willingly with him up to the box. "Take a paper out of the box, Davy." Mr. Summers

Appendix 9: The Lottery Short Story

said. Davy put his hand into the box and laughed. "Take just one paper." Mr. Summers said. "Harry, you hold it for him." Mr. Graves took the child's hand and removed the folded paper from the tight fist and held it while little Dave stood next to him and looked up at him wonderingly.

"Nancy next," Mr. Summers said. Nancy was twelve, and her school friends breathed heavily as she went forward switching her skirt, and took a slip daintily from the box "Bill, Jr.," Mr. Summers said, and Billy, his face red and his feet overlarge, near knocked the box over as he got a paper out. "Tessie," Mr. Summers said. She hesitated for a minute, looking around defiantly and then set her lips and went up to the box. She snatched a paper out and held it behind her.

"Bill," Mr. Summers said, and Bill Hutchinson reached into the box and felt around, bringing his hand out at last with the slip of paper in it.

The crowd was quiet. A girl whispered, "I hope it's not Nancy," and the sound of the whisper reached the edges of the crowd.

"It's not the way it used to be." Old Man Warner said clearly. "People ain't the way they used to be."

"All right," Mr. Summers said. "Open the papers. Harry, you open little Dave's."

Mr. Graves opened the slip of paper and there was a general sigh through the crowd as he held it up and everyone could see that it was blank. Nancy and Bill Jr. opened theirs at the same time and both beamed and laughed turning around to the crowd and holding their slips of paper above their heads.

"Tessie," Mr. Summers said. There was a pause, and then Mr. Summers looked at Bill Hutchinson, and Bill unfolded his paper and showed it. It was blank.

"It's Tessie," Mr. Summers said, and his voice was hushed. "Show us her paper. Bill."

Bill Hutchinson went over to his wife and forced the slip of paper out of her hand. It had a black spot on it, the black spot Mr. Summers had made the night before with the heavy pencil in the coal company office. Bill Hutchinson held it up and there was a stir in the crowd.

"All right, folks." Mr. Summers said. "Let's finish quickly."

Although the villagers had forgotten the ritual and lost the original black box, they still remembered to use stones. The pile of stones the boys had made earlier was ready; there were stones on the ground with the blowing scraps of paper that had come out of the box. Delacroix selected a stone so large she had to pick it up with both hands and turned to Mrs. Dunbar. "Come on," she said. "Hurry up."

Appendix 9: The Lottery Short Story

Mr. Dunbar had small stones in both hands, and she said, gasping for breath, "I can't run at all. You'll have to go ahead and I'll catch up with you."

The children had stones already. And someone gave little Davy Hutchinson few pebbles.

Tessie Hutchinson was in the center of a cleared space by now, and she held her hands out desperately as the villagers moved in on her. "It isn't fair," she said. A stone hit her on the side of the head. Old Man Warner was saying, "Come on, come on, everyone." Steve Adams was in the front of the crowd of villagers, with Mrs. Graves beside him.

"It isn't fair, it isn't right," Mrs. Hutchinson screamed, and then they were upon her.

Written by Shirley Jackson (1948)

The Boarding House

Pre-reading Phase

1/ How can the Irish society be depicted during the early 20th century?

The Irish society during the early 20th century was a very conservative one. It was sticky ruled and influenced by religion. Punishment was harsh and sins were intolerable.

2/ During that period, was there any relation between marriage and social class?

During the early 20th C, Ireland was known for the upper class was the rich and well mannered, while, it exists the lower class which poor and rejected.

3/ Is religion important for the country?

Yes, it is in that, it is part of the identity and culture of a country.

While-reading Phase

1. What are the main themes and issues of this story?

The main themes and issues of this story are entrapment portrayed by marriage, social standards in the Irish society.

2. How does religion figure in this story?

Religion figures in this story as being one of the elements that paralyse the Irish society.

3. Discuss the manipulative nature of women in this story.

The manipulation nature of women in this story is illustrated by Mrs. Mooney and her plan to marry her daughter with Mr. Doran.

4. How is the relationship between mother and daughter?

The relationship between mother and daughter is very superficial.

5. Are Mr. Doran and Polly well suited, with regard to the society, Polly, and Mr. Doran?

No, Mr. Doran and Polly are not well suited for marriage but with regard to society they have to be married to cover their sin.

Appendix 10: A Simple of Leila's Questionnaires

6. Which values has the author focused in this story?

Love, marriage and responsibility.

7. How would you categorise the Irish society?

I would categorise the Irish society as being paralysed by its tradition, customs and religion.

8. What is Joyce's attitude to marriage in this story?

Joyce describes marriage as an entrapment and as a picture of life that Dubliners cannot avoid.

Post- Reading Phase

1/ What is your position vis- à – vis the characters of story?

They are hypocritical when they do morally unacceptable things for the society as Moony and her daughter. Doran likes to satisfy his needs unethically but fears the society because of his status.

2/ How can you consider Ireland during the early 20th century and contemporary Algeria?

My culture and the Irish one are similar. The social hypocrisy and the importance of marriage are shared between them.

The Lottery

Pre- Reading Phase

1/ As Algerian EFL learners, how would you define the term 'lottery'?

It is a game of chance

2/ Is the lottery practiced in your country? If not, Why?

It is practiced in Algeria, but it is forbidden by our religion (islam) once it is related to games and money.

While Reading Phase

1/ What is the setting of 'The Lottery'?

Concerning the time, it was the morning of June 27th (a sunny day of summer) and concerning the place, the events take place in a village and more precisily between the post office and the Bank.

2/ What is the mood/ tone at the beginning of the story, and how has it changed by the end?

In the beginning of the story, the writer describes carefully the setting, she raises a descriptive style with much more details.

3/ How do you know the time period of writing the story?

The time period of the story was clearly mentioned in the starting paragraph and in the second paragraph we notice that it was summer holidays.

4/ At what point in the story did you start to think about "the lottery" in a different way?

I started thinking about the lottery in a different way, when Mrs Hutchinson cries and protest that it was fair at that level I have a doubt that something wrong will be taken place.

5/ How are the men and women depicted at the beginning of the story?

At the beginning of the story, the men are depicted as farmers because their speech was about planting and tractors. And women are depicted as being simple and poor.

Appendix 10: A Simple of Leila's Questionnaires

6/ How do the villagers treat the black box?

The black box was used only on the day of the lottery. It was useful only this day. Each year, the talk of producing a new one takes place but in practice nothing is realised.

7/ Why did Mr. Summers use paper slips instead of wooden chips in the lottery?

Mr. Summers used paper slips because according to him it facilitates the operation because the population was more than before.

8/ What was Mrs. Hutchinson doing before she came to the town meeting? Is this important?

She was doing the dishes; it is really not that important thing to keep her from coming on time, but the lottery was such a horrible thing that she would rather forget.

9/ Do you think that people believe that they have the choice to practise the lottery? Why or why not?

No, people were obliged to follow this cruel tradition though they were convinced that it is unfair and no one dares to claim.

Post- Reading Phase

1/ How would you react if this lottery tradition was part of your culture?

If this lottery tradition was part of my culture, I do not accept it and push the others to protest and convey them and make a positive change.

2/ Is this story is difficult to be read or comprehended? Why? Why not?

Yes, this story is difficult to be liked because it has an obscure ending.

The Boarding House

Pre-Reading Phase

1/ How can the Irish society be depicted during the early 20th century?

In the early 20th century, the Irish society was known as being too conservative and hypocritical and religious.

2/ During that period, was there any relation between marriage and social class?

Marriage was represented as male centred society where traditional vision of family authority to man and woman submission.

3/ Is religion important for the country?

Yes, it has a powerful impact on it.

While-reading Phase

1. What are the main themes and issues of this story?

The main themes and issues of this story are social paralysis and the importance of marriage which is represented by Mrs. Mooney responsibility over her daughter. Religious influence which plays an important role in changing Mr. Doran decision about marriage.

2. How does religion figure in this story?

In this story, people work with religious norms the best example when Mrs. Mooney want to divorce, she went to the priest to make a separation.

3. Discuss the manipulative nature of women in this story.

Manipulative nature of women is obviously mentioned in this story. the best ex the method that Polly followed Mr. Doran to attract him by showing her beauty, her affection ect.

4. What is the relationship between mother and daughter?

In this case, the relation between them resemble any relation between mother and her daughter, in which the mother looking for the benefit and the best for her daughter by trying to preserve her.

Appendix 11: A Sample of Sami's Questionnaires

5. Are Mr. Doran and Polly well suited, with regard to the society, Polly, and Mr. Doran?

For me, this couple is not suited because Polly is so little than Doran. Second, he is more educated than her and she belongs to the inferior class than him, and which is important there is no mutual and real love between them.

6. Which values has the author focused in this story?

The author focused on various values as ethical, society and religious one, the ethic of Doran didn't permit Polly to suffer and society ethics push her to take decision.

7. How would you categorise the Irish society?

The Irish society is traditionalist and conservative which work with religion norms in resolving its problem. It did not permit to commit a sin or an evil.

8. What is Joyce's attitude to marriage in this story?

In this story, Joyce portrays to us the difficulty and the complexity of marriage, the best example is the unsuccessful marriage of Mrs. Mooney and the fear of Mr. Doran refusal to marry her daughter.

Post- Reading Phase

1/ What is your position vis- à – vis the characters of story?

I think it is tricky and the characters are hypocritical since they fear the society as Mr. Doran who does not want or hesitate to marry Polly because of his relation to the church.

2/ How would you consider Ireland if it were part of your own society?

The Irish culture is like the contemporary Algerian one through the characters of the story. It is strict and harsh when it comes to religious values and the society judgment.

The Lottery

Pre- Reading Phase

1/ As Algerian EFL learners, how would you define the term 'lottery'?

It has to do with being lucky enough to win price by chance via buying tickets.

2/ Is the lottery usually a positive or negative experience? Why?

Yes, it is positive. However, as long as it is related to games and wining money, it becomes forbidden by Islam and the Algerian society since it is believed that it is easy money.

While Reading Phase

1/ What is the setting of 'The Lottery'?

Time: Summer day, June, 27th

Place: village, between the post office and the bank

2/ What is the mood/ tone at the beginning of the story, and how has it changed by the end?

The mood at the beginning of the story was 'excitement', yet by the end, people were disappointed.

3/ How do you guess the time period of writing the story?

It looks like it happened in the beginning of the 20th century because of the way people behave and speak.

4/ At what point in the story did you start thinking about "the lottery" in a different way?

When Mrs. Hutchinson started saying that it was unfair many times and repeat_it many times as if something bad will be taken place.

5/ How are the men and women depicted at the beginning of the story?

The men gathered to talk together to talk about planting, rain, tractors and taxes, their jokes were quiet, they smiled instead of laughing. They were the authority of the village. Whereas, women are depicted as ordinary housewives with ordinary function in their society, which is based on gossiping and staying updated with what happenin the village.

Appendix 11: A Sample of Sami's Questionnaires

6/ How do the villagers treat the black box?

The fact that they have gathered to do the lottery, it means that the box is highly represented and regarded among them and it symbolises an important part of their culture. It is a kind of metaphor.

7/ Why did Mr. Summers use paper slips instead of wooden chips in the lottery?

Mr. Summers used papers' slips because according to him the population was increasing and the wooden chips took more place.

8/ What was Mrs. Hutchinson doing before she came to the town meeting? Is this important?

She was cleaning the dishes. It is important because it implies that the women at that time had to assure the house work and it refers to her that to forget is better than attending it.

9/ Do you think that people believe that they have the choice to practise the lottery? Why or why not?

They believe that they do not have a choice, because they accept it for granted and allow each year that someone innocent will be killed for no reason.

Post- Reading Phase

1/ How would you react if this lottery tradition was part of your culture?

If this lottery tradition was part of our culture, I would be against such tradition because it is a criminal and unhuman act that this not accepted by my culture and religion.

2/ Is this story is difficult to be read or comprehended? Why? Why not?

It is difficult to like because of the cruelty of this tradition. The meaning also contradicts the reality of the lottery. Normally, the lucky one should win not being stoned until death.

الملخص

تعتبر قراءة النصوص الأدبية من أهم مناهج دراسة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. الهدف من هذا الأطروحة هو إظهار كيف يمكن للطلاب الماستير بالجزائر القراءة بشكل أفضل من خلال تسليط الضوء على تأثير المعلومات المكتسبة سابقا و التي يمكن أن تكون ذات طبيعة ثقافية، لغوية أو/ وأدبية. تكشف هذه الدراسة ان هؤلاء العناصر يعتبرون كعوامل هامة في تحديد مهارات القراءة لدى الطلاب المشاركين في هذا البحث. إضافة الى ذلك، النتائج المتحصل عليها من هذا التحقيق تشمل عشرون طالبا الماستير من جامعة عبد الحميد ابن باديس بمستغانم. في الواقع، تنقسم هذه الأطروحة الى خمسة فصول: الفصلين الأولين يعالجون أهمية الدراسات القياسية التي ترتبط بقراءة النصوص الأدبية من خلال مراجعة مختلف المناهج التي تتعلق بنظرية المعلومات المكتسبة كما ذكر ويداوسون (2000، 2007) ، ماك في، دانسمورو غايفلاك (2005) و بارنهاردت (2005). إضافة الى ذلك، يقوم هذا البحث بوصف نظرية المعلومات الخلفية المعرفية المتعلقة بالقراءة مع الرجوع الى المعلومات الاجتماعية، الثقافية، اللغوية و الأدبية المكتسبة سابقا من القارئ. في ما يخص الفصل الثالث، فإنه يناقش الأطار البيداغوجي و النظري لهذه الدراسة. كما يقوم ايضا بمحاولة تقديم تحليل نظري فيما يخص وسائل جمع البيانات. اما في الفصل الرابع، اقدم وصف منهجية الاساليب المتبعة في تحقيق هذا العمل التجريبي. إضافة الى ذلك، اقوم بتحليل الظروف السياقية التي أجريت في إطارها استبيانات الطلاب والمعلمين. وفيما يتعلق بالفصل الأخير، فإنه ينطوي على تحليل البيانات التي تم جمعها من خلال التجربة. وفي هذه المرحلة، يتم تطلب جمع البيانات المتعلقة ببعض العمليات الاحصائية والتصنيفية المتمثلة على شكل اعمدة بيانية ، دوائر نسبية وجداول. ونتيجة عن ذلك، يظهر التحليل أن المعرفة الخلفية للطلاب من حيث العناصر الثقافية، اللغوية والأدبية لا تعزز بالضرورة فهم الطلاب لقراءة النصوص القصيرة الغير مألوفة ثقافيا. وإضافة إلى ذلك، يظهر التحليل أيضا أنه ليس بالضروري على اساتذة الادب اتخاذ بعين الاعتبار شخصية الطلاب في اختيارهم من النصوص الأدبية التي سيتم تدريسها لأنهم يعتبرون ناضجين وقادرين على التعامل مع أي نص أجنبي ثقافية. وفي الواقع، يؤكد كل من اساتذة الأدب وطلابهم أن القراءة المكثفة تلعب دورا هاما في تعزيز الكفاءات اللغوية والثقافية للقارئ. و من خلال المطالعة المكثفة واكتشاف الثقافات الأجنبية، يصبح الطالب أكثر تعاطفا وتسامحا إزاء هذه النصوص الأدبية تماما كما انه يصبح ماهرا في فهم واستخدام اللغة المستهدفة. و من خلال القيام بذلك تصبح الخلفية المعرفية للطلاب في تغيير مستمر، وبالتالي تصبح ديناميكية. وبالتالي، فإنها تتيح للطلاب إثراء وتحسين كفاءته اللغوية وكذلك انفتاحه من أجل التعرف على الثقافات الأجنبية. لذلك تؤكد النتائج فكرة كوك (1989) حول تفعيل العمليات الذهنية في قراءة النصوص الأجنبية. و في الخاتمة، فان هذا البحث الاستكشافي يوضح أن نظرية المعرفة المكتسبة سابقا ليست دائما ضرورية في فهم النصوص الأدبية في حالة الطلاب المتطورين في سياق اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

Résumé

La lecture des textes littéraires a toujours été considéré comme un processus important dans l'apprentissage de l'Anglais comme langue étrangère. Le but de ce travail est de démontrer comment les étudiants Algériens en master peuvent atteindre une meilleure compréhension de la lecture tout en jetant la lumière sur l'influence des connaissances de bases qui peuvent être culturelles, linguistiques et/ou littéraires. Cette étude essaie d'explorer ce genre de facteurs en tant qu'éléments importants dans l'identification des compétences de la compréhension d'un échantillon d'apprenants. En plus, les résultats obtenus lors de cette enquête ont été élaborés a touché vingt étudiants en graduation a l'Université Abdelhamid Ibn Badis de Mostaganem. Cette thèse est divisée en cinq chapitres; les deux premiers chapitres mettent en relief l'aspect théorique et les études empiriques qui sont reliés à lecture de la littérature tout en citant les différentes approches de la théorie de la lecture. Les exemples les plus cités sont s'eux de Widdowson (2000, 2007), McVee, Dunsmore & Gavelek (2005), and Bernhardt (2005). Je présente aussi la théorie des connaissances de bases en relation à la lecture tout en se réfèrent aux compétences socioculturel, linguistique et littéraire déjà acquises par le lecteur. En ce qui concerne le troisième chapitre, il discute le cadre pédagogique et théorique de cette étude. Il essaie de produire une explication de l'analyse des théories concernant les outils d'instigation. Dans le quatrième chapitre, je présente une description méthodologique des procédures qui ont été adoptés dans la conduite de cette étude empirique. Je présente aussi une analyse des circonstances contextuelles dans les quelles les questionnaires des étudiants et des professeurs ont été conduites. Par rapport au dernier chapitre, il implique l'analyse des résultats obtenus de l'expérience. À ce stage- ci, ces résultats requièrent la représentation de certaines opérations statistiques et évaluatives qui sont représentés sous forme de graphes, camembert et des tableaux. Par conséquent, l'analyse démontre que les connaissances déjà acquises des étudiants quelles soient culturelles, linguistiques ou littéraires, n'améliorent pas forcément leurs compréhension des nouvelles qui sont basées sur une culture non familière. L'analyse démontre aussi que les professeurs sont pas obligés de prendre en considération le profil des étudiants dans le choix des textes littéraires puisqu'ils sont considérés comme des étudiants mature et capables de lire et comprendre des textes étrangers. En réalité, les professeurs de littérature et leurs apprenants affirme que la lecture approfondie joue un rôle très important dans l'évolution des compétences linguistiques et culturelles des lecteurs. En lisant profondément and découvrant les cultures étrangères, l'apprenant devient plus empathique et tolérant vis-à-vis ces textes littéraires comme il/elle devient habile dans la compréhension et l'utilisation du la langue cible. Donc, les résultats confirment l'idée de Guy Cook qui consiste à activer les processus mentaux dans la lecture des textes étrangers. En conclusion, ce travail exploratoire démontre que la théorie des connaissances de base n'est pas toujours nécessaire dans la lecture des textes littéraires dans le cas des apprenants matures et avancés dans le contexte de l'Anglais comme langue étrangère.