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READING METACOGNITIVELY: THE ROLE OF KNOWLEDGE AND CONTROL IN READING LITERARY TEXT. (The Case of Third Year EFL Students)

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the substance of this dissertation is entirely the result of my investigation and that due reference or acknowledgment is made, whenever necessary, to the work of other researchers.

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Signed:

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my lovely parents who provided me with all the spiritual and material support to achieve this work.

Abstract

The research concern of this dissertation is to highlight the importance of a vital aspect of the psycholinguistic processes in reading: metacognition. The rationale of this study is to display the link between the readers' **knowledge** of what reading involves i.e. the reading requirements and the strategies used which are basically metacognitive strategies and the type of reading needed for literary texts. This investigation also aims to shed light on the relationship between the readers' **use** of metacognitive strategies to monitor and regulate the reading process and their reading performance as regards literary texts in the context of this study.

The study's theoretical framework is based on the works of Flavell (1978), one of the first theorists to embark on the investigation of the notions of meta-memory and metacognition and to describe metacognition as knowledge and regulation of cognition.

Thirty one third year students from the English Department, University of Algiers at Bouzareah were selected for this investigation as well as five literature teachers who provided information about the demands and the strategies needed for reading a literary text.

Two questionnaires and a reading task were used in the study to probe the metacognitive aspects present or absent in students' reading of literary texts. The results were compared and showed that the knowledge students possess about reading is not specific to the task per se and does not match the requirements of the reading task. In addition, deficits at the level of control appear to be dominant in students' processing since they lack knowledge about how best to do it i.e. namely the use of alternative, appropriate strategies.

All the above things considered, the study calls for training first year university students to monitor and regulate their own reading process since it is the basic skill through which they learn. This can be achieved if they are able to detect their own failures and attempt to find solutions for them. Prior to use, the students ought to possess the knowledge required to control the process effectively.

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List of Abbreviations:

- **A** Average
- **BU** Buttom Up

- **G** Good
- **Q** Question
- **S** Student
- **SK** Strategic Knowledge
- **T** Teacher
- **TD** Top Down
- **TDs** Task Demands
- **TP** Task Purpose
- **W** Weak

Chapter One
Introduction

1.1 Aims of the research

The aim of the present research is to shed light on the topic of reading as a receptive skill as well as an interactive process which involves both readers' Bottom up skills

(BU) and top down (TD) strategies along with other constituents that are exploited so as to make reading an active effective learning skill. The study focuses on reading as a process and investigates thoroughly its most hidden aspects that are likely to enhance comprehension at all levels. Among the factors that have proven to foster comprehension in reading at a higher level is metacognition.

1.2 Scope of the study

This study will find out whether metacognition, comprising knowledge and control, is responsible for third year university students' success or failure in reading and comprehending literary texts. An attempt will be made to understand the relationship between students' metacognitive awareness and control and their processing of literary texts. This investigation of students' metacognitive states in reading was motivated by the fact that metacognition is a fertile area not exclusively studied given its psychological complexity on the one hand and the difficulty of collecting unobservable data on the other. In addition, it is not easy for readers to verbalise their involvement with the text not because of their lack of awareness of their mental abilities, but because they engage in automatic processing (Baker and Brown, 1984). Yet these weaknesses can be redeemed either by using alternative means such as retrospection and introspection or by triangulation in order to insure the validity and reliability of the data gathered.

As a matter of fact, metacognition is a fairly new area of research (1970's) full of imperceptible aspects that have not been examined at length despite the fact that the topic of the role of metacognition in reading comprehension has been already dealt

with. This research intends to examine some aspects of metacognition as they relate to reading literary texts. Thus, it tries to link both areas of teaching reading and teaching literature.

Metacognition deals also with knowledge and control of the reading process. Knowledge about the process of reading allows students to consider what the purpose of reading is and what they are required to do when they are exposed to a written text. Control deals with the ability to detect their own failures while reading and to use appropriate and effective strategies to remedy them. Hence, students can regulate the reading process according to their own needs and purposes.

1.3 Metacognition in reading

Reading is yet to be scrutinised in depth although it has been the topic of inquiry for a long time. In the 1970's, the main focus of research in the field of reading was concerned with the outcomes i.e. what students understand and what they produce to answer comprehension questions. This was the only way to access to their reading ability. On this point Alderson and Urquhart (1984: xviii) state: 'Recent research, consequently, has attempted to investigate the *process* of reading rather than focusing upon the *product* or outcome' (*italics* are the authors'). Interest shifted in the last decades towards the study of the process and the sub-processes involved in reading. Researchers were concerned chiefly with what happens inside the reader's mind when his eyes are exposed to print. Therefore, they realised that it was more important to look at reading as a process since this new perspective allows more consideration of

readers as active participants in the reading process. In this new role allotted to him, the reader contributes a great deal to create wider opportunities to understand at a low level and to interpret at a higher level especially if one considers reading literature which requires greater ability to go beyond the written words.

Regarding reading as an interactive activity whereby bottom up and top down processes are interwoven, our approach to reading in this research is to consider it as a problem solving activity (Clark, 1975. In Olshavsky, 1976:656). It is considered so in order to stimulate the students' attempts to cope with the difficulties encountered. The problem that needs to be solved is that of seeking to find the appropriate meaning (s) of the text that relate to the reader's background knowledge and the context in which it was written. Since this latter entails an effort from the reader, he is expected to control the reading process during which monitoring and regulation are taking place. A prerequisite knowledge about task demands, purpose as well as the deliberate techniques to use are necessary to be aware of prior to control. Researchers (Meltzer, 1993; Paris, 1991) agree that 'there is empirical evidence to support the theory that metacognition in one explanatory factor of reading comprehension difficulty' (Lewis and Moorman, 2007). It may be the case that our students' in the department suffer from reading comprehension problems at a metacognitive level, as will be discussed below.

The reasons for our choice of metacognition as an important factor that effects reading significantly are listed below:

- Metacognition is closely related to the psycholinguistic state of the reader; therefore, an investigation about readers' awareness, monitoring and regulation can give insights about the process of reading.
- Meatcognition is defined as 'thinking about thinking' (Stewart & Tei, 1983) and this offers an opportunity for student readers to reflect upon what they read.
- Reflection while reading involves other sub-processes which are related to metacognition on the one hand and to reading requirements on the other. These are: planning one's reading, monitoring and evaluating.
- Reading involves different levels of comprehension and reading literature calls for high skills of understanding. This is congruent with some metacognitive skills like self-questioning and hypotheses testing.
- When the reader is wholly engrossed in the reading activity, he is responsible for his learning situation. This state of concentration which is metacognitive in nature raises students' awareness to the processes they have to go through and the appropriate strategies to use to make them autonomous readers.
- When addressing strategies in reading, this may refer to multiple ways of approaching the text. Therefore, different readers employ different strategies. Some might be successful, others not and this offers an opportunity to try and give students instructions on the use of effective strategies that are employed by 'successful readers'.

1.4 Studying literary texts

As for the use of a literary text as reading material in this study, it is important to stress that students at the third year level are required to read literature in English, mainly fiction. Understanding the process of reading literary texts may assist students in the accomplishment of this task. This may help students and teachers alike to clarify the demands of literature reading and to stimulate readers' motivation to read more and in an effective way.

As far as the benefits of literature are concerned, it is commonly agreed that reading literary texts fosters students' critical ability likely to be achieved if the reader is fully immersed in the text and is aware of the best way to approach it. This is, in fact, a prerequisite element in metacognition. Reading literary texts presents as well wide opportunities to deal with high and multiple levels of understanding.

All the above things considered and in relation to what was stated in this rationale, the concept of metacognition is looked at in relation to processing a specific sort of texts: literary texts. Knowledge of the operations involved in reading including awareness of the different purposes as well as the best effective techniques to be used are crucial elements that constitute one side of metacognition that is thought to be problematic in our students' reading. On the other hand, this knowledge is scanty if taken by itself. It ought to be employed efficiently and strategically by the reader to control the process. This becomes true if the reader shows an ability to detect failures and to use successful techniques to regulate the process according to the aims set. Control, therefore, is also assumed to be defective in students' readings. Due to these reflections, the research seeks to find out the relationship between metacognition;

comprising its sub-constituents and reading literary texts by setting forth the following research questions.

1.5 Research questions

RQ: What is the relationship between metacognition and students' reading of literary text?

a. **What is the relationship between metacognitive knowledge and students' reading of literary texts?**
b. **What is the relationship between metacognitive control and students' reading of literary texts?**

In short, the research aims to be beneficial in multiple ways especially if one thinks about the subjects taught at university. In other words, English in the Algerian context is taught by means of literature and civilisation. Hence, it will be fruitful to investigate reading by means of literature as this enhances reading literary text. Furthermore, students at the first year level are taught reading as a separate module and in the second year they are introduced to reading literature. In the third year, the challenge increases and it is presumed that the difficulty in reading persists because students have not developed their knowledge about reading requirements in general let alone reading for critical appraisal. Eventually, the research endeavours to explore some of the obscure realities about the reading process and what might affect it.

1.6 Operational definitions

Owing to the fact that the study aims at drawing the relationship between metacognition comprising knowledge and control and reading literary texts, the key notions that relate to the topic need to be clearly defined. These notions are: reading as an interactive process, metacognition and its constituents as well as techniques, strategy and skill. The definitions are meant to avoid any possible ambiguity in the use of the terminology needed for this study.

1.6.1 Reading

Reading is defined as a process of extracting meaning from a written text. This process is both cognitive and interactive (Thorndike, 1917: xxvi. In Alderson and Urquhart, 1984). By cognitive is meant that reading involves the interaction of various mental processes starting from the very low level of decoding up to the higher level of interpreting. Thus, the reader makes use of his psycholinguistic abilities to understand a text. As far as the second feature 'interactive' is concerned, reading consists of multiple observable and unobservable constituents that are dynamic and interwoven. The definition provided by Thomas and Harri-Augustin (1984:273. In Alderson and Urquhart, 1984) describe this phenomenon quite exhaustively:

> Reading is an active generative process whereby meaning is attributed to the words on the page. This process represents the core to the eyeball-to-print interaction. The sophisticated reader samples, searches, selects and relates the items of meaning in a text, in ways which make sense to him or her depending on self-defined purposes. This process continues more or less intuitively depending on the degree of conscious control exercised. Our studies show that the more readers can bring the process under review the greater the probability that he or she can recruit an optimal strategy for effective interaction.

1.6.2 Metacognition

Metacognition is a term that denotes a person's memory state. It is generally defined as one's thinking about thinking. In learning contexts, metacognition refers to the learner's knowledge and control of the learning process. It is closely related to cognition; therefore, it is represented as 'cognition about cognition. Brown, Armbruster and Baker (In Orsanu, 1986) reported researchers' definitions of metacognition and its constituents as follows:

> As used by cognitive psychologists, metacognition refers to both the knowledge and control an individual has over his or her own thinking and learning. Metacognition in reading to learn involves the knowledge of four variables and the manner in which they interact to produce learning. These variables are: text, task, strategies and learner characteristics…Metacognition in reading to learn also involve control or self-regulation (Brown, Bransford, Ferrara, and Campione, 1983; Brown, Campione, and Day, 1981; Flavell and Wellman, 1977. In Orasanu, 1986: 51).

Thus, metacognition comprises two broad notions: knowledge and control. Although researchers (ibid) used the terms control and self-regulation interchangeably, this research considers regulation as a sub-component of control along with monitoring since control requires both problem detection i.e. monitoring and correction i.e. regulation. Anderson et al. (1985. In Abromitis, 1994) define the constituents of control as follows:

> (…) two crucial components of metacognitive control are comprehension monitoring, or the ability to notice when comprehension failure occurs; and corrective strategy use, or the ability to take action to correct a comprehension failure once it has been noticed.

1.6.3 Technique, strategy and skill

A technique, in general, is any specific attempt made by a person to deal with a difficult situation. It shares some specificities with a strategy owing to the fact that they are both used to cope with a challenging learning task. However, they are significantly distinct in terms of the way they are used to approach the task. While a strategy is said to be deliberate, and has to be appropriately and effectively used to be called so, a technique does not forcibly own these features. Yet, it is likely that a technique becomes a strategy when reading metacognitively as Brown rightly remarks: 'A technique becomes a strategy only if students have the knowledge of when, where, and how to use it' (Brown, 1978: 63. In Orsanu, 1986). As for strategy, it can develop to become a skill if used unconsciously. A skill is also referred to as a technique; however, it is different from it in the sense that it is a technique used automatically i.e. not consciously. Skill and strategy are defined by Paris et al. (1991. In Collins, 2007) as follows:

> Skills: information-processing techniques that are automatic. An "emerging skill" can become a strategy when it is used intentionally, and a strategy can go "underground" (i.e. internalized by a reader) and become a skill, when used automatically.

Thus, the terms technique, strategy and skill are complementary and the distinction made above is thought to serve the study as it makes the use of the terminology clear all along the research.

Chapter Two
Review of the Literature

Since the study intends to look at the link existing between the reading skill and the notion of metacogniton, this chapter provides a detailed account of some studies related to them. The first section of the review is devoted to researchers' considerations of reading as an interactive process. It tries to uncover the way different studies view the process of reading as an active operation whereby several variables are at work. Therefore, the second section of this review illustrates some of these variables that play a part in reading such as: background knowledge, readers' affect and text topic and genre. Furthermore and given the nature of this research which tries to investigate the way readers process a written text, it is assumed that readers encounter difficulties when reading. Thus, the third section endeavours to exemplify some of the shortcomings when reading like unidirectionality, schema availability, readers' conceptualisation about reading as well as strategy use. Eventually and regarding the reading process, section four of the review deals with the ways in which readers attempt to overcome the difficulties met in reading through the use of strategies.

On the other hand, and concerning the concept of metacognition, section six with a number of sub-sections are dedicated to the constituents of metacognition. Metacognitive knowledge is reviewed with two of its components: knowledge of task and knowledge of strategies whereas metacognitive control is examined alongside with monitoring and regulation. The reasons behind selecting some of the elements of metacognition and not others will be justified in the section devoted to metacognition. In order to elucidate the notion of metacogntion, a description is given in this review

about the metacognitive state of good and poor readers together with the most common tools employed in researching metacognition in reading. These latter will illuminate the purpose and the methodology adopted in this research.

The last section of the review seeks to throw light on the type of text used in this study. Since the research aims at investigating reading at a high level of processing, literary texts are thought to be the most suitable for that purpose. Ultimately, a distinction is made between the levels of comprehension in reading mainly the literal level, the inferential and the critical level of literary texts. This is done in order to clarify the aim of selecting a specific sort of texts and to explain its relation to reading.

2.1 The nature of reading

Alderson and Urquhart (1984) define reading as follows:

> In reading, the learning process consists of a learner becoming more conscious of his own acts, and with guidance developing his own strategies and defining his own purposes.

The 1980's perspective on reading considered it as a process as opposed to reading as an outcome. Before the 1980's, research on reading was concerned with reading ability in relation to what readers produce after reading i.e. their answers to comprehension questions. The researchers who leaned towards this view neglected what exactly happens in the while reading phase of the process which is more important as it is at this stage that the reader interacts with the written text for comprehension. Investigating the process of reading leads to more consideration of the ways in which

readers deal with texts and overcome the problems that may prevent the realization of meaning which is the ultimate goal of reading.

Much research was conducted in the 1980's which viewed reading as a process. Hosenfeld (1977. In Alderson and Urquhart, 1984:245) focused on reading as a process rather than an outcome. She sought to find out the strategies readers use when coping with a text. According to her, reading is a problem solving activity since students encountering difficulties while reading endeavour to solve them. This research utilizes the Think Aloud Procedure as well as introspective/retrospective tools to identify and categorize the strategies readers resort to when faced with a reading problem. These research tools allowed Hosenfeld to provide an exhaustive description of readers' strategies while reading which depicted the reading process better. However, the research is not without limitations since the research tool used i.e. Think Aloud Procedure is said to distort the reading process. The readers have to stop their reading each time to describe the way they read through verbalising their actions and the steps taken to deal with the difficulty. Despite this drawback, Hosenfeld's study has enabled more research into reading as a process and as a problem solving activity in order to cast light on the ways in which readers approach a text.

Thomas and Harri-Augustin (1978: 252. In Alderson and Urquhart, 1984) described the use of the conversational approach to study the reading process in which 'experimenter and subject share the responsibility for the observation and measurement of a continuously changing process within a 'context sensitive' framework'. The purpose of using such tools reflects researchers' attempts at

scrutinizing the way readers read and the actions they take so as to handle a task. Furthermore, it shows the variety of tools employed as a proof of the complexity of the reading process.

2.2 Reading as an interactive process: Top-down and Bottom-up reading

During the1960's and 1970's, when the behaviourists theories were dominating the field of language learning, reading as a learning skill was not studied in isolation; it was dealt with in relation to listening with a priority to the listening skill. In addition, reading was mainly associated with decoding stages of small units of language (letters and words) i.e. it was essentially a bottom up process. Although some researchers like Fries (1963) and Rivers (1978) acknowledged the importance of cultural knowledge in the reading process, it was given trivial concern. However, the late 1980's saw the growing interest in reading as an isolated skill and readers as active participants in it. Their own efforts were taken into account along with the knowledge they bring to the process. Thus, with definitions of reading as a 'psycholinguistic guessing game' (Goodman and Smith, 1967, 1971), a top down processing of reading emerged. It takes into consideration the reader's knowledge of the world, of the language and the content area studied so as to enhance comprehension. Nevertheless, researchers' perspectives towards reading were combined in order to give an interactive view to the reading process with both BU and TD processing working together (Rumelhart, 1977).

Thus, our study acknowledges the interactive nature of reading; however, the main emphasis is on top down processing as it deals with higher thinking skills which

involve the reader and his efforts to cope with the text. In addition, the interactive nature of reading has to be pointed out to avoid crucial reading problems as unidirectionality in reading, that is, over reliance on one of the processes TD or BU, which may cause serious reading difficulties. Thus, considering reading as working interactively may pave the way to a broader view of the process that takes into account various variables that interweave together and that can explain further its nature and what causes failures of comprehension as is discussed below.

2.3 Some variables that affect reading

Given the fact that reading is an interactive process under which a number of operations take place, it is clear that various variables are working together so as to modify the way different readers read the same text. First of all, and due to the fact that reading is a process whereby different mental operations occur, metacognition is one of the most vital variables that are involved in the understanding of reading. Moreover, the reader's knowledge labelled 'schematic knowledge' about both the language and content area studied is crucial to the study of reading. Readers' affect when attempting to deal with the text along with other variables such as motivation, attention, and interest may appropriately contribute to provide a clearer picture of the reading process. Besides the reader, the text, text type, genre are likely to influence reading. Each of these variables affecting reading is examined in the next section.

2.3.1 Schemata in reading

Alderson and Bachman (2000:33) state that:

> The development of schema theory has attempted to account for the consistent finding that what readers know affects what they understand.

The background knowledge that readers bring to their reading process is referred to by researchers as 'schemata'. It is the combination of both the pre-existing knowledge that the reader possesses along with the new information acquired. The importance of schemata lies in the fact that it involves the reader in an interaction of old and new information for the sake of generating meaning. The reader either attempts to find a 'mental home' to use Anderson and Pearson's terms (In Carrell et al, 1988:37) for the new information or he tries to modify the already existing mental home so that it fits in memory and is finally stored and retrieved when needed. Carrell (1988) pointed to different kinds of schemata: formal schemata and content schemata.

2.3.1.1 Formal schemata

The construct of formal schemata refers to the reader's knowledge of language. It was demonstrated, through research illustrated in this section that awareness about the grammar and vocabulary of the language contributes to the understanding of the text. Alderson and Bachman (2000:36) state that: 'in second and foreign language reading, it has always been assumed that learners must first acquire language knowledge before they can read'. Therefore, researchers have endeavoured to show the relationship between syntactic/ lexical knowledge and reading comprehension. Cooper (1984), for

instance, distinguishes between ‘practised’ and ‘unpractised’ readers. The practised readers are non-native readers who have been largely educated by the medium of English as opposed to the unpractised readers who have mainly studied by means of their first language. Cooper’s findings revealed that both types of readers demonstrated weaknesses in a range of syntactic features, but the main differences were apparent in knowledge of vocabulary, meaning relationships, cohesive devices (lexical cohesion) and the inability to use linguistic cues in context to deduce word meaning.

2.3.1.2 Content schemata

Carrell (1983) defined content schemata as knowledge of the world, including the subject matter of the text. In his classification, however, Alderson (2000) divided content schemata differently distinguishing between background knowledge and subject matter knowledge. While background knowledge is broad and it can include general information and information about the subject matter, subject matter knowledge is information about a specific topic. Studies by Rumelhart, 1980, 1985 and Bransford et al., 1984 (In Alderson and Bachman, 2000:43) have demonstrated that the availability of this knowledge alone is not enough since it needs to be activated. They explained that it is possible for readers to learn how to activate their background knowledge through training as this will enhance their performance in reading.

In sum, schematic knowledge is a crucial variable that needs to be reviewed whenever reading is investigated since it contributes to a better understanding of the

reading process. Moreover, the ability to activate one's background knowledge in reading is a sign of effective reading on the one hand and of exercising control on the process on the other.

2.3.2 Readers affect

Readers' emotional state while reading is assumed to be of a noticeable significance in understanding the reading process. Reading is defined as an interactive activity; but an interaction between the reader's feelings and his reading achievement is another issue worth investigating. Goetz et al. (1992) reported students' responses and emotional states through the use of self reports in order to shed light on their impact on the process of reading literary texts. The study provided readers with short stories and aimed at reporting their affective feedback. The results showed different responses to the episodes of the story and a great complexity of the readers' emotional state.

Fransson's research (1984) was concerned with the study of the effect of motivation on reading; more specifically, of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on recalling texts. What is significant in this study is the fact that internally motivated students who read for their own interests and needs and not solely for the test, are said to adopt 'deep level learning' strategy. Thus, they were characterized as better performers as opposed to extrinsically motivated students who read to answer test questions only. The latter were said to use a 'surface learning strategy'. This corresponds to Fransson's (ibid: 115. In Alderson and Urquhart, 1984) description:

> a subject motivated by expected demands to read
> a text for which he has very limited interest is likely to

> adopt a surface-learning strategy, while deep-level learning seems to be the normal strategy chosen by a student motivated only by the relevance of the content of the text to his personal needs and interests.

The section has reviewed the variables related to the reader essentially. Other variables external to the reader such as the text, its topic and genre, have a role to play in the reading process as well. These will be examined in the next section.

2.3.3 Text topic and genre

It is believed that processing a familiar text is easier than reading an unfamiliar one. This is due to the ability to handle a common topic for which the reader has the necessary background information. As Alderson (2000) remarked, readers of arts, humanities and social sciences find it harder to process scientific texts whereas those who are used to read technical texts find it difficult to read humanities.

In addition, text genre is supposed to influence the way students read. Expository texts for instance are likely to be processed with difficulty compared to narrative texts. Denis (1982. In Alderson and Bachman, 2000:64) remarked that: 'one interesting feature of narrative texts in particular is that they appear to induce visualisation in the reader as part of the reading process' contrary to expository texts that seem to have no place for imagination.

As far as literary versus non literary texts are concerned, it is generally assumed that literary passages are hard to process because of the hidden meanings contained in

them along with the style used. The reason behind the challenge that literature creates for readers is to thrust them to reflect upon what they read and to demonstrate the strategies they use to analyse and interpret the text. In relation to this, a distinction of 'literariness' was made by researchers like Zwaan (1993) and Steen (1994). They argued that there are specific strategies to be employed in reading literary texts which differ from non-literary ones. Other scholars like Culler (1975) went further to call for a special literary competence to process this sort of print. Nevertheless, more evidence is required, through empirical work, to demonstrate the need for such competence (Alderson and Bachman, 2000).

To summarize, the variables reviewed in this section were meant for a better understanding of the reading activity and what might affect it. Metacognition as the key variable in this research was left out so as to give a detailed review about its impact on reading in subsequent sections. Although schematic knowledge was dealt with, it will be briefly tackled again in the following section to try and provide an explanation for some reading problems and their source. Among the difficulties reviewed are: unidirectionality in reading, readers' conceptualization about reading, and strategy use.

2.4 Sources of difficulties in reading

When studying reading in a foreign language, one expects readers to encounter a number of difficulties that are either due to a language problem, that is, the foreign language or to a reading problem i.e. the way readers approach the text. This section

focuses on some of the difficulties that readers come across and that might be due to the students' reading problems since the research focuses on the process of reading in EFL.

2.4.1 Unidirectionality in reading

As was stated earlier in this review, reading is defined as an interactive process whereby bottom up and top down processing work together in order to lead to comprehension. When reading at low levels, the reader generally reads small units of language i.e. phonemes, words, and sentences. Whereas when reading at higher levels, he usually reads to infer and interpret the text. But both TD and BU processes are needed for the realization of meaning. When a deficit in one of the processing modes occurs, the reader automatically moves to the other which implies that he will rely mainly on one of the modes, either the BU when interpretation and inferring is impossible or TD when dealing with the words and sentence structures seems an impossible task. Carrell (1988:103) has dealt with the causes of text-boundness and schema interference and states that: 'some causes can be hypothesised for the breakdown of bidirectional processing and the over reliance on unidirectional processing in ESL reading'. She alluded to some of the causes of unidirectionality and summarised them as the existence of schema and its activation.

2.4.2 Problems with schema availability and activation

According to Carrell and Eisterhold (1983), both formal and content schemata are required in knowledge-based processing. As far as content schemata are concerned,

Johnson (1982) argues that familiarity with topics facilitates recall of text as opposed to unfamiliar topics. In addition, Carrell and Eisterhold (ibid) found out that one of the reasons of over reliance on bottom up processing is that the schema is culture-specific; thus, readers resort to text only to find some clues when comprehension is broken. In addition, Ostler and Kaplan (1982) pointed out that formal schemata are vital for comprehension; notably in relation to contrastive rhetoric.

In sum, the availability of schema be it formal or content is crucial to prevent unidirectionality in processing print. But, if the schema is available, this does not mean that the problem is solved as the existing schema needs to be triggered.

2.4.3 Reading perceived as a decoding process

What readers think about reading contributes to the understanding of the problems they face. For example, a student who takes reading to be a decoding process finds it difficult to infer meaning from a text he reads. This is due to his conceptualization of the reading process. Researchers like Devine (1983) investigated this issue and the analysis of the interviews conducted showed that younger readers as well as poor readers perceive reading as a decoding process rather than a meaning making process (Myers and Paris, 1978; Garner and Krauss, 1982). Therefore, readers' conceptualization about reading is another variable that may help investigate the causes of reading deficits and what is required to help alleviate these deficiencies.

2.5 Learning strategies and reading strategies

In this section of the review, examples of studies conducted in the area of learning strategies in general and reading strategies in particular are discussed in relation to the topic under study i.e. metacognition.

2.5.1 Learning strategies

The shift, in language learning, from behaviourist views to the cognivist ones has diverted researchers' interest towards the study of the mental operations that take place in the learners' minds rather than the range of behaviours learners engage in while coping with a task and which exhibit but little about the realities of any learning activity. Besides, the notion of learner autonomy in learning which views the learner as responsible for his own learning, has paved the way to the study of strategies. The rationale behind the investigation of strategies is that it can provide clear objectives for learning and help devise adequate methodologies for foreign language learning in the classroom (Faerch and Kasper, 1980).

The best example of research into learning strategies in a foreign language is that of O'Malley and Chamot (1990) who identified and classified the learning strategies employed by second and foreign language learners. They divided learning strategies into metacognitive, cognitive and socio-affective. They also used the Think Aloud Procedure which consists of the learners' verbalisation of the process in action along with the interviews in order to probe the techniques employed. Ultimately, the results yielded a classification of the strategies that could be used for foreign language

learners as well. The next section deals with the reading strategies used by second and foreign language learners of English.

2.5.2 Reading strategies

Among the learning strategies that have been addressed by a number of investigators, the reading strategies have taken the lion's share of researches' attention given the importance and the complexity of the issue of comprehension in processing print. In a narrower sense, a study of reading strategies reveals the multiple ways in which readers approach a text and how they manage the interaction with it. Strategies are said to 'assist learners with the acquisition, storage and retrieval of information' (Rigney, 1978). They 'indicate how readers conceive of a task, how they make sense of what they read, and what they do when they do not understand' (ibid).

The area of strategy use was broadly explored by scholars and practitioners for its relevance to the way learners approach any learning task. Learning strategies is an umbrella term that includes a number of deliberate actions learners of a language engage in when faced with a learning task in general or a problem solving activity in particular. In reading, strategy use has always been a field of interest to researchers especially the use of strategies by successful and unsuccessful readers. This is because it was found to be effective in improving students reading comprehension (Baker and Brown, 1984; Brown, 1981; Palincsar and Brown, 1984). It was noticed, for instance, that a successful reader uses a given set of strategies that are generally known to be effective whereas the unsuccessful reader does not.

As an illustration of the researchers' interest in identifying strategies frequently employed by good and weak readers, Hosenfeld (1977) in a Second Language study which is worth noting, sorted out the type of strategies called for by successful and unsuccessful students and its relation to reading comprehension. She reached the following conclusion:

> High scorers (called successful readers) tended to: keep the meaning of the passage in mind, read in broad phrases, skip inessential words, guess from context the meaning of unknown words and have a good self-concept as a reader. By contrast, low scorers (called unsuccessful readers) tended to: lose the meaning of sentences as soon as they decoded them, read word-by-word or in short phrases, rarely skip words, turn to the glossary of the new words, and have a poor self-concept as a reader.(In Alderson and Urquhart, 1984:233)

The quotation explains that while high achieving readers tend to approach the text globally , looking for main ideas and skipping unimportant words, low achieving readers process the text locally, that is, they are more concerned with the understanding of the text word by word; therefore, they lose the meaning of the text whenever stopping to look for individual words.

It is clear then that strategy use is another useful variable for the understanding of reading failures when they occur. The techniques used deliberately and effectively by the readers are one of the most controversial aspects in reading research which necessitates looking deeper into readers' own mental operations to gain a clearer picture of what is exactly involved in reading.

A similar study to Hosenfeld's was done by Alderson (1991) on strategy use. He conducted a research to probe the reading strategies of adult second language learners whose levels ranged from beginner to advanced. The research tool utilised was the Think Aloud Procedure when answering comprehension questions about the reading activities. Analysis of the data showed that there is no set of specific strategies that contribute to successful performance in reading as both high and low achieving readers tended to employ the same type of strategies. However, high scoring readers appeared to be applying strategies more effectively and appropriately than the low scoring readers. Consequently, Alderson's study demonstrates that declarative knowledge about strategy use, that is, what strategies to use, is necessary but not sufficient for efficient reading. Procedural and conditional knowledge, dealing with the how, when and why to apply them, is similarly crucial for reading successfully. Since this implies both the what and how to read, metacognition is thought to be the area which highlights most these aspects in reading.

2.6 Metacognition

Although the notion of metacognition dates back to Plato and Aristotle (Brown, 1987), it was seriously introduced to the area of learning research by Flavell in the 1970's (1976, 1977) when he discovered that remembering and recall of information (or deficits in memory) are due to lack of knowledge about 'the parameters that facilitate this recall' and he called this a 'shortcoming in meta memory'. From then onward, researchers started to focus their attention on the processes that lie behind cognitive processes and knowledge and regulation of these processes. This was termed

afterwards ‘metacognition’. This concept was broadly defined as ‘thinking about thinking’. However, a real definition of metacognition goes far beyond these three words as is discussed below.

In an attempt to clarify what is meant by metacognition, researchers divided the notion of metacognition into two broad components without ‘oversimplifying’ them as Brown (ibid) warned. These two components are: knowledge and control. Knowledge refers to the learners’ awareness of the mental processes they are involved in learning or any other situation. Researchers like Brown, Campione and Day (1981), Flavell and Wellman (1977) specified the sub-components of the knowledge aspect of metacognition. These are: knowledge about self as a learner, knowledge about task, and knowledge about strategies. Control comprises sub-constituents like: planning, monitoring and evaluating. The focus of this paper is chiefly on the monitoring phase of metacognition as will be explained in the ensuing section.

2.6.1 Metacognition in reading

Metacognition, when applied to reading, refers to knowledge about and control of the mental processes involved in reading. As for the knowledge component of metacognition in relation to reading, it comprises knowledge about the self as a reader, about the task demands (comprehension questions for instance), knowledge about strategies in addition to knowledge about text since it is the reading skill that is being attended to. As regards the control facet of metacognition in reading, it includes planning one’s reading by setting a purpose for example, monitoring one’s

understanding of the text or what is referred to in the literature as ‘comprehension monitoring’ (Abromitis, 1994) along with evaluating what someone reads.

In the present study, however, some components are focused on but not others for this research has a limited scope. It delves into two sub-components of metacognition; which are knowledge about task and knowledge about strategies. Knowledge about the reader as self (i.e. motivational and personal factors) and knowledge about text will be examined in a further study. As for the control phase in metacognition in reading, emphasis is on comprehension monitoring only. Monitoring is granted importance since it is in this phase that regulation seems to occur as will be examined in the following section. Diagram 1 below presents the elements of metacognition dealt with in the study.

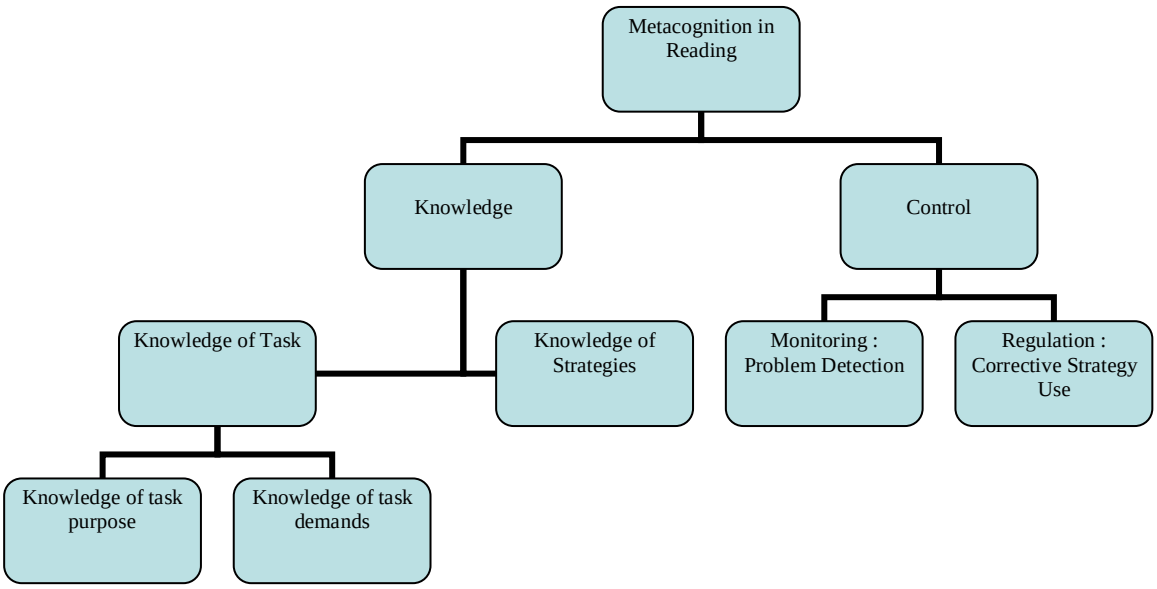

Diagram. 1 Components of metacognition in reading as examined in the study.

2.6.2 Metacognitive knowledge in reading

As was stated previously, the idea of metacognition in reading incorporates both aspects of knowledge and control and this section is devoted to a detailed review of what knowledge consists of.

Knowledge was broadly defined as the person's awareness of his cognitive processes. It is characterised as stable and statable (Wenden, 2001). What is meant by stable is that part of long-term memory which contains what learners generally know about learning and, statable refers to the fact that learners can reflect on their own cognitive processes and talk about them (ibid).

Metacognition includes knowledge of variables like text (in the case of reading), task, strategies and learners characteristics. What is intended in this research is to demonstrate the relationship between readers' awareness about the reading task and the strategies they call for to monitor and regulate reading. Knowledge about a specific reading task will focus on the reading of a literary text.

2.6.2.1 Knowledge about task, task purpose and task demands

Task knowledge includes awareness of the purpose of the learning task that is, what learners know about the pedagogical intent of a task and their expectations of how it will serve their language learning needs in Wenden's terms (2001:46). It also denotes knowledge about task demands; in other words what learners are required to do with the task and how to do it. Lastly, knowledge about task includes awareness of the task

type, that is, whether it is similar to or different from other tasks or if it needs more efforts to be performed. All these constituents of task knowledge are important and integral. For example, if the reader is assigned to read a poem and analyse it, it is certainly different from asking him to read an article from the newspaper on account of the discrepancy between task type and purpose.

As an illustration to what has been stated, Smith (1967) conducted a study in which he asked twelfth-grade readers to read for different purposes: reading for details and reading for general impressions. He interviewed the subjects after reading and the interview revealed that good readers discriminate and vary their procedure for the different purposes and always keep the purpose in mind unlike poor readers who exhibit slight variation in their procedure of approaching the text and immediately forget the purpose of reading.

This research thus demonstrated the vitality of knowledge of task purpose, type and demands as related parts of the knowledge aspect of metacognition which is crucial in the realization of comprehension in reading. We also believe that knowledge about task along with its sub-components is important as it can raise students' awareness of what is required from them when reading a literary text for critical comprehension. This facet of knowledge i.e. task knowledge is targeted in this study since it draws students' attention to the distinction that exists between the purposes of reading and the different possible approaches to handle the text according to these purposes.

2.6.2.2 Knowledge about strategies

Knowledge about metacognition also includes knowledge about the strategies used by readers in an attempt to deal with print. In any definition of strategies, a distinction is posited between technique and strategy. A general definition of strategy is that of a technique used purposefully. A distinction was put forward by Brown (1978) between a technique and a strategy. Thus, she contended that: 'students can employ a technique 'blindly' without using it strategically in processing text information. A technique becomes a strategy only if students have the knowledge of when, where, and how to use it' (In Orsanu, 1986:63).

Comprehension monitoring occurs whenever reading breakdowns are present and hence the need to use strategies becomes compulsory. Mentioned in Armbruster (1983) is a distinction between the strategies used to solve comprehension problems labelled as 'fix-up' strategies and the strategies used for general reading not necessarily when a problem occurs, these are called 'studying' strategies.

Fix up strategies are used to monitor comprehension failures essentially. The reader employs a fix-up strategy when he is able to take a strategic decision to remedy the occurring shortcoming. Consequently, a fix-up strategy is used in an attempt to solve a problem, in this case a reading problem. Alessi, Anderson and Goetz (1979. In ibid, 1986: 61) provided examples of fix-up strategies like storing the problem in memory for the hope of a forthcoming clarification, re-reading, looking ahead in the text, or consulting another source like a dictionary or a knowledgeable person.

Thus, the use of fix-up strategies appears to indicate metacognitive awareness. One of these strategies is looking back to what is relevant in the text or what has been read before so as to solve a problem. Adults and young students were observed to detect inconsistencies in a text by looking back in the text as a sign of monitoring and thus using a strategy to endeavour and resolve what hindered their reading (Baker and Anderson, 1982).

Studying strategies on the other hand are for remembering mainly. These include note taking, outlining, underlining, summarising, etc. Although studying strategies are worth mentioning, they are not dealt with in this research since they are resorted to for recalling information from a text essentially. Recalling and remembering the text are not part of the present study. However, Fix up strategies are stressed in this research because they are used in monitoring the process by detecting failures and taking appropriate decisions to remedy them. Study strategies are not used for that purpose, thus, they do not serve the purpose of the study.

This section was devoted to the role of knowledge in metacognition. It is requisite in achieving a lucid view of reading but insufficient by itself as control is a complementary aspect of the process of reading metacognitively which should include both monitoring and regulation.

2.6.3 Metacognitive control in reading

According to Otto et al. (1985), when a task is analysed metacognitively, it: 'puts the reader in control of the situation; it encourages flexible and adaptive thinking, and if necessary, modification of the reading process to fit the known purpose for reading' (In Abromitis, 1994). Control in metacognition, according to the quote, refers to the reader's ability to monitor the reading situation by taking responsibility of the task and its outcomes and to detect and recognise the failures when they arise. Hence, the reader must not stop at the stage of problem detection, but ought to regulate his actions according to the encountered difficulty to overcome it and this can be achieved through altering the strategies to fit the reading task.

In the case of reading, the reader controls the reading activity by setting a purpose for reading the text. For example, he can make decisions before starting to read on how to approach the text, what strategies to use and how to use them. Baker and Brown (1984) summed up the aspects of the regulatory phase of metacognition as planning, monitoring and evaluating. In the planning stage, the reader is expected to plan the strategies to be employed with a foregoing consideration of appropriateness and effectiveness. In the monitoring phase, the reader employs and controls the strategies planned and attempts to regulate them in case they do not work properly by adjusting the incompatible ones. The final stage is that of evaluating in which the reader revises and tests the effectiveness of the strategies resorted to in order to retrieve them for the upcoming reading activity or to call for an alternative, adequate set of strategies. Baker and Brown (ibid) describe these stages as metacognitive skills

and components of control in reading, bearing in mind that a strategy becomes a skill if it is used automatically, and these are:

(a) Clarifying the purpose of reading, that is, understanding both the explicit and implicit task demands.

(b) Identifying the important aspects of a message.

(c) Focusing attention on the major content rather than trivia.

(d) Monitoring ongoing activities to determine whether comprehension is occurring.

(e) Engaging in self-questioning to determine whether goals are being achieved; and

(f) Taking corrective actions when failures in comprehension are detected.

2.6.4 Monitoring and regulation as components of control

The concern of this section is devoted to the other aspect of metacognition, basically the components of control. At this level, the reader is supposed to perform different actions to put under control the process of reading. The stages discussed in the previous section, that is, planning, monitoring and evaluating are among them. However, monitoring is tackled here as it is at this stage that the reader reveals the strategies employed to cope with the text. Thus, monitoring depicts clearly the while reading phase which is the main concern of this study. Planning and evaluating are not examined in detail since they are more concerned with the before and after reading stages.

Monitoring is when the reader shows his ability to detect comprehension breakdowns and to use corrective strategies by taking appropriate and effective actions in order to remedy the failure after detecting it. Thus, the first facet of control is represented under monitoring while the second is referred to as regulation in this research.

According to many researchers on comprehension models (e.g. Collins, Brown, and Larkin, 1977; Goodman, 1976; Ruddell, 1976; Rumelhart, 1977; Woods, 1980), comprehension monitoring involves activities like hypothesis testing and schema building. They explain that when readers go through the process of interpreting a text, for example, they engage in hypothesis testing which means that they try to make their own propositions and confirm them or disconfirm them later. Markman (1979) argues that a problem in comprehension may occur when the hypotheses cannot be found and contends that hypothesis testing is one indication that the reader is engaged in the active process of comprehension monitoring. She explains that: 'if one is able to confirm or disconfirm one's hypotheses, one can acquire knowledge about how well one is comprehending the text' (Markman, ibid. In Baker and Brown, 1984). Further examples of comprehension monitoring strategies were provided in Ruddell's model (1976) which involves evaluating information adequacy, data gathering, hypothesis building, organizing and synthesizing data, and hypothesis testing.

According to the comprehension models mentioned above, readers get involved in the process of comprehension monitoring through the use of the strategies stated like

testing hypotheses, building one's background knowledge, synthesising and evaluating information gathered in relation to the text. However, a problem is likely to emerge when the reader 'is not treating the ideas produced as provisional so he can inspect and welcome them or reject them as they appear'. What may happen is that the poor reader may 'say the words to himself without actively making judgments concerning what they reveal' (Thorndike, 1917.In Baker and Brown, 1984). What can be inferred from this view is that readers must embark on self-questioning the text while reading as well as on other activities like hypothesis testing in order to be regarded as effective processors of text. Besides, the effective reader should not accept the ideas he is exposed to for granted as he has to make judgments and contribute to the construction of meaning. This idea leads logically to the interactive nature of reading which involves not only the text as an abstract entity but also the reader as an active meaning maker.

When his expectations are not met, the reader will carry on reading with an attempt to build a personal representation of what he reads. As a result, comprehension monitoring stands as a condition of considerable importance for control to take place in reading. The reader does not realise that a problem has been encountered unless he engages in comprehension monitoring.

Brown (1984) claims that there are two states in which a reader is involved when reading: an 'automatic state' whereby understanding proceeds smoothly and thus comprehension monitoring does not take place. This characterises fluent and rapid

processing. A ‘debugging state’ occurs when there is an obstruction to the flow of comprehension. This obstruction urges the reader to slow the reading. It renders it less rapid and needs extra processing. As a matter of fact, it is in the debugging state that the reader needs to employ strategies so that the reading comprehension obstacles can be overcome.

On this point, Baker and Brown (1984) comment that readers can move from an automatic state to a debugging one. They wrote:

> One commonly experienced triggering event is the realization that an expectation we have been entertaining about the text is not to be confirmed. Another triggering situation is when we encounter unfamiliar concepts too often for us to remain tolerant of our ignorance. Whatever the exact nature of the triggering event, we react to it by slowing down our rate of processing, allocating time and effort to the task of clearing up the comprehension failure. And in this process of disambiguation and clarification, we enter a deliberate, planful, strategic state that is quite distinct from the automatic pilot state, where we are not actively at work on debugging activities. The debugging activities themselves occupy the lion’s portion of our limited processing capacity, and the smooth flow of reading abruptly stops.

As can be noted from the above quotation, the reader often shifts from fluent understanding when reading is not hindered by any faced difficulty to strategic processing when the reader comes across a challenging obstruction.

Although comprehension monitoring is viewed as a prerequisite phase to achieve successful reading, it is insufficient as such. After detecting a problem in understanding the text, the reader has to decide for further processing which consists

of taking actions represented under effective strategies to treat the failure. The choice of the deliberate techniques depends on the purpose of reading. This alludes to regulation. Following from the above discussions, a distinction is made between the processing of good and poor readers, their knowledge bases and the strategies they use. The aim behind this distinction is to exemplify the notions of metacognition concretely by drawing on the processing of different readers. It intends also to give weight to the present research by trying to apply the theories reviewed to the practical part of the study.

2.6.5 Metacognitive knowledge and control of good and poor readers

Differences are prevalent among good and poor readers in terms of processing text and one explanatory factor is metacognition with its two aspects of knowledge and control. The reader who is aware of the cognitive processes involved in reading and knows, above all, what reading is likely to cope with the text better than the reader who is oblivious in these respects. Because knowledge precedes control in metacognition, knowledge has to be dealt with first in case a problem arises. Generally, the problems concerning poor readers result from their lack of knowledge about the cognitive operations they have to be engaged in. Moreover, the problems are often due to the inadequate knowledge of the variables that affect this knowledge like text, strategy, task and self as a learner.

On the other hand, if the reader is aware of what constitutes reading, especially if adult readers are the subjects of the study, the reading problem is assumed to be at

the control level of metacognition not the knowledge level. According to Pearson and Camperell (1985): ‘good readers are much more in control of their reading’. Anderson (1994) also states: ‘good readers have shown to acknowledge different purposes for reading, to assess their own knowledge as related to the task, to monitor their own comprehension and to implement corrective strategies when needed’ (In Abromitis, 1994). Therefore, it seems that good readers have a better control of these variables than poor readers.

Furthermore, poor readers are assumed to be defective as concerns the proper way to use the knowledge base they possess. For example, a poor reader may have the knowledge required to deal with the text, knowledge about the reading task presumably; however, he is not able to handle the task appropriately and effectively. Thus, the regulatory phase which entails the use of strategies is at fault in poor readers. Despite the fact that the literature reports that the strategies poor and good readers know about are the same, good readers use them more frequently and effectively (Hare and Smith, 1982; Olshavsky, 1976). This seems to imply that the problem sometimes is not the availability of strategies but rather how to employ them, when and why.

All the above things considered, the difficulties in reading may be caused by serious lack in either task knowledge or strategy knowledge. They might also be due to a defect in the control stage, that is, monitoring and regulation in reading a literary text.

2.7 Levels of comprehension: literal versus inferential and critical levels

On account of its interactive nature, reading comprises several processes and sub-processes and is affected by various variables. Every process in reading leads to a given level of comprehension depending on the purpose of reading and the type of the text being read. Type of text is a crucial variable which determines and modifies one's processing of text.

The ability to combine the meaning of words into sentences so as to achieve general understanding results in surface understanding or what is called 'literal' understanding. Subsequently, literal comprehension refers to one's ability to get to direct meaning in the text. According to Gray (1960), literal understanding is the outcome of reading the lines. However, the reader is able to go deeper into the understanding of the text through inferring the meaning targeted; then, the reader moves a step further into the inferential level, which is the ability to read between the lines. Reading between the lines implies that the reader is able to work out meaning which is not directly stated and this can be achieved either by the reader's activation of his appropriate background knowledge about the content of the text or through the use of the contextual clues existing in the text. The reader can also proceed additionally in the understanding of the text in case the purpose of reading requires it. The ability to comprehend beyond the lines is what is addressed as critical reading whereby the reader evaluates and argues about the writer's style for instance or about the way the ideas are presented.

Given the fact that understanding develops intensely in each level, it is clear that the level of difficulty will increase accordingly. As a matter of fact, reading at a critical level is more challenging than it is at the inferential level and the former is more difficult to process than understanding at a literal level. Relating the two levels of comprehension i.e. inferential and critical to the present research can help us to understand what aspect of comprehension monitoring is at work when a problem is detected and what attempts can be made to solve it. Reading at both inferential and critical levels is congruent with the demands put on the readers to cope actively with the text since they call for more attention and processing than reading at a literal level. The text selected for the present study is a literary text since it urges the reader to infer and evaluate what is being read. Literary texts are also the typical teaching materials used by teachers to teach literature courses, and the writing course to a certain extent. The reasons why literary texts were selected for the present study are outlined below.

It is considered commonsense that literary texts are harder to deal with than non-literary texts. According to Alderson and Bachman (2000) this is 'either because of the multiple layers of meaning they are held to contain, or because of the wider and more complex range of language they exhibit'. Although some researchers like Van dijk (1977) argued that the processing of literary and non-literary texts is the same, others like Zwaan (1993) differentiated between the processing of the two and contended that reading literary texts can be distinguished from reading non-literary texts in terms of the strategies used. In addition, some literary critics like (Culler,

1975) advocated the need for a literary competence in order to understand literary texts at a given level.

These views concerning reading literature disclose but little of the importance drawn from learning a language by means of literature and learning about whole cultures. This turns out to be true particularly when readers are required to play an active role not only to comprehend literature but to interpret it as well (Widdowson, 1979). Hence, readers' participation in this meaning making process implies the use of an appropriate set of strategies. Carter and McCarthy (1995:304-305) state:

> process-based approaches are learner-centred and seek to encourage students to respond to the text not exclusively as a complete artefact or finished product but rather more to the text as an unfolding process in which the relationship between form and meaning is shown to be central, as in Widdowson (1992a). Such learner-centred serve also to stress the unfolding and evolving nature of reading and interpretation of literary texts.

This new perspective towards the process-based practices as was argued in the review of this research and that are characterised to involve the learner (i.e. they are learner-centred) is congruent with what this research aims at i.e. to foster readers' knowledge and control of every learning task be it reading a literary text or other through readers' employment of their own techniques in a strategic way. Thus, dealing with literary texts in this study is deliberate as they are thought to be challenging both in terms of language and content. Metacognition involves higher thinking skills; hence, the text type that fits most for this study is likely to be the literary text.

The following chapter investigates the metacognitive state of the reader when dealing with literary texts. The research design comprising data collection and data analysis procedure is examined.

Chapter Three
Research Design

3.1 Research tools for the assessment of metacognition in reading

The tools that are suggested for this study and which are commonly used to assess metacognition in general are those proposed by specialists and investigators in the field. They consist of verbal reports that include introspection and retrospection, questionnaires and interviews. They have been selected by researchers as will be demonstrated below for their remarkable utility in data collection and for what they reveal about the reading process. Nevertheless, they are not without limitations.

First of all, self-reports comprise introspective and retrospective techniques. While introspection refers to one's reporting of thoughts and processing while accomplishing the task, retrospection stands for reporting these same operations after the completion of the task. They are significantly useful in the way they reveal the underlying mental processes that are difficult to demonstrate otherwise. They are more suitable to use with adult readers who do not suffer from language problems that may inhibit the description of process. In spite of this, self-reports do have some drawbacks. They are likely to be inconsistent means while automatic processing is taking place during which the reader does not report any process not because he is a poor reader but because reading is not problematic. In order to remedy this, self-reports are used with challenging tasks in which the reader is expected to come across some difficulties.

A survey of research has revealed that various studies have used these verbal reports as research tools to explore students' reading process (e.g. Chamot and El

Dinary, 1999; Harmon, 1996; Suh, 1999). A number of other assessment specialists like Alderson (2000), Ericsson and Simon (1993), Matsumoto (1993) agreed that: 'verbal reports can be valuable sources of information about students' cognitive processes when they are elicited with care and interpreted with full understanding of the conditions under which they were obtained' (In El Koumy, 2004). What is referred to as elicitation of data with care are the number of conditions put forward by researchers like Ericsson and Simon (ibid) in order to ensure more validity and reliability of the means. These are summarized as follows:

- The interval between processing and reporting must be short.
- The reports must reflect exactly what is being thought.
- The students must be helped by providing directions to them in order to report their actual processing.
- The researcher can allow students to report in their L1 or L2 if the ideas are complicated to express in the FL.

In addition to self-reports, questionnaires and interviews have also been used so as to tap into students' knowledge and control of metacognition. Metacognitive questionnaires are effective research tools for their organized structure and for what they unravel about the process through the questions asked. The questions can be close or open ended, yet there is a preference for using open ended questions in order to allow readers to answer freely and to gather rich data. An example of research which employed this tool is Carrell's (1989) investigation of metacognitive awareness of second language readers' reading strategies and the relationship between this

knowledge and comprehension. She used a metacognitive questionnaire in order to prompt information about their metacognitive awareness.

Moreover, Jacobs and Paris (1987) used similar research means under the form of a taxonomy to reflect metacognitive learning and cognitive processing and they called it the Index of Reading Awareness (IRA), the aim of which is to compensate for 'the pitfalls of verbal reports' (ibid). In the same context, Butler (1993, 1995) designed a metacognitive questionnaire in her programme for developing consistent means for measuring metacognition; the programme is called the Strategic Content Learning Approach to strategy instruction (SCL). In fact, she adapted the questionnaire from other researchers (e.g. Wong et al, 1994; Graham & Harris, 1989) asking students to report in writing their metacognitive awareness of tasks, strategies and their strengths and weaknesses as learners.

All things considered and despite the pros and cons of every tool, they are of considerable importance in studies dealing with the reading process in general and the cognitive processes involved in it in particular. Therefore, and in order to compensate for the limitations of every tool, triangulation is called for, which consists of employing two or three instruments for collecting data in the same study.

3. 2 Research Design

The aim of this research is to explore 3rd year students' reading of literary texts at a metacognitive level and also to investigate possible reading deficiencies from a crucial

angle, that of metacognition. Metacognition refers to one's reflection on the processes one is involved in and the ways in which these processes are monitored and regulated. This present investigation examines the role of knowledge and control in students' processing of a specific genre of texts i.e. literary texts and to pinpoint some possible flaws in the way students approach the text at an inferential and critical levels of reading.

This research is non-experimental and descriptive in nature given the fact that no treatment or manipulation of variables is taking place. It deals with the identification of variables and the relationship that exists between them. On this type of research methodology, Hart (2005:319) writes:

> Descriptive non-experimental research is also interested in identifying variables and relationships between them. There are, of course, different degrees of association and different ways of describing a phenomenon…The design is usually based on a *case* where the subject is measured only once; a *cross-section* of some behaviour is observed based on a sample from a population…Descriptive studies measure the occurrence of phenomenon without intervening, that is, making changes.

To this end, the procedure of data collection and data analysis will use both quantitative and qualitative means to provide clear presentations and exhaustive interpretations of results. This procedure is referred to in the literature as the 'combined approach' (Allwright and Bailey, 1991:68), these researchers argued that:

> There is, of course, no compelling reason why both quantitative and qualitative ways of collecting and analysing data should not be deliberately combined in

> any one research project, and every reason why both approaches should be harnessed at all times.

This is also called the 'hybrid research' (Ellis, 1984).

The following sections describe the subjects who participated in this study, the tools employed to collect data along with the rationale behind their use, a detailed account of the data gathering procedure and finally, the methods of analysis utilised.

3.3 The subjects

The population sample of the study consists of 31 third year university students enrolled in a four-year English degree course at the English Department of Algiers University in Bouzareah. These students should obtain the Bachelor's degree by the end of 2010 since the study was carried out at the beginning of the academic year 2008-2009. The students' age ranges from 21 to 26 and they are upper-intermediate level. The rationale for selecting 3rd year students for this research is that they have already studied literature in the second year in the English literature and American literature modules in addition to their 1st year reading classes in which the reading material was generally literary. Because of their two year of literature study, we assumed that they would be quite familiar with not only the process of reading but also of reading a literary text with the different techniques monitored by the teacher.

Concerning the five teachers who contributed to the research, they all teach in the English Department. Four of them teach American literature and/or civilization and one teaches English literature. Three of them are experienced teachers who have

been teaching for more than twenty years and two are less experienced and have been teaching for seven years.

3.4 Research instruments

As was stated in the review of the literature, the tools used by researchers for data gathering in the area of metacognition in reading are basically verbal reports. These include introspection and retrospection, questionnaires and interviews. For this research, the tools used are a questionnaire and a reading task involving a literary text followed by three comprehension questions. The tools are described below.

3.4.1 The reading task

A literary text was used for the reading task. The text is an extract from a short story entitled: The Fall of the House of Usher from a book of selected tales written by the American novelist Edgar Allan Poe and published in 1994. The choice was made for this extract given its remarkable style which the students are expected to recognise easily since the short story is included in the 2nd year American literature syllabus. We avoided literary texts from the 3rd year syllabus since the students are not acquainted with the material. Furthermore, owing to the fact that it is a passage from a short story which was studied in depth in the 2nd year, it was supposed to be easy to read unlike a text from a novel due mainly to its length; which means that a novel is longer than a short story.

Using a short story text for a reading task as an actual material in the study is likely to stimulate students' demonstration of the metagognitive aspects present in their readings. The use of actual texts rather than asking students to describe their knowledge and control theoretically was advocated by Ericsson and Simon (1987) who state that:

> When answering questionnaires about hypothetical problem-solving situations, readers may describe a reading strategy, but fail to demonstrate it in actual problem-solving situations relevant to the reported strategy…General questions such as "How do you perform these tasks?" invite responses based on prior experiences and knowledge of how a task ought to be performed, rather than responses to the specific problem-solving situation. General questions about how to solve an imaginary situation are least likely to elicit responses closely linked to the cognitive processes under discussion. Consequently, to provide valid information, questions should be specific to the problem-solving task. (In Collins et al., 2007)

In order to see how students confront a problem-solving situation, the students were asked later in the course of data collection to answer three questions about the text at both the inferential and critical levels (see Appendix 2). Theses questions sought to spur the students monitoring and regulation when reading the literary text since it was of recognizable difficulty both in terms of language and content. This task could be described as 'challenging' and this is what researchers called for when measuring metacognition. Among these researchers is Flavell (1976) who argued that 'there are probably few conscious metacognitive experiences when comprehension is proceeding smoothly; such experiences are more likely to become conscious when progress is blocked and some obstacle to comprehension arises' (In Baker and Brown, 1984).

3.4.2 The questionnaires

Two questionnaires were used in the study; one questionnaire addressed five teachers of literature and the other addressed the thirty one 3rd year students. The questionnaires were used for their practicality and for the insightful information they could provide especially through the open-ended questions. The questionnaire for students was handed and retrieved on the same day, but the teachers' questionnaires were retrieved two days after they were given to them. Each question targeted an area assumed to be problematic to the students.

The questionnaires to teachers and to students were adapted from the questionnaire used by Butler et al. (1994, 1995) in which a taxonomy was used to highlight metacognitive awareness and control and their subcomponents in the questions (see p.44 in the literature review chapter). However, the questions were reworded by the researcher.

3.4.2.1 The teachers' questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire (see Appendix 3) was designed by the researcher following the taxonomy used by Butler (1994). It addressed the areas of metacognition believed to be closely responsible for the common problems faced with when reading. It should be noted that many researchers have adopted this research tool in their investigation of the role of metacognition in reading.

The teachers' questionnaire includes seven questions all of which are open-ended except the first one that asks the teachers to indicate their overall 3rd year students' level in reading literary texts in the form of a scale question. It says:

Q1: How do you qualify your students' reading of literary texts? (Tick your answer)

Good □ Average □ Week □

Justify your answer .....

The second question is related to the first as it requires teachers to give the possible reasons for students' weaknesses in reading a literary text. Questions 3, 4, and 5 are related to a category or a sub-category of metacognitive knowledge, these are: knowledge of task and knowledge of strategies with their subcomponents i.e. task purpose and task demands as wall as the choice of effective and appropriate strategies. For example,

Q3: 'What is the purpose of reading a literary text?' refers to task purpose,

Q4: 'What must students already know before they read a literary text for critical analysis?' denotes knowledge of task demands

Q5: 'What are the techniques one must use to read a literary text effectively?' is related to strategy knowledge.

Questions 6 and 7 were meant to infer the possible 'acceptable' difficulties that students are likely to face when reading a literary text. Teachers could tolerate some errors and not others. The reason for qualifying the difficulties as 'acceptable' is useful in our analysis of the students' questionnaire in the following section since they have to report the difficulties they met. Since they are at the 3rd year level, they are supposed to deal with most difficulties by themselves; therefore, the teachers are well-

aware of the degrees of possible obstacles that can be reported and accepted. Problems at the language level, for instance, are not approved by the teachers.

In sum, the purpose of the teachers' questionnaire is to gather data related to students' metacognitive knowledge and control from the teachers' perspectives. Their contribution will be compared with those of the students' later in the data analysis so as to draw possible conclusions about students' metacognition in reading literary text.

3.4.2.2 The students' questionnaire

The students' questionnaire (see Appendix 4) is composed of three parts: part I concerns the students' personal details such as age and marks in the literature modules, part II is devoted to the knowledge aspect of metacignition while part III addresses control. Part I of the students' questionnaire is important for the description of the subjects on the one hand and for ranking students as: good, average, or weak on the other. This classification is purposeful and useful in comparing students' level in reading literary texts and their metacognitive knowledge and control.

Part II of the questionnaire contains four questions; every question is directed towards an aspect of metacognitive knowledge. Question 1 deals with the students' knowledge of task purpose. Questions 2 and 3 refer to their knowledge of task demands and question 4 inquires about their knowledge of the strategies they use to cope with the literary text. Q1 and Q4 are open-ended while Q2 and Q3are yes/no questions (see Appendix 4: part II).

Part III of the questionnaire includes four questions asked to pinpoint students' monitoring and regulation of their reading. Since monitoring involves problem detection, question 5 asks whether any difficulties where encountered in reading the text or in answering the questions. Questions 6 and 7 look for the type of difficulties and require from students to give examples. Question 8 explores the way in which students regulate the process by modifying strategies to achieve a better understanding (see Appendix 4: part III).

3.5 Piloting the questionnaires

The pilot stage is said to be compulsory as an initial step before real data collection sets out as it can determine the type and quality of the questions the researcher employs and can help to avoid ambiguity and confusion and to guarantee the validity and reliability of the data gathered.

Before data collection started, the teachers' questionnaire was piloted. Two literature teachers were given the original questionnaire which contained eight questions instead of seven. A question was omitted from the original questionnaire as it was felt to be irrelevant to the study. Furthermore, the question related to the purpose of reading a literary text appeared to be ambiguous to one teacher. It was understood as 'oral reading' whereas it meant reading at a critical level. Therefore, I felt the need to highlight the word 'literary text'; either by writing it in bold character, or by explaining to the teachers what I meant by reading within the context of my research.

Regarding the students' questionnaire and after the analysis of three 3rd year students' answers, a question needed to be made more specific. In the original questionnaire used in the piloting stage, question 4 asked 'how do you usually deal with the literature test questions?' which students answered by describing the way they write the answer. Therefore, in the revised questionnaire, the question was made more specific by asking 'how do you deal with the literature test question especially if you are asked to analyse a passage?

3.6 Data collection procedure

As a first step in data gathering, part I of the students' questionnaire and the literary text were handed to the participants in class at the beginning of the academic year (2008-2009). They answered the questionnaire first and then read the text silently. When the reading was over, part II of the questionnaire was administered to students to investigate their metacognitive knowledge which comprises: task purpose, task demands and strategy knowledge. After answering to the second part, they were required to answer the comprehension questions about the text. The first question asks students what the title of the text symbolises and the other two questions involve the students in a critical evaluation of the author's plot and style. The purpose of the questions, as stated previously, is to engage students in comprehension monitoring. The students were given 45 minutes to accomplish this task, and they were asked to answer the questions without paying much attention to language mistakes since the concern is on the ideas and comprehension rather than on the use of language.

When the answers to the reading task were handed back, the students were given the third part of the questionnaire to fill which focuses on metacognitive control. They were asked to mention the difficulties they faced when reading and/or answering the questions and to describe the strategies they used to cope with the difficulties.

3.7 Method of data presentation and analysis

The subsequent steps were followed in data presentation and analysis:

1. Data from the questionnaires: the teachers' and the students' (comprising the three parts) are transcribed and presented.

2. Categories are created according to the metacognitive elements investigated.

3. The categories from the questionnaires are presented in tabular forms and described under the form of narratives.

4. The teachers' answers are presented and analysed.

5. The students' answers are presented and analysed along with their answers to the reading task.

6. The comparison between the teachers' questionnaire and the students' is made.

7. The comparison between three readers' levels in reading literary texts (their marks and the answers to the reading task) and their metacognition is demonstrated in a table. Since students were divided into three groups: good, average and weak according to their achievements in literature modules, we sought to represent every category by one student given the scope of the study which does not allow a description of the metacognitive state of thirty one students.

8. The results are discussed.

Chapter Four
Data Presentation, Results and Discussion

4. Data analysis, results and discussion

The tools used to collect data in this study are questionnaires to the students' and to the teachers', and the reading text followed by questions. After gathering the information on the targeted elements of the study; that is, metacognitive knowledge and control in reading literary texts, the data were transcribed, categorised and presented. Ultimately, comparison of results from the different research tools along with their analysis ensued. The data are reported in what follows.

4.1 Presentation and analysis of the teachers' questionnaire

As described in chapter 3 on the research design, the teachers' questionnaire covers the metacognitive notions assumed to be necessary in reading a text. These are metacognitive knowledge with both sub-components: knowledge of task and knowledge of strategies. Knowledge of task comprises knowledge of task purpose and task demands and knowledge of strategies emphasises the appropriate and effective use of the technique selected.

Prior to displaying the teachers' answers as concerns the metacognitive elements tackled in the study, the level of the students regarding reading literary texts is presented according to the teachers' answers:

Level / Teacher	Good	Average	Weak
T1		+	
T2		+	
T3		+	
T4		+	
T5			+

Table.1 Third year students' level in reading literary texts.

Table 1 shows that four teachers of literature out of five qualified the students as being of average level in reading literary texts and they justified their answers with different reasons. Teacher 1 explained that this is due to lack of reading habits. Teacher 2 argued that his students are midway i.e. they are neither good nor weak since they have had a year only of literature study and they still need a full mastery of English in order to read literary texts better. As for teacher 3, although she selected the average level, she seems to believe that the students are 'weak' according to the comments she made and her remarks of the students' unwillingness to volunteer for reading. Teacher 4 contended that the students' level is average because 'they do not have a good grasp of the English language'. Whereas teacher 5 maintained that the level is weak since students 'are not yet equipped to apprehend a text, any text and they are weak to say the least'.

According to their answers, it can be noted that the teachers highlight a lack of reading practices as well as incomplete language proficiency. They also appear to stress the students' responsibility for the existing deficiency in their reading.

Concerning the second question which says: If you have qualified your students reading of literary text as 'weak', what is this weakness due to in your opinion? (i.e. what are the reasons of students' weaknesses in reading literary texts?), the teachers provided some of the reasons that prevented the students from reading the literary text effectively. The answers are presented in the table below:

Weakness / Teacher	Lack of reading habits	Poor lexical competence	Lack of cultural background	No interest in reading	No mastery of language	No purpose when reading
T1	+	+				
T2	+	+	+			
T3	+					
T4						
T5				+	+	+

Table.2 Students' weaknesses in reading literary texts according to the teachers.

According to the answers provided by the teachers, the most frequent weakness in the data is that students do not read much which results in their ineffective reading. In addition, lexical competence represents another deficiency in students' reading according to T1 and T2. A vital requirement for reading a literary text efficiently seems to be missing in students; that is, cultural background knowledge which was stated by T2. Teacher 5 attributed the students' limitations in reading literary texts to lack of interest in reading, no mastery of language and to the fact that students have no purpose in reading.

What can be inferred from these stated weaknesses is that the source of failure in students' readings is due to either student's unawareness of the importance of the elements mentioned above, that is, lexical and cultural knowledge, the practice of reading and mastery of the language in reading a literary text and which constitute some reading requirements or to lack of understanding of how to use them in an effective and appropriate way. This is going to be displayed through the analysis of the students' questionnaires. What is worth noting is that T5 mentioned the students' unawareness of the purpose of reading as one of the weaknesses. Setting a clear purpose in reading is a vital element in task knowledge when reading metacognitively.

Regarding the following question (Q3) which asks: What is the purpose of reading a literary text? it can be noted that there are divergent views among teachers concerning the purpose of reading a literary text as it is shown in the table below:

Purpose / Teacher	Improve vocabulary	Develop students' culture	Develop critical mind	Ability to respond to literature	Improve language proficiency	Develop analytical reading	Ability to use language as a tool to deal with the culture
T1	+	+					
T2			+	+			
T3							
T4					+	+	
T5							+

Table. 3 Purpose of reading a literary text: task purpose (TP)

Table 3 displays the teachers' answers to question 3 concerning task purpose. It is clear that the purpose of reading a literary text differs from one teacher to another. While T1 argues that the goal of reading a piece of literature is to improve vocabulary and develop one's culture, T2 and T4 seem to view literature as a tool to enhance students' ability to think critically and deal with the text analytically. What they have in common is the fact that literature engages the reader in understanding at higher levels. The teachers' answers to this question will be compared to the students' answers and analysed in relation to task purpose which is but one sub-component of metacognitive knowledge of task.

As for the second sub-component of metacognitive knowledge of task, namely task demands, it is presented and analysed from the teachers' perspectives in the table below.

Demands / Teacher	Discrimination between literary genres	Knowledge of literary devices	Knowledge of cultural background of text and author	Distinction between different levels of reading	Mastery of the English language	Knowledge of linguistic tools
T1	+	+				
T2			+	+	+	
T3		+	+			
T4					+	+
T5					+	

Table.4 Requirements for reading a literary text: task demands (TDs).

As the table indicates, the main task requirements for reading a literary text were emphasised by most teachers. They consist of knowledge of the literary devices like theme, plot, setting, characters; knowledge of the cultural and literary background of the text and author as it 'helps for a better understanding of the text' as stated by T3; and a mastery of the English language in order to understand both the explicit and implied meanings. Teacher 1 stressed the need for a clear distinction between different literary genres like novel, short story, poetry and drama to be able to cope with the text. Teacher 2 pointed out to the necessity to draw a difference between the multiple levels of reading; 'surface reading' which the teacher explains as a superficial reading to get a general idea versus 'deep reading' by means of which the student is able to analyse and criticise a piece of literature. In addition, teacher 4 highlighted knowledge of linguistic tools such as stylistics, discourse analysis and semiotics for literary interpretation. These answers will be compared to those of students' to see how students process literary text.

As for question 4 which is: What must students know already before reading a literary text for a critical analysis? the teachers provided the different techniques that a reader of a literary text ought to use so that he achieves a sound understanding of the

text. This stands for another category of metacognitive knowledge, that of knowledge of strategies which are displayed in the table that follows:

Technique / Teacher	Read slowly and gradually	Skip difficult words in the 1st reading	practise reading	Read the text more than once	Use dictionary for a deep reading	Concentrate on what you are reading	Skim then scan the text	Find the theme by focusing on key words	Use stylistics	Paraphrase, analyse and interpret	Circumscribe the text in a context
T1	+	+	+								
T2		+		+	+						
T3				+		+	+				
T4							+	+	+		
T5										+	+

Table.5 Strategies to use in reading a literary text according to teachers: strategic knowledge (SK)

Table 5 shows the various strategies a reader of a literary text should use in order to process a text effectively according to literature teachers. The most prevalent techniques cited consist of avoiding the use of the dictionary in the first reading as the aim is to get a general understanding of the text, and this, in fact, gives way to the other strategy mentioned i.e. reading the text more than once. Furthermore, the teachers emphasised the need to skim then to scan the text according to the purposes of reading, either to read for the gist or for details. Other techniques were referred to like the reading speed in which the students have to process the text gradually without rushing and by focusing on important points. Although teachers stressed the need to skip difficult words, teacher 2 called for the use of the dictionary when it becomes a necessity; that is, when the words are crucial for a 'deep' understanding of the text.

What was striking in their answers was the fact that the teachers did not focus on the techniques to use for a critical analysis as such. That is, the teachers reported the strategies commonly used for reading in general except for teacher 4 and teacher 5

who mentioned some techniques related directly to reading for critical appraisal. In addition to skimming and scanning; T4 emphasised the use of stylistics in reading a literary text 'to understand its meaning and the literary purpose of the author' and the need to find out the theme of the text by focusing on key words as an 'efficient technique'. Teacher 5 on the other hand focused on three stages in reading the literary text which are paraphrasing, analysing and interpreting and which similarly reflect a purely literary reading. Hence, Reference to general reading strategies as opposed to specific techniques by teachers may be due to students' inefficient reading for general understanding and their inability to go beyond the literal level of comprehension.

The notions tackled in what preceded are related to knowledge of task with the sub-categories of knowledge of task purpose, of task demand and of strategy knowledge. The notion of control which can be considered as the other side of the coin in metacognition was also hinted at in the teachers' questionnaire. The teachers were asked to describe the possible ways which the students might use to overcome their difficulties in reading a literary text for high levels of understanding. In other words, how students would regulate their reading. The teachers' answers are presented in the following table:

Techniques / Teacher	The practice of reading	Motivation and self-involvement with the text	Using the dictionary whenever needed	Being an independent reader	Asking for help from a classmate	Enriching vocabulary	Build a purpose
T1	+						
T2	+	+	+	+			
T3				+	+		
T4						+	
T5	+						+

Table.6 Strategies suggested by teachers to regulate the students' reading process

The idea of control in metacognition refers to both monitoring and regulation. Monitoring refers to the student's ability to detect problems when they occur and regulation means the attempt made by the student to adjust his strategies for better understanding. In table 6 above the teachers highlighted some crucial techniques that relate to both effective reading and metacognition. For instance, the practice of reading results in what is called 'expert' readers whose familiarity with the reading process enables them to cope with any problem encountered. In addition, to be immersed in reading allows concentration and concern with the different aspects of the process and thus self-involvement with the text to remedy any failure to understand. This is congruent with the view of an independent reader who can exercise self-control on the reading process.

Concerning their problems at the bottom-up processing level, students appear to be still struggling with language difficulties; hence, the teachers recommended the use of a dictionary in an appropriate way and the need to enrich vocabulary so as to surmount these shortcomings. Teacher 3, for instance, suggested that 'lost' students might be helped by a classmate.

4.2 Presentation and analysis of the students' questionnaire's data (part I)

The students' questionnaire as explained in chapter 3 on research design aimed at collecting data on the metacognitive aspects that could be problematic in students' reading of literary texts. These aspects comprise metacognitive knowledge and control. Explicit questions were directed to the third year students concerning task purpose

(TP), task demands (TDs), strategic knowledge (SK), monitoring and regulation in a two part questionnaire.

4.2.1 Presentation and analysis of the reading task

At on the onset of the study, some background information that served the research was gathered from students. This consisted of their marks obtained in American and English literature modules in the previous year in order to gain an idea of their approximate level in reading literary texts. According to the marks obtained, it is remarkable that the overall level of students in reading literature is average as three students out of thirty one obtained 12/20 and above which is assumed to be the mark gained by a good student. For this reason, only the three students are characterised to be 'good' according to their mean, these are: S2, S14, and S25. Therefore, teachers' claims about the students' level are compatible with the results they obtained. The average readers constitute the majority in the literature class as it is shown in the table below in which:

- 12/20 refers to the mark obtained by students in literature modules and which is considered 'good'.
- 10/20 and 11.5/20 refers to the marks obtained by 'average' students.
- less than 10/20 refers to the mark obtained by 'weak' students.

Students	Good	Average	Weak
100%	9%	67%	22%
31	03	21	07

Table. 7 The classification of students into levels according to their marks in literature modules

Modules / Students	American Literature	English Literature	Mean	Students' level
S1	12	10	11	A
S2	14	13.5	**13.75**	**G**
S3	10	12.5	11.25	A
S4	12	10.5	11.25	A
S5	09	12	10.50	A
S6	09	10.5	**09.75**	**W**
S7	10.5	10.25	10.37	A
S8	12	11	11.50	A
S9	12	06.5	**09.25**	**W**
S10	12	09	10.50	A
S11	10.5	10	10.25	A
S12	10.5	11.5	11	A
S13	13	10	11.50	A
S14	11.5	13	**12.25**	**G**
S15	12	10	11	A
S16	12	09	10.50	A
S17	08.5	10	**09.25**	**W**
S18	09	10	**09.50**	**W**
S19	11.5	09	10.25	A
S20	10	09	**09.50**	**W**
S21	08.75	09	**08.87**	**W**
S22	10.5	12	11.25	A
S23	10	12	10	A
S24	10	10	10	A
S25	09	15	**12**	**G**
S26	10	10	10	A
S27	10	13.25	11.62	A
S28	11	11	11	A
S29	08	07	**07.50**	**W**
S30	10	11.5	10.75	A
S31	10.5	11	10.75	A

Table. 8 Third year students' marks in American and English literature modules and their levels (G= good, A= average, W= weak)

As it can be noted from the table, three students out of thirty one are 'good, twenty one students are 'average' while seven students are 'weak'. For further representation of the students' level we drew the following diagram:

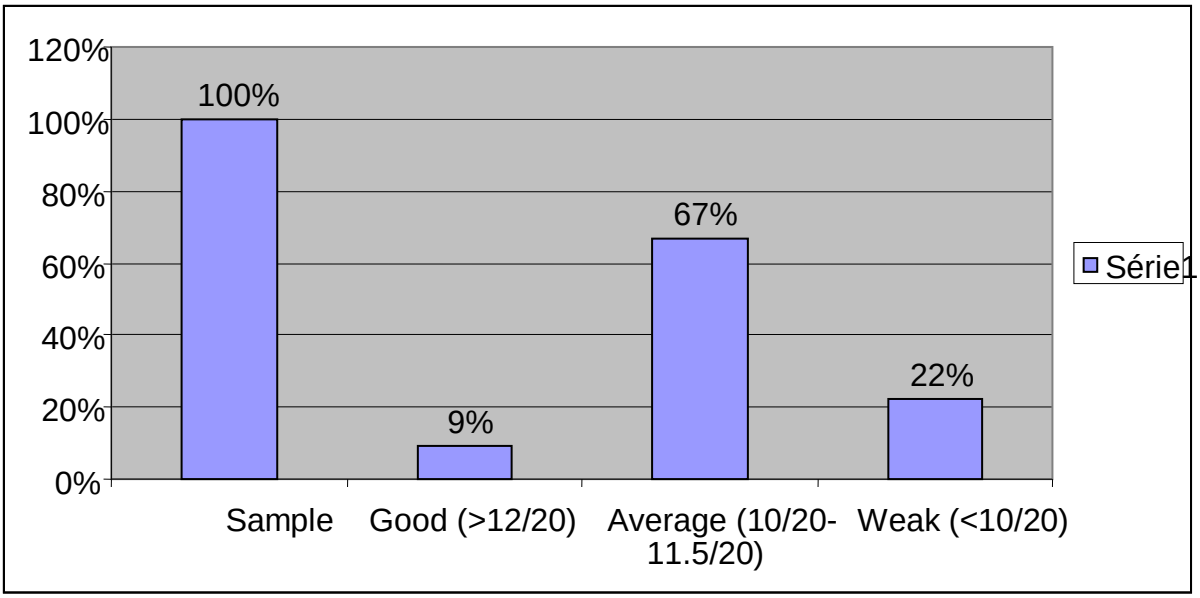

Diagram.2 Students' overall level in reading literary texts

In fact, the marks were not the only reference to students' level; their answers to questions about the text also provided a picture of their general ability in reading literary texts. The answers to the comprehension questions that followed the literary text displayed diverse levels of ability depending on the question and the level of reading it addressed. The questions sought out to tap students' ability to infer and evaluate some elements of the text which are plot and style and they pointed out to two high levels of comprehension that need monitoring i.e. the inferential and the critical level (see Appendix 2). The following table demonstrates the results of their answers in which:

- (√) refers to a correct answer.
- (≈) refers to a partially correct answer.
- (Ø) refers to no answer.
- (X) refers to an incorrect answer.

	Answers									
	Q1: What does the title of the short story symbolise?			Q2: What events of the story are anticipated in the text?				Q3: What are the characteristics of Poe's writing revealed in the text?		
S1	√			√				≈		
S2	√			≈				√		
S3	X			≈				√		
S4	≈			≈				√		
S5	≈			X				√		
S6	≈			X				√		
S7	≈			X				≈		
S8	√			X				≈		
S9	√			Ø				√		
S10	√			X				≈		
S11	≈			X				≈		
S12	≈			X				≈		
S13	≈			X				≈		
S14	√			≈				≈		
S15	X			≈				≈		
S16	≈			≈				√		
S17	≈			≈				≈		
S18	√			≈				≈		
S19	√			≈				≈		
S20	√			≈				≈		
S21	≈			X				≈		
S22	≈			≈				X		
S23	X			X				≈		
S24	≈			≈				≈		
S25	≈			X				≈		
S26	≈			X				≈		
S27	√			Ø				≈		
S28	√			≈				X		
S29	≈			≈				≈		
S30	√			√				≈		
S31	√			√				≈		
Total **31**	√=**13**	≈=**15**	X=**03**	√=**03**	≈=**14**	X=**12**	Ø=**02**	√=**07**	≈=**22**	X=**02**

Table.9 Students' answers to the three comprehension questions

What is noticeable in the students' answers is that question 1 obtained a large number of correct and near correct answers. Put together, nearly half of the subjects answered the first question either with a correct or a partially correct answer. As

concerns Q3, most students answered with a partially correct answer (≈). However, question 2 seemed to be challenging to a certain degree since only three students were able to answer correctly whereas nearly half of them answered incorrectly or with a partially correct answer. These were justified as follows:

- Question 1 asked the students to infer the meaning of the title and the students succeeded in doing so either completely or moderately due to their recall of the events of the story and the key word in the title that symbolises the 'fall' at two levels. Therefore, they did not exercise much control in answering this question.
- Question 2; however, was concerned with the evaluation of the plot through the use of anticipation or 'foreshadowing' as student 2 answered. What is worth mentioning is the fact that most students were not able to answer this question due to either the absence of this strategy i.e. anticipation to deal with the text (except for few of them) or to their lack of knowledge about how to use it. This was deduced from an observable bewilderment from their part to what the question means and how to answer it. Therefore, there in an absence of knowledge of the task demand (TD) as well as how to implement it (SK).
- Question 3 was perceived to be fairly moderate in terms of difficulty but it revealed that students were able to retain what the teachers provided in the lesson and give it back in the form of items. What can be noticed is that they do not select for themselves the techniques that are emphasised by the writer but rather wait for the teacher to specify the devices to be dealt with. This was inferred from their answers where they gave even the characteristics of Poe's writing that are not in the text This implies that most students are not

independent readers since they rely on the teachers to guide them in the analysis of the text.

A sample of answers to the three questions is provided in Table 9 below:

Answers	Correct (√)	Partially correct (≈)	Incorrect (X)
Q1 (inferring)	It refers to both the fall of the house and the end of the family line.	Refers to the fall of the house / OR Refers to the death of the family.	The title symbolises evil, darkness, sadness and horror.
Q2 (analysis and evaluation of plot)	Death, confusion, illness, loneliness, emptiness of soul, there is some evil in the house, sad events, the fall of the house, mystery.	Gloomy climate, objects that foreshadow death and evil, the death of the friend (Usher), life is terrible in the house	Madness of Usher, gothic, the story begins with the arrival of the friend, description of the house, the death of the members.
Q3 (analysis and evaluation of style)	Romantic, gothic, use of symbols and imageries, reflection of sadness and mystery through language, negative connotations.	Style reflecting fear and gloominess, complicated style, melancholy, use of specific words.	Poe used adjective to achieve concreteness, Poe is too descriptive and uses many difficult words, the use of old style, he is interested in the state of mind, he uses many themes, he focuses on gothic events.

Table.10 Sample answers to the literary text comprehension questions.

4.2.2 Presentation and analysis of the students' questionnaire's data (Part II)

Part II of the students' questionnaire, as stated in the design chapter, highlights the theoretical side of the knowledge aspect in metacognition. It means that the

questionnaire addresses what students are aware of regarding the task; its purpose and demands as well as the strategies usually employed in reading the text. However, the strategies were not clearly stated in their answers to the fourth question in part II of the questionnaire (see Appendix 4, part II, Q4). They rather demonstrated the techniques they use when they analyse a text Part III of the questionnaire, which was related to the reading assignment and which involves them in controlling the process, enabled them to report the strategies employed. In fact, this is compatible with what comprehension monitoring theorists called for when dealing with metacognition in reading; that is, the use of actual texts in demonstrating the strategies rather then theorizing about them. (e.g. Baker and Brown, 1984).

Therefore, question 1 of the questionnaire investigated students' knowledge of the purpose of reading a literary text. What is remarkable in their answers is that students stated diverse purposes of reading literature which was reflected in the different approaches they used in their analysis of texts. The students' answers are revealed in the following table:

Purpose / Student	Ability to read between and beyond the text (to analyse it)	Evaluate the literary techniques	Improve literary vocabulary and vocabulary in general	Gather knowledge of different kinds (authors, styles, literatures)	Enrich culture	Develop reading habit and experience	Acquire and develop language and pronunciation	Change the way of thinking	Get involved in the text	Produce literary texts	Entertain
S1	+										
S2	+	+									
S3			+		+						
S4	+	+									
S5	+										
S6	+										
S7			+	+			+				
S8				+							
S9			+								
S10			+	+							
S11	+		+								
S12		+				+					
S13				+			+				
S14				+							+
S15	+									+	
S16	+										
S17								+			
S18						+					
S19	+		+								
S20				+			+				
S21				+							
S22									+		
S23									+		
S24				+							
S25			+	+							
S26				+							
S27	+										
S28	+					+	+				
S29			+	+		+	+				
S30				+							
S31				+	+						
Total	11	03	08	13	02	04	05	01	02	01	01

Table.11 Purposes for reading literary texts according to students (TP)

The point to consider in the answers is that many students (13/31) stated that the purpose of reading literature is to develop their knowledge in multiple ways, that is, knowledge about writers, styles, way of thinking, societies, literature in general and also civilisations. It seems that students are taking the text as a source of information. For instance, S8 wrote: ‘the purpose of reading a literary text is to take information

about the author'. S13, similarly, stated that the purpose is to 'have an idea about the literature in a country'; S20 thinks that the purpose is to 'know a new foreign style of literature'. Therefore, there appears to be a need for more cultural background knowledge for students to develop the ability to deal with a text in an analytical way.

The other purpose that was given prominence in the students' answers is the ability to read between and beyond the lines or the ability to analyse a text. Eleven students out of thirty one (11/31) stressed this goal in reading literary texts. What is significant in their answers is that students seem to have a vague idea of what the purpose of reading a literary work means. S1, for instance, explained that 'when I read a novel or story I make in my mind that the fact is more than simply written in that story, so I attempt to interpret the beyond lines of the events'. S16 noted that 'the purpose of reading a literary text in the literature classes is to analyse the text, it means, give details, decipher sentences…etc'. Therefore, it is noticed that there are multiple views among students as regards purpose which explains the way they consider and deal with the text.

Another purpose stressed by students is that of improving vocabulary be it literary or other. Eight students from the sample (08/31) stated this goal in reading literary texts. In fact, most of them combined this purpose with that of acquiring and developing language. This was pointed out by five students (05/31). S7, for example, commented that 'the purpose of reading a literary text is to ameliorate my English language with new words'. Concerning the other purposes mentioned by students, they are considered to be minor given the fact that four students only alluded to them. S17, S 15, S14 and S09 set the aims of reading literature as follows: to change the way of

thinking, to produce literary texts, to entertain and to develop imagination. However, one of the purposes commonly assumed to be of paramount importance in reading literary text, that of evaluating literary techniques, seems to be neglected by students since only three of them (03/31) set it as an aim in reading literature. This is quite surprising given that the usual activity the students are involved in in their literature classes is to focus on the literary techniques of the writer.

As far as the task knowledge component is concerned (i.e. knowledge of task demands), twenty two students (22/31) appear to be able to anticipate both the questions of the literature test and the ones related to the text in the reading task. The rate of the students' answers is displayed below:

	Students	YES	NO
Anticipation of the test questions	31	22	09
Anticipation of the text questions	31	21	10

Table. 12 Students' knowledge of task demands (TDs).

It appears quite clearly from their answers that most students can predict the questions to be asked in a literature exam, which indicates their knowledge of the task requirements. Nevertheless, this knowledge seems to be incongruent with that of knowledge of purpose since students did not give the evaluation of the literary technical devices sufficient importance. Only three students (03/31) mentioned it as one of their purposes in reading literary texts. This aim is the one that is reflected as the main requirement for reading literature and is given the lion's share of practice in the literature class. Consequently, what students set as a purpose for reading does not match the demands of the task. This brings us to the conclusion that there is a

mismatch between the elements of students' metacognitive knowledge. In other words, the students do not combine the knowledge aspects together when reflecting on the text.

As an illustration of the type of question anticipated by the students, the one that prevailed in their answers is that of 'analyse/ discuss the: characters, theme, plot, style, setting of the passage'. Some students even stated it clearly that the same question repeats itself year after year which demonstrates that questions are quite predictable for students. S4 observed: 'I anticipate the type of questions because a literary work needs analysing nothing more such as technical devices, point of view, setting…etc'. There seems to be a discrepancy between what students aim to do and what they think they ought to do. This is may be due to their misunderstanding of task purpose and task demands. Some students expressed plainly that one of the purposes of reading a literary text is to analyse the text. However, they are not aware of what analysis consists of.

Knowledge of strategies was reported after the students performed the reading task. They provided the examples of the strategies they usually employ when they answered part III of the questionnaire which is dealt with in the next section.

4.2.3 Presentation and analysis of the students' questionnaire's data (part III)

The third part of the students' questionnaire tackles the two remaining aspects of metacognitive control i.e. monitoring and regulation. Monitoring is the students' ability to detect their failures to understand the text and the nature of this difficulty.

Regulation addresses the way the students use and modify strategies to reach a better understanding of the text. Four questions were asked relating to monitoring regulation when reading the text and when answering the questions and to the strategies employed.

Concerning question 1 which asks the students whether they met difficulties in reading and answering the questions, the results are reported in Table 12 below:

	Students	YES	NO
Difficulty when reading the text	31	23	08
Difficulty when answering the questions	31	15	16

Table.13 Number of students who monitor the reading process.

It can be observed that most students; 23 out of 31, stated having difficulties when reading the text whereas the number of students who faced troubles answering the questions is 15 out of 31 students. Detection of failures in reading implies that the process of reading is under control. Therefore, it can be concluded that the majority of students monitor the process of reading.

However, detecting failures is not the only condition for monitoring to take place as the problem perceived has to be at the level of the demands and the purpose of the task itself. For example, if the student is asked to analyse a literary passage in which he is supposed to achieve a higher understanding by reading not just the lines but between and beyond, it would be inefficient to read locally and thus superficially. For this reason, the sort of failure the students encountered has to be pinpointed as well. In Table 13 below the type of difficulties the students reported to have when reading and answering the questions are displayed.

Difficulty / Students	Difficult words	Lack of background knowledge	Difficulty in finding the right connotation	Complicated language and style (use of symbols)	Understanding the writer's meaning
23	21 instances	1 instance	2 instances	4 instances	1 instance
100%	91%	4%	8%	17%	4%

Table.14 Students reported difficulties in reading the text.

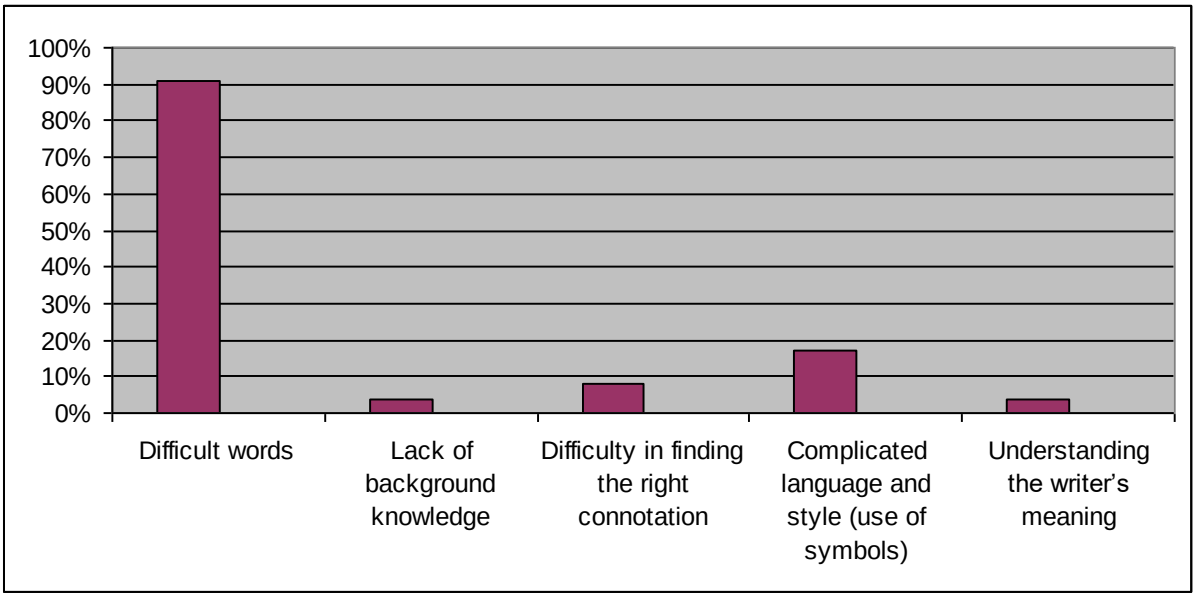

Diagram.3 Students' reported difficulties in reading the literary text

Table13 displays the kind of difficulties prevalent in students' questionnaire as concerns monitoring. The difficulty the majority of the subjects (21/23) mentioned is difficult words when reading the text. The second involves the complex style and language such as the use of literary symbols. The third obstacle in their reading is of finding the appropriate implied meaning of the words as S22 commented 'it is somehow difficult because it contains a lot of difficult words and may be they carry indirect meaning'. Lack of background knowledge along with understanding the writer's meaning were minor obstacles in reading for students.

Although it seems obvious that the style used by the author is somehow challenging and any reader would struggle to understand it, the case of these subjects is different. The have already studied the short story in depth and analysed most of its part in the first year of the literature course. Yet, they appear to be still bound to the understanding of words. This lexical problem stands as a major obstacle when reading to the point that other problems seem to be insignificant such as lack of background knowledge, inability to read between and beyond the lines, lack of knowledge about how to interpret a text that has already been studied in class.

The students have used different strategies to regulate their reading. They reported them in the questionnaire whose third part dealt with regulation as Table 15 below describes these strategies:

(+) the strategies mentioned
(−) absence of strategy

Strategies / Students	Concentrate when reading	Skip to the next events	Use the context then the dictionary	Use context only	Always Use dictionary	Improve reading	Understand the whole meaning	Read the whole sentence	Try to remember	Re-reading
S1	+									
S8	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−
S9							+			+
S10		+								
S11	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−
S12	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−
S13			+							
S14				+						
S15					+	+				
S17							+			
S18					+			+		
S19							+			
S20					+					
S21										+
S22										+
S23							+			
S24									+	
S25	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−
S26					+					
S27				+						
S28	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−
S29	+									
S30			+							
Total	02	01	02	02	04	01	04	01	01	03

Table.15 Strategies used by the students for regulation.

What is noteworthy is that eighteen students out of the twenty three (18/23) who stated having difficulties tried to monitor their reading and to regulate their failures to understand in different ways. Four of students (S15, S18, S20, and S26) resorted to the dictionary immediately as a solution to understand the difficult words whereas other

four students (S09, S17, S19, and S23) noted that they tried to understand the whole meaning of the text. According to researchers' classification of successful readers and unsuccessful ones (e.g. Hosenfeld, In Alderson and Urquhart, 1984), the students who turn to the glossary immediately for difficult words are characterised as 'unsuccessful readers' while those who skip inessential words and read globally are 'successful readers' and this seems to be the case of the subjects described above.

Only one student (S10) regulated the reading process through skipping to the next event and two subjects (S14 and S27) used the context to understand which can be described as effective strategies according to previous researches (Hosenfeld, ibid). The remaining strategies are either ineffective or irrelevant. For instance, to improve reading as well as concentration on the text are effective strategies for reading in general but not for the reading task at hand. Therefore, there appears to be a significant reliance on the part of students on the text to extract meaning and lack of self-control when comprehension breakdowns occur.

4.3 Comparison between the teachers' questionnaire and the students'

4.3.1 Task purpose (TP)

Metacognitive knowledge of both teachers and students as concerns task purpose is compared in this section. Four common purposes were identified in the data. Table 15 below demonstrates these purposes and their rate among respondents:

	Improve vocabulary	Develop culture	Analyse and interpret	Develop language proficiency
Teachers	20%	20%	40%	20%
Students	25%	6%	35%	16%

Table.16 Comparison between students' and teachers purposes in reading the literary text.

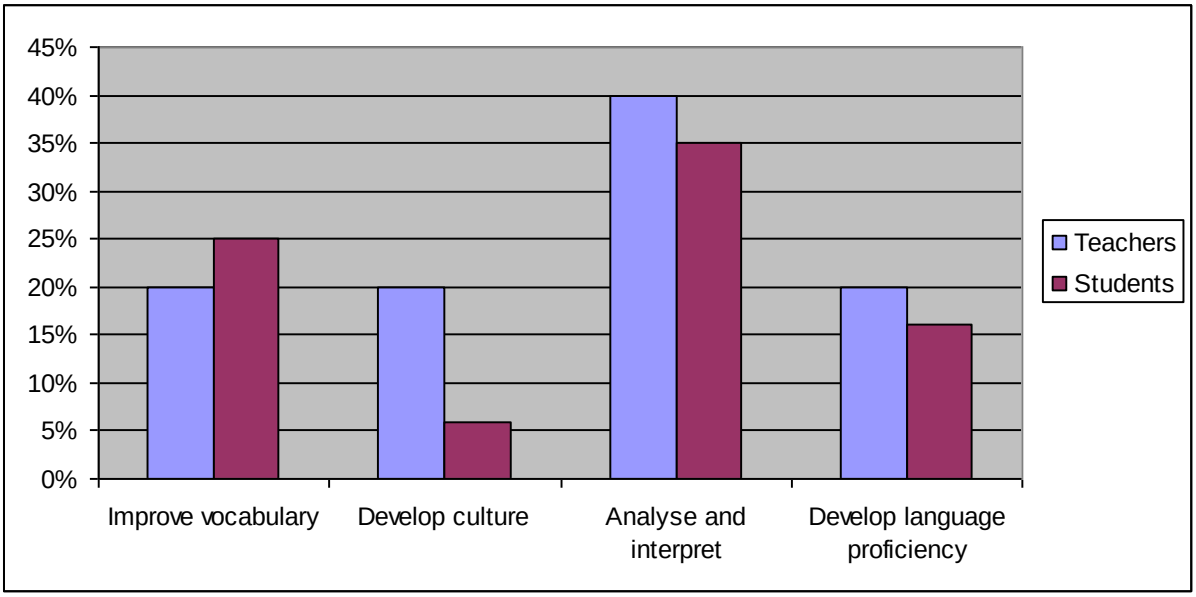

Diagram.4 Comparison between the teachers' task purposes and the students'.

The fact that there is a significant correlation of three purposes i.e. improve vocabulary, analyse and interpret, and develop language proficiency shows that the students are aware, to some extent, of the aim behind reading a literary text and assign similar goals to this task as their teachers do.

4.3.2 Task demands (TDs)

As for task demands, the second component of metacognitive knowledge, there was a significant difference between what teachers emphasise and what students think are required to do. While the teachers highlighted knowledge of different kinds to deal

with the literary text such as cultural background knowledge, discrimination between literary genres and levels of reading, the students seem to be restrained to the teachers' demands rather than the tasks'. The majority of students observed that the task demand is always the same, that is, they have only to analyse and discuss the literary devices selected by the teacher. Consequently, knowledge of task demands appears to be either unclear for students or thought to be so clear that it is not given the necessary attention.

4.3.3 Strategic knowledge and regulation (SK)

As for this sub component of metacognition related to knowledge and regulation respectively, five strategies seem to be common among both teachers and students. Yet, the way they are used differs. The strategies reflecting the way the reading process is regulated from students and teachers standpoints is displayed below with varying degrees of correlation.

	Skip when failure to understand occurs	Reread	Use the dictionary	Concentration	The practice of reading
Teachers	02 instances	02 instances	01 instance	01 instance	01 instance
Students	01 instance	03 instances	04 instances	02 instances	01 instance

Table. 17 Comparison of the strategic knowledge and regulation used by teachers and students.

Despite the fact that the teachers provided other strategies specific to the reading of literary text like paraphrasing and analysing, the ones mentioned in table 16 were dominant in the students' questionnaires. Although the strategies are said to be

effective, they are used inappropriately. For example, using the dictionary was mentioned by teacher 2 as a strategy in reading but ‘when dealing with the text deeply’ in the second or third reading and when checking the words becomes a real necessity. Nevertheless, four students out of the eighteen students who reported that they monitor and regulate their reading resort to the dictionary immediately.

What is worth mentioning at this point of the discussion is that whereas teachers emphasised the strategies that need to be used in reading at higher levels such as the use of stylistics, use of key words to find the theme, paraphrasing, analysing and circumscribing the text in a given context were not touched upon by students. Therefore, there is a discrepancy between the expected processing of literary texts by teachers and the actual processing of students and this is mainly due to either lack of knowledge of the strategies that must be employed in reading literary text as opposed to the ones employed in general reading or to their lack of knowledge about how to use them effectively.

4.4 Comparison between students’ level in reading, their answers to the questions and their metacogniton (a sample of three readers)

In this part of the analysis, a comparison is made between the students’ level of reading competence according to the marks obtained in literature modules, to their answers to the reading task and to their metacognitive knowledge and control. To be representive of the group sample, the comparison involves a good, an average and a weak student. S2 who obtained above 13.75/20 in both literature exams and answered the questions fairly well is called a ‘good’ achiever. S10 is considered an ‘average’

reader according to his mark: 10.5/20 and to the answers which were partly right. While student 21 is a weak reader since his mark is 08.87/20 and his answers to the reading text questions were superficial. This information is displayed in Table 17 below.

	Marks obtained in literature modules	Answers to reading task questions			Metacognitive knowledge		Metacognitive control	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Task Knowledge	Strategic Knowledge	Monitoring	Regulation
S2	13.75	√	≈	√	-TP: to analyse and read Beyond the lines -TD: to discuss and analyse the devices.	Ø	Ø	Ø
S10	10.5	√	X	≈	-TP: to be familiar with the vocabulary and style of the author. -TD: analyse the text	-Skip to the next event	-Difficult words	-Skip
S21	8.87	≈	X	≈	-TP: to have an idea about the author's environment and way of thinking TD: Ø	-Rereading -Use the dictionary	-Difficulty with words and in understanding the writer's meaning	-Read twice then use the dictionary

Table.18 Comparison between students' levels in reading literary texts and their metacognition (a sample of three readers).

The examples in the above table show that:

- The good reader (S2) seems to know well enough what the task purpose and the demands are since she made a clear statement of the purpose and anticipated the task questions. Obviously, the subject did not monitor the process of reading because she did not detect failures as she explained 'I was immediately absorbed, I imagined the situation and it was easy because the words are simple and it reminded me of some movies so I understood'. This indicates that the subject's processing was smooth and she did not need to make efforts to understand; so, she did not monitor the reading process or mention any strategies.
- The average reader (S10) stated a purpose for reading the literary text but not that of analysing; the purpose, according to this student, was to get familiar with the vocabulary and to know the different styles used by different authors. But, the student did anticipate the task demand (the analysis of the text) which reflects this subject's task knowledge. Yet it is worth noting that his task demand is incongruent with his task purpose. As far as monitoring is concerned, S10 stated that he encountered vocabulary problems (which is a reason for monitoring) and the strategy he selected to remedy the problem deserves considering. He commented: 'I passed just to see what the next event is' which is a rather effective strategy since the student focuses on understanding ideas rather than single words. Hence, the subjects' problem appears to be at the knowledge level of metacognition, not at the control level.
- The poor reader (S21) mentioned that the purpose of reading a literary text is that of acquiring knowledge about the author, his environment and his way of

thinking. She did not anticipate the questions; consequently, she did not know what the demands are. Moreover, the difficulties detected are at the language level. Although she mentioned rereading (which is an effective strategy), she did not use it to guess the meaning of words but she used the dictionary afterwards. Therefore, for this poor student both knowledge and regulation of metacognition are problematic.

4.5 Discussion of results

This research was intended to explore the relationship between metacognition and reading literary texts and since metacognition comprises both knowledge and control, two sub research questions were put forward:

RQ: What is the relationship between metacognition and students' reading of literary texts?

(a) What is the relationship between metacognitive knowledge and students' reading of literary texts?

(b) What is the relationship between students' metacognitive control and students' reading of literary texts?

Research question (a) sought to investigate metacognitive knowledge in relation to two main aspects, knowledge of task purpose and knowledge of task demands. For this purpose, a three part questionnaire was used in the study addressing students and teachers to investigate the presence or absence of this knowledge. Research question (b) targeted students' monitoring and regulation in metacognition. As a second tool, a reading task made of a text followed by inferential and evaluative questions to uncover

the notions in question was used. The results of the reading task and the questionnaire were presented in the previous section and revealed that the reading process of the students is rather problematic, they showed that:

- Metacognitive knowledge is present along with its components in the processing of poor readers. However, there is a mismatch between these elements of knowledge. For example, weak readers knew about the task purpose but this was not reflected in the strategies they used to deal with the text.
- Metacognitive control is also present in the processing of poor readers but it is only at one level. The students were able to detect their failures when reading; yet, they did not regulate the process in an effective way. In other words, the students did not resort to the appropriate and efficient strategies.
- Average readers exercise half of their metacogntition when reading. They do know about the task, its purpose, its demands and the strategies to use but do not monitor the process well i.e. they do not utilize alternative useful strategies.
- Good readers seem to display a better metacognititve state. They have the knowledge needed on the task and how to implement it and the strategies to employ, they do detect the appropriate problems and they regulate the process successfully which lead to effective reading.

4.5.1 The relationship between metacognitive knowledge and reading literary text

According to the results presented earlier, the students revealed lack of awareness of the reading process; its purpose and demands. They also showed that they do not reflect on their processing of print be it reading in general or reading specific texts. As for the purpose of reading a literary text, the majority of students think that the aim is to gather information of different kinds, of author, of environment, of style, etc. In addition, a minority of students attribute to reading the literary text the purpose of analysing and interpretation, yet, with an apparent misunderstanding of the word 'analysis' since they distinguished between the evaluation of literary techniques and analysing a text. It is self-evident that the analysis of literary texts includes the evaluation of the literary techniques. This implies that some students seem to have a vague awareness of the aim of reading literary texts and also seem to confuse between task purpose and task demands.

As a matter of fact, these two aspects of task knowledge are closely related and one completes the other. If the goal of the task is clear, its requirements are clear too (Wenden, 2001). This was not the case of students' answers as they stated a task purpose which is at odds with the demands of the task. For example, according to many students the purpose of reading a literary text is to collect information from the text about the author, his style and his country. It is clear that a literary text offers more than mere information; it can be the object of a critical analysis as some students noted. Although the information they gain from the text is necessary, it can only serve as background knowledge rather than be an aim in itself.

Likewise, the students' perception of the task demands was also inaccurate. This was pointed out by previous research in this area (Smith, 1967. In Armbruster, 1983). He demonstrated that the procedures readers adopt when reading depend largely on the purpose they set. The research revealed that 'good readers report that they adjust the procedures they use according to purpose'. In the case of third year students under study, the procedure followed was that of analysing the text and it seemed evident to all students that reading a literary text requires an analysis; nevertheless, for the majority that task purpose was to gather information from the text. Eventually, it appears from the results come out with that there is a close relationship between metacognitive knowledge and reading. However, this knowledge needs to be adjusted to the type of text to be read since it is a literary text. The elements of this knowledge work hand in hand, and there is a risk of failure in processing if they are not linked together.

In short, it was remarkable that the few good readers as they were in the sample of the study benefited from the metacognitive knowledge they possessed about the task. They knew that the task was subject to a literary analysis, that the demands are that of reading critically. Therefore, they used the strategies appropriate to the task i.e. analysing and interpreting. They were able to read smoothly given that no failure was detected. Hence, they demonstrated the effect of metacognitive knowledge on their successful reading.

4.5.2 The relationship between metacognitive control and reading literary text

As far as research question (b) is concerned, it attempted to sort out the relationship that might exist between metacognitive control and reading of literary texts. According to the results obtained from the research tools and more specifically from the reading task and part III of the questionnaire, the students revealed some difficulties encountered and the actions they took in order to work them out. The students were divided into categories according to their processing and strategies:

- Students who did not find difficulties in reading the text and thus did not need to report on how they solved them.
- Students who had difficulties with the text and who represent the majority of the subjects. They found that the vocabulary was challenging; however, one must take into account that the text was dealt with in depth before the study and any difficulty was expected to arise at the level of analysis and interpretation and not at word level. However, difficult words and language received the highest rates in students' answers while lack of background knowledge and inability to interpret received the least. Therefore, it appears that most students are characterized to be local readers who are still bound to bottom up processing even when they are asked to read critically.
- Some of the students who detected their own failures made attempts to solve them which is a sign of regulation; unexpectedly, the strategies selected to do so were not modified and the students used the same strategy to monitor and to regulate. For example, some subjects stated that they used the dictionary, others

reread the parts not understood, and some read the whole sentence or used context so as to achieve a better understanding of the word. Yet, when the strategy failed, the student kept using it without any attempt to alter the process employing other techniques like skipping in case the word is not important.

Hence, the comprehension monitoring process seems to have been defective in this case since the strategies were employed to solve language problems mainly and no control was exercised over the process to serve its real aim. Previous research in comprehension monitoring and particularly in Think Aloud studies have shown that good readers used a wide range of comprehension strategies as stated in the quote:

> Good comprehenders use a wide range of other reading comprehension strategies while they read, even if they have no trouble understanding. In fact, more than 150 different strategies have been identified at one time or another. The most frequently used strategies include generating and asking questions about the text, activating background knowledge, searching for specific information, summarizing or paraphrasing while reading and making predictions. (Rosenshine and Meister, 1994; Hansen and Pearson, 1983; Fehrenbach, 1991; Lundberg, 1987; Pritchard, 1990; Olshavsky, 1976-1977. In Cromley, 2006:194-195)

Unfortunately none of the strategies mentioned in this research was used by students. Rather, when the students were asked to anticipate the events of the story in the reading task, the majority were not able to do so because they stated they did not know this strategy although it is an efficient technique that helps in hypotheses building and testing. What was striking as well is that none of the students reported to find difficulty in anticipation although they were asked to state the problems encountered in reading and in answering the questions. Consequently, there is a serious lack of knowledge

(declarative and procedural) about the effective strategies to be used in reading a literary text and absence of executive control over the reading process. This proves that metacognitive control is essential in reading since detecting one's failure and regulating them properly help to overcome reading problems enhance reading efficiency.

To summarise, researchers in the field of metacognition in reading stressed that all the elements of metacognitive knowledge and control interact in a way that insures efficient reading. According to Alderson (2000): 'Readers alter their cognitive reading strategies based on the purpose of the task and the task demands' (In El-Koumy, 2004). Hence, they implicitly call for training students in using their metacognition in general and metacognitive strategies in particular in order to process the text effectively whatever its type. This point is tackled in the next chapter of this research.

Chapter Five
Pedagogical Implications

5. Pedagogical implications

The results of this study confirm the importance of metacognition in reading and that it is a vital variable that can affect comprehension considerably. Metacognitive knowledge and control were seen, indeed, to have a close relationship with reading at a high level particularly reading literature. For this reason, some measures need to be taken in reading classes for first year students and in literature classes in the following years to clarify the reading process, its demands and the best ways students can control it. The aim is to raise students' awareness of the learning tasks in reading and to fulfil them successfully and thus make students autonomous readers and strategic learners. Therefore, a number of actions can be taken into account in teaching reading involving both teachers' and students'. The concern of this section is to present models of strategies useful for reading in general and reading specific texts.

5.1 Methods of teaching metacognitive knowledge

These methods refer to instruction of reading strategies or teaching students what techniques to use and how to use them in order to facilitate reading. Many researchers advocate strategy instruction, including metacognitive strategies, to improve the reading process (e.g., Cohen, 1998; Gersten et al., 1997; Nunan, 1997; Pressley and El-Dinary, 1997; Swanson and De La Paz, 1998; Williams, 2000. In El-Koumy, 2004). The underlying principle of strategy instruction is that it can help develop readers capable of controlling their own processing of print. An example of these instructions is: the embedded strategies instruction which involves Reciprocal Teaching.

5.1.1 Embedded Strategy Instruction: Reciprocal Teaching

It is to teach an effective reading strategy within the context of reading and not in isolation. It consists of raising students' awareness of the strategy, when, how and why to use it in a specific reading task thus tapping into their declarative, procedural and conditional knowledge of the technique which is a prerequisite condition in strategy use. It was recommended by theoreticians in the field (e.g., Carrell et al., 1998; Chamot and Rubin, 1994; Graham, 1997; Hattie et al., 1996; Janzen and Stoller, 1998. In El Koumy, ibid) to employ the embedding strategy instruction in reading context because 'if strategy training is carried out in a metacognitive, self-regulative context, in connection with specific content rather than generalized skills…positive results are much more likely' (Hattie et al., 1996. In ibid). Among the embedded strategy instruction methods is reciprocal teaching.

This method was developed by Palincsar and Brown (1984, 1986). It focuses on four major strategies proved to be effective in reading which are predicting, generating questions, clarifying and summarizing. The way this strategy is implemented consists of the teachers modelling the strategies to the students who take turns to model the strategies themselves while discussing a portion of the text together. Palincsar et al. (1984) describes the procedure as follows:

> In reciprocal teaching, teachers and students take turns leading a dialogue about the meaning of the text with which they are working. The discussion focuses on (1) generating questions from the text, (2) summarizing the text, (3) clarifying portions that impair understanding, and (4) predicting upcoming content. (In El Koumy, 2004)

Thus, this procedure of reciprocal teaching seems to be appropriate for reading specific types of texts since it involves the strategies required to understand at higher levels like questioning and predicting. In addition, students can interact with the text and this interaction turns the text into a living entity. Figure.1 provides examples of prompts to elicit the strategy in a general way.

Reciprocal Teaching Strategies for Reading:

English: Reading Strategies

Strategy Name:	**Prompts to elicit the strategy**
Use what you know	I remember……..
Summarize	This is about……
Ask and clarify	Where….? Who….? When….? What happened….? Why….? How do you know….? What's the reason….? What does it mean….? What would have happened if….?
Predict	I think what's going to happen is….?

Adapted from Palincsar and Brown (1984). "Reciprocal Teaching of Comprehension-fostering and Comprehension-monitoring Activities". *Cognition and Instruction*, 1, 117-175.

Figure.1 Reciprocal Teaching Strategies for reading.

5.1.2 The Metacognitive Model

The individual strategies of the metacognitive model were developed by specialists and researchers in the area of learning strategies (Chamot and Kupper, 1989; Chamot et al., 1993; Chamot et al., 1996; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; O'Malley at al., 1985a. In Chamot et al., 1999). It includes a wide range of effective strategies that are usually employed by successful learners. They can be applied with various learning tasks- reading, listening, writing, and speaking- as well as for vocabulary and content information retention. The model consists of four metacognitive processes:

- Planning
- Monitoring
- Problem solving
- Evaluating

For each process of the metacognitive model some strategies are listed. This description incorporates a definition of the strategy, an example of how the strategy can be used, and an explanation of why and when the strategy is useful. Some examples of the individual strategies are provided in what follows according to their description in Chamot et al. (1991):

Planning strategies: they consist of the actions taken for reflection before performing the task. In fact, they are the first step toward becoming 'a self-regulated learner'.

Planning strategy 1: Set goals (What is my goal for this task? What do I want to be able to do?)

Definition: goal setting involves understanding the task and deciding what you should get out of it.

Example: if you are going to see a video of a reporter interviewing people about a social issue, your goal might be to understand each person's opinion.

Why: Identifying your purpose gives you direction and allows you to plan appropriate and effective strategies.

When: for all types of tasks.

Planning strategy 2: Activate background knowledge (What do I already know about this?)

Definition: Activating background knowledge helps bring to mind information that you know about the topic, the world, and the language to help you to do the task.

Example: If you are asked to read a fairy tale in the target language, think about what you know about the typical characters, settings, and plots used in fairy tales.

Why: Thinking about what you already know helps you get ready for the task by familiarizing yourself with it. By having in mind what you already know, you will find it easier to understand and learn new information by relating it to your background knowledge.

When: Whenever you know what the topic is and you have adequate knowledge of the topic or of related information; whenever new information comes up in the task.

Monitoring Strategies: they consist of the learners' measuring of the actions adopted for their efficiency and to adjust and modify them if ineffective.

Monitoring strategy 1: Ask if it makes sense (Do I understand this? Am I making sense?)

Definition: This strategy involves checking your understanding by asking yourself, “Is this making sense to me?” or checking your clarity by asking yourself, “Am I making sense?”

Example: As you are reading a story, periodically ask yourself if you understand what is happening.

Why: Asking yourself if everything makes sense helps you to keep track of how you are doing and to identify problems.

When: For all types of tasks, especially more challenging ones.

Monitoring strategy 2: Selectively attend (What parts should I pay attention to? Is this information important?

Definition: Selective attention involves choosing to focus on specific aspects of language or situational details that will help you perform the task.

Example: If you have to read a train schedule to get to your destination, you might choose to focus on finding departure times and platform numbers.

Why: Deciding to focus on specific information makes it easier to identify the critical information for your goal because you can give it full concentration and ignore distractions. You can also choose to focus on information you know to help you understand and communicate better. Focusing on information you do not know can help you pinpoint problems and expand your learning.

When: Useful for a variety of tasks, especially if your goal requires you to understand and give specific information.

Problem Solving Strategies: These are used to find out the alternative solutions for the problems encountered in the implementation of the task.

Problem solving strategy 1: Inference (Can I guess what this might mean?)

Definition: Inferencing involves guessing the meaning of unfamiliar language based on what you know, the content, the language, and other contextual clues (for example, nonverbal cues and pictures)

Example: You are reading a dialogue about school, and you repeatedly see the word meaning 'to study', which is not familiar to you. Based on your knowledge of the language, you figure out that this word is probably a verb. Many of the words in close proximity to the unknown word are cognates such as mathematics, literature, biology, and music. Based on this information, you make a guess that the word must mean 'to study'.

Why: Often, the information you need to solve problems is already available if you just look at other parts of the task and at your own resources. Drawing inferences can help you quickly solve problems yourself without having to go to another person or reference materials.

When: When something does not make sense to you; when necessary context is available.

Problem solving strategy 2: Use resources (What information do I need? Where can I find more information about this?)

Definition: This strategy involves your using reference materials such as dictionaries, textbooks, computer programs, CD-ROMs, and the Internet.

Example: If you get confused when reading a novel and you notice an unfamiliar verb structure, you could look in your textbook index to locate information on the structure.

Why: Looking up unfamiliar information in a reference source can help you solve complex problems, especially if no one is available to help you.

When: When something crucial does not make sense to you or you do not know how to say something that is crucial to your message.

Evaluating Strategies: These involve the learner in reflecting on and assessing the actions chosen for their effectiveness and to improve the strategies selected.

Evaluating strategy 1: Check goals (Did I meet my goal?)

Definition: This strategy involves deciding whether you met your goal for the task.

Example: If you are writing a letter, reread it to see if it communicates the information you wanted to share.

Why: Asking yourself, "Did I accomplish what I set to do?" should help you decide whether you need to go back and rephrase, add additional information, reread a text, or ask for more information.

When: At the end of a task or whenever you are not sure how well you are meeting your goal.

Evaluating strategy 2: Evaluate your strategies (Did I choose good strategies? What could I do differently next time?)

Definition: Evaluating your strategies involves judging how well you applied the strategies to the task, judging how effective and appropriate your strategies were for that particular task, identifying why a strategy was helpful or not-so-helpful for the task, comparing the usefulness of various strategies on the same task, and thinking about better strategies you could have used.

Example: If you made predictions based on your knowledge of Japanese foods, but you still did not understand a restaurant video, think about why predicting did not help. May be your knowledge of Japanese foods is more limited than you thought, and your predictions were incorrect.

Why: Assessing strategies use helps you decide when certain strategies work best so you can choose appropriate strategies in the future.

When: For all types of tasks.

All in all, the strategies of this model were purposefully selected and illustrated as they are perceived to fit in performing reading tasks in general and reading literary texts in particular. The rationale for suggesting this model is also to raise students' awareness of the importance of setting goals in reading and activating background knowledge, detecting the difficulties one meets when reading and making attempts to solve them by using effective techniques like inferring and questioning the ideas of the text, as well as assessing one's processing for understanding on the one hand and for the efficacy of the strategies employed on the other.

As for reading literature, little research was conducted in this respect. Although some researchers (Culler et al., 1975. In Alderson and Bachman, 2000) stressed the need for a literary competence for readers to process a literary text more effectively, the components of these competence are still unclear. The best approaches required to read literature have not come to light yet. However, attempts were made by literature teachers themselves in FL contexts to try methods of their own to make the literature class more interactive and productive and readers more autonomous. These teachers

developed new approaches to adopt in literature classes; yet their endeavours were not concerned with investigating the reading process. For example, Baurain (2007) developed a small group framework called ‘multitasking’. It consists of the students working cooperatively in groups. The groups have a variety of tasks to perform in an American literature class of about 100 students. The multitasking task categories are as follows according to the teachers’ description:

1. Study

Groups work to answer study questions requiring them to examine a text for key meanings and themes.

2. Teach

Groups prepare a reading activity or partial lesson to help classmates understand a text. For example, they might design a vocabulary exercise or pre-reading warm-up. I asked them to design a reading activity rather than a literature activity because they had more experience in that subject.

3. Artistic

Groups interact creatively with a reading to help it come alive for the class, for example, by drawing, doing an oral interpretation, or practicing a brief role-play or drama.

4. Meta

Groups compare and contrast perspectives and issues within a reading, or themes and viewpoints between two or more authors or two or more historical-cultural settings.

5. Respond

Groups give personal responses as part of the interpretive process, for example, by creating a group 'dialogue journal' or holding a debate on an issue from a reading.

6. Write

Groups discuss a potential exam essay question, then work individually to write well developed paragraphs or brief essays answering the question.

Since the framework was implemented in a FL literature large class, it can be applied in the Algerian context. Multitasking involves a range of useful tasks that engage the reader in different activities such as preparation which can reflect the planning stage of metacognition. Furthermore, a number of strategies suitable for reading literature are included in this framework like comparing, contrasting and interpreting. Thus, multitasking does not only make reading the literary text interactive and enjoyable but also develops in readers the notion of autonomy. Thus, the attempts made by the FL teachers prove the need for a framework that includes the effective strategies to read and appreciate literature better.

Conclusion

6. Conclusion

The present study was concerned with investigating the role of metacognition in reading literary texts. Metacognition is a construct which covers both notions of knowledge and control of one's cognitive processes in learning in general. This was applied to reading literary text for the purpose of the present investigation. As regards metacognitive knowledge, two main components were examined: knowledge of task and knowledge of strategies in students' reading of literary text. As concerns metacognitive control, two aspects were highlighted: monitoring which refers to the students' detection of their own failures when reading, and regulation which engages the students in strategy modification and process adjustment.

The subjects selected to achieve this aim were third year students enrolled in the English degree course of the English department, University of Algiers. They were selected on the basis of the marks they obtained in literature modules in the second year. As for the tools employed in the study, a questionnaire designed for teachers and one for students as well as a reading task were used. The three part questionnaire aimed at both collecting data from teachers on the students' metacognitive knowledge and control as well as from the students themselves. Part I of the students' questionnaire targeted general information about students like age and marks, Part II investigated students' metacognitive knowledge comprising task knowledge and strategy knowledge whereas part III was closely related to the reading task and examined metacognitive control. The aim of the teachers' questionnaire was to obtain information on the students' abilities in reading literature from the teachers themselves. A comparison was made between the students' knowledge of the purpose,

the demands and the techniques that are specific to the task of reading a piece of literature, the teachers' views on these aspects of students' metacognition and the reading task.

The analysis and triangulation of the data gathered through these instruments revealed that most students have an average level in terms of reading literary texts. Their metacognitive knowledge of the purpose of reading seems to be blurred since they stated various aims which do not reflect the demands of the task. For instance, although the majority of students agreed that the demand of reading a literary text is evidently the analysis of the text, the strategies used were not specific to analysis; the students exhibited the techniques to understand the literal meaning chiefly such as using the dictionary. This deficient knowledge seems to have affected the whole process of reading the literary text.

6.1 Metacognitive Knowledge

As it is demonstrated in this research, knowledge of the reading process comprising awareness about the reading task, its purpose and requirements along with the effective strategies is crucial in processing print at a high level of understanding. The elements of this knowledge component of metacognition are interrelated and complementary. Knowledge of task purpose alone, for instance, is insufficient when dealing with the text. Knowledge of task and strategies is also prerequisite for achieving comprehension successfully, particularly when the task requires strategic processing. In addition, these aspects of knowledge, if available for readers, need to be clearly stated and matched together so that the task is handled smoothly.

As far as metacognitive control is concerned, the students monitored their reading process through detecting their own failures to understand. As regards regulation, one could see that they are local readers, often relying on BU strategies like using the dictionary to understand every single word. This underscores a misunderstanding of the purpose of reading literary text, and which takes them away from analysis and interpretation, the ultimate goal of reading a text. Few students resorted to effective strategies like rereading and using the context to understand the language. Surprisingly, no subject mentioned the strategies used to read critically like questioning the ideas of the author, inferring, paraphrasing, and anticipating which demonstrates their lack of knowledge and control over the reading process.

6.2 Metacognitve Control

At the control level in metacognition, the reader is supposed to find out and deal with the failures of understanding effectively. The breakdowns encountered and the regulative measures taken to adjust the process need to be congruent with the level of reading. For example, if the text requires anticipating and inferring from the part of the reader, it is inappropriate to deal with it at the language level. Thus, the process ought to be controlled according to level of reading. The two aspects of metacognitive control work together i.e. understanding successfully fails if the reader, for instance, detects the failures but do not use alternative strategies to alter the process of reading.

This study provided but a glimpse of the way students process a literary text as more comprehension questions could have been asked to students, which could have revealed more on their reading process. Ultimately, the research calls for metacognitive strategy instruction in general reading and most importantly, in reading literature through the methods suggested

in the previous section. This may pave the way to better strategic reading practices. In fact, the study did not cover all the metacognitive notions like knowledge about self and knowledge about text in relation to reading and which are crucial in any learning task and in reading particularly. However, it encourages further research on the areas that are of direct relevance to what happens in the readers' mind when exposed to a text be it literary or other. The problems detected regarding students' metacognitive state in reading involve knowledge of process in terms of the task itself and the strategies along with the control exercised on this process as requisite elements in but one variable in reading research: metacognition.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: The Reading Text

THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER

Son Coeur est un luth suspendu ;
Sitôt qu'on le touche il résonne.

De Béranger

During the whole of a dull, dark and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country, and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher. I know not how it was- but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half-pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible. I looked upon the scene before me-upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain- upon the bleak walls- upon the vacant eye-like windows- upon a few rank sedges – and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees- with an utter depression of soul which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the after-dream of the reveller upon opium-the bitter lapse into everyday life- the hideous dropping off of the veil. There was an iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart- an unredeemed dreariness of thought which no goading of the imagination could torture into aught of the sublime. What was it- I paused to think - what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble; nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded upon me as I pondered. I was forced to fall back upon the unsatisfactory conclusion, that while, beyond doubt, there *are* combinations of very simple natural objects which have the power of thus affecting us, still the analysis of this power lies among considerations beyond our depth. It was impossible, I reflected, that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene, of the details of the picture, would be sufficient to modify, or perhaps to annihilate its capacity for sorrowful impression; and, acting upon this idea, I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled lustre by the dwelling, and gazed down- but with a shudder even more thrilling than before- upon the remodeled and inverted images of the grey sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant eye-like windows.

Edgar Allan Poe

Appendix 2: Comprehension questions

1. What does the title of the short story symbolize?

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2. What events of the story are anticipated in the text?

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3. What are the characteristics of Poe's writing that are revealed in the text?

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Appendix 3: The teachers' questionnaire

Dear teacher,

This questionnaire serves to conduct a study on reading literary text and your valuable answers will be of enormous use. Could you please answer the following questions. Thank you very much.

1. How do you qualify your students' reading of literary texts? (Tick you answer)

Good □ Average □ Weak □

Justify your answer:.....

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2. If you have qualified your students reading of literary text as 'weak', what is this weakness due to in your opinion? (i.e. what are the reasons for students' weaknesses in reading literary texts?).

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3. What is the purpose of reading a literary text?

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4. What must students know already before reading a literary text for a critical analysis?

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5. What are the techniques that must be used to read a literary text effectively?

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6. What do you consider as an ‘acceptable’ difficulty in your students’ reading of literary text?

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7. How do you expect your students' to cope with these difficulties?

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Appendix4: The students' questionnaire Part 1

Dear student,

This questionnaire is meant to collect information for a research project on reading literature. Could you please answer both parts of the questionnaire as honestly as possible. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

- **Student's name:**
- **Age:**
- **Sex:**
- **Mark obtained in the American literature module in the 2nd year of licence:**
- **Mark obtained in the English literature module in the 2nd year of licence:**
- **Are you repeating the year: Yes □ No□**

Part II

1. What do you think is the purpose of reading a literary text in your literature classes?

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2. Do you anticipate the type of questions you will have to answer for an American literature test? Yes□ No□

If yes, give examples of such questions:

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3. Did you anticipate the questions you will have to answer about this text? Yes□ No□

If yes, what are these questions?

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4. How do you usually deal with the literature test questions especially if you are asked to analyse a passage?

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Part III

5. (a) Did you find any difficulty in reading the text? Yes□ No□

(b) Did you find any difficulty in answering the questions? Yes□ No□

6. What is the degree of difficulty and why?

When reading the text…….....

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When answering the questions:…….....

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7. What type of difficulties did you come across?

When reading the text :(give examples)…….....

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When answering the questions :(give examples)…….....

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8. How did you deal with these difficulties? Give examples and justify.

In reading the text…….....

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In answering the questions.....

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دور المعرفة و التحكم المافوق إدراكي في قراءة النص الأدبي
(طلبة السنة الثالثة جامعي)

ملخّص :

إنّ هذا البحث يسّلط الضوء على عامل مهم في القراءة باللغة الانجليزية و ما تحتويه من عمليات فكرية نذكر منها: العامل المافوق إدراكي (metacognition). يهدف هذا البحث من جهة لإيجاد العلاقة ما بين معرفة القارئ بماهية القراءة ؛ متطلباتها مثلا و ما هي الطرق المثلى للقراءة التي يمكن تمثيلها في الاستراتيجيات المستعملة أهمها الاستراتيجيات المافوق إدراكية و قراءة صنف محدد من النصوص المتمثل في النص الأدبي. يأمل البحث من جهة أخرى إلى توضيح العلاقة ما بين استعمال القراء للاستراتيجيات المافوق إدراكية و ذلك من اجل الإشراف على عملية القراءة و كيفية قراءتهم للنص الأدبي.

يستمد البحث نظريته من باحثين في مجال علم اللغة النفسي بشكل عام و من باحثين في مجال ما فوق الإدراك و الذاكرة بشكل خاص منهم Flavell (1978) الذي عرف المعرفة المافوق إدراكية بأنها معرفة الشخص بعملياته الفكرية و الإشراف عليها وضبطها.

شارك في جمع معطيات هذا البحث واحد و ثلاثون طالبا في السنة الثالثة من مرحلة التدرج من قسم اللغة الانجليزية بمعهد اللغات ببوزريعة بالإضافة إلى خمسة أساتذة أدب أسهموا بتقديم معلومات حول متطلبات و استراتيجيات قراءة النص الأدبي.

نتيجة للمطالعات في البحوث التي اهتمت بنفس الموضوع: أهمية المعرفة الما فوق ادراكية في القراءة استخدمت وسائل بحث مماثلة لجمع المعطيات اللازمة حيث استعمل البحث استبيانين ونص أدبي مرفق بأسئلة على المستوى النقدي لغرض معرفة وجود أو غياب المعرفة المافوق ادراكية في طريقة قراءة الطلاب.

اظهر تحليل النتائج أن هناك خللا في المعرفة المافوق ادراكية لطلاب السنة الثالثة جامعي حيث أن المعرفة التي يكتسبها الطلاب عن القراءة ليست هي القراءة التي يتطلبها النص الأدبي بكونها لا تتماشى مع حاجياته. إضافة إلى ذلك تمكن البحث من تشخيص عجز الطلاب عن الإشراف على و ضبط عملية القراءة و ذلك لعدم معرفتهم بالطرق المثلى لذلك مثل استعمال استراتيجيات بديلة و ناجعة.

و نتيجة لهذا كله يأمل البحث بعد تبيان أهم عقبات القراء فيما يخص التفكير المافوق إدراكي إلى تدريب الطلاب ابتداء من السنة الأولى جامعي للتحكم في القراءة لأنها تعتبر من أهم الوسائل التعليمية في الجامعة عن رف على أخطائهم و تصحيحها تصحيحا سليما و ناجحا لكن و قبل هذا يجب على الطالب طريق التمكن من التع أن يكتسب المعرفة المسبقة المناسبة للتحكم و ضبط القراءة و ذلك بقصد الفهم الصحيح.