Chapter 3

MATERIALS AND METHODS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the students participated in this study, followed by the procedures as well as the research questions. Then, the tools used in the current study were ‘The Reading Comprehension Test, the Students’ Questionnaire and the Teachers’ Questionnaire’ showed in the research design. Finally, this chapter ends with the data analysis procedures.

3.2 Samples of the study:

The sample size: two hundred students out of which one hundred twenty responded and fifty teachers out of which twenty seven responded. Those teachers will be from the same schools where the participating students are.

Area: Libyan students from different schools at Al-Zawia University which is located in the Western part (120 km West the capital Tripoli).

Background: Students had similar educational background.

Selection of sample: This number of the participants was chosen randomly.

Age: the age of the participants was between 18-24 years old.

Gender: the gender of the participants is (males 60 (50%) and females 60 (50%)).
Table (1:3) the distribution of the sample of the Study according to the students’ gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 Research Design

This is a Descriptive and Analytical Research study based on a survey research conducted for the purpose of making descriptive assertions about some population. This study aims at finding out the Language Learning Strategies used by the Libyan students, and to investigate the relationship between Gender and Language Learning Strategies of the third year English majors at Al-Zawia University. Furthermore, to find if a relationship between the Language Learning Strategies and the Comprehension Achievement Level exists among the participants.

In this study, Student’s Questionnaire data was collected through two techniques, one of which aimed to (a) identify, categorize students’ Learning Strategies, (b) to find out what strategies students seemed to prefer. The student’s level of language comprehension achievement level was determined by an achievement test. Both the students’ Questionnaire and the Students’ Comprehension Test were designed by the researcher under the supervision of
my supervisor from India and with the consultation and guidance of Mr. Salah Meto (an associate Professor of English and Foreign Language Department, Al-Zawia University) from Libya. After attaining consistency from both persons, the Questionnaire items and the Questions of the Test were developed. A pool of questions were framed, sorted, and delimited the number of questions to be asked, were selected on the need of the research. The questionnaire items were selected, categorized, and placed under the following categories:

(a) Memory Related.

(b) Cognitive Strategies.

(c) Compensation Strategies.

(d) Meta-Cognitive Strategies.

(e) Affective Strategies.

(f) Social Strategies.

The consistent opinion of the two persons and the researcher, the Research Questions were designed. There was co-relation found in the Questions framed in the Questionnaire and the Learning Strategies.

Furthermore, Teachers’ Questionnaire was also used (a) to show teachers’ point of view regarding the ability of students in learning and understanding the Reading Comprehension of English as a Foreign Language. Moreover, (b)
to show the techniques and materials used by them in teaching English Reading Comprehension, and to give their remarks about the problem they face in the classroom.

3.4 Data Collection Instruments:

In this study, three instruments were used with the purpose of collecting quantitative data. (a) The Students’ Questionnaire, (b) the Students’ Achievement Test, and (d) The Teachers’ Questionnaire were explained below.

3.4.1 The Students’ Questionnaire

The Reading Strategy Questionnaire (RSQ) was used as a major instrument in this study. This questionnaire was to gain insights into Libyan students’ use of reading strategies. The main objectives of this questionnaire were to show if there is a significant difference of Reading Strategies used for subjects with different sexes and proficiency level. The RSQ was designed by the researcher’s observations and the SILL questionnaire adopted and translated from Oxford (1990) under the guide of the supervisor as well as two experts (one from Libya and the other one from India). The researcher also tested the questionnaire to ensure its validity and reliability.

The questionnaire was designed for a five-point Likert scale (from 5 strongly agree to 1 strongly disagree). The participants of the study were asked to response to each item of the questionnaire by choosing from among five answers: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree).
This questionnaire consists of 32 items related to the six types of reading strategies as shown in table (2:3).

The items measured Memory-Related Strategies were 20, 25, 26, 29, 31, items that measure Cognitive Strategies were 10, 15, 17, 21 and 27, items that measure Compensation Strategies were 4, 8, 9, 14, 18, and 28, items that measure Meta-Cognitive Strategies were 1, 2, 6, 7, 13, and 19 items that measure Affective Strategies were 11, 12, 22, 23, 24, and 30 items that measure Social Strategies were 3, 5, 16, and 32.

Table (2:3) the distribution of the questionnaire items according to the strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>No. of items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Memory related</td>
<td>20, 25, 26, 29, 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cognitive Strategies</td>
<td>10, 15, 17, 21 and 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Compensation Strategies</td>
<td>4, 8, 9, 14, 18, and 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Meta-Cognitive Strategies</td>
<td>4, 8, 9, 14, 18, and 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Affective Strategies</td>
<td>11, 12, 22, 23, 24, and 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Social Strategies</td>
<td>3, 5, 16, and 32.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The researcher had placed the Demographic data at the beginning of each questionnaire. In addition, personal information within the demographic section of the questionnaire was deduced.

**Dillman (2000)** asserted that “obtaining personal information from participants in a survey, such as questions regarding annual income or sexual behavior, may deter respondents from answering or completing the survey and thereby affect the response rate”.

The questionnaire was distributed to 200 EFL Libyan students at Al-Zawia University (College of Arts Zware, College of Arts Sabratha, and College of Education Zultn). The respondents were told to select only one answer to each item. They were given sufficient time to complete the questionnaire and return it immediately. Only 120 of the respondents returned the questionnaires, while the rest (80) ignored to return the questionnaires. **Appendix (1:3)**

3.4.2 The Reading Comprehension Test

The Reading comprehension Test was the second major instrument that was used in this study. This test consisted of one paragraph followed by 15 multiple-choice reading comprehension questions on each. The maximum point for the test was 30 (2 points for each correct answer). **Appendix (2:3)**

The significance of the Reading Comprehension Test in this study is to identify the level of strategy use for each strategy and to show the ability of the
students’ proficiency in dealing with reading comprehension of English as a Foreign Language.

3.4.3 The Teachers’ Questionnaire

A Questionnaire had been used in this study to serve as a “Research Tool” in eliciting supplementary source data. Fifty copies of the questionnaire were distributed, twenty seven responded in self-addressed envelopes many of which were completed on the spot, while the remain were sent back to the researcher. Teachers’ Questionnaire contained twenty questions. All these questions focused on the major points related to reading learning strategies. The questions fall into two types: yes / no questions and questions which require comments from teachers. The choice of questions were based on or related to the researcher's experience in the teaching field, as well as the Researcher's familiarities with the curriculum of third year students. The teachers' questionnaire was distributed to fifty teachers of both sexes in the same school, where the students' test was conducted. Teachers' answers have been given a special number.

The main objective of the Teachers’ Questionnaire was to show the teachers’ point of view regarding the ability of students in learning and understanding ‘Reading comprehension of English as a Foreign Language’. Moreover, teachers had been asked about the techniques and materials used by them in teaching English Reading Comprehension. As well as to give their comments about the main problems they faced in teaching English Reading
Comprehension. Teachers were requested to read every question and then answer it as spontaneously as possible. Discussion and results of the questionnaire were provided later. A Copy of the questionnaire appears in Appendix (3:3).

3.5 Data analysis Procedures:

O’Malley and Chamot (1990) point out that making use of different types of Data Collection methods may lead to different results since every assessment method has its own advantages. Therefore, some researchers have made use of Multiple Approaches for Data Collection. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) state that “many sources of data are better in a study than a single source, because multiple sources lead to a fuller understanding of the phenomena you are studying”.

The background “Reading Strategy Questionnaire” (RSQ) and the Reading Comprehension Test were distributed to regular classes of the third year EFL students of Al-Zawia University (college of Arts Zware, college of Arts Sabratha, and College of Education) during the regular class meeting. The class instructor, who was informed about the nature of the Reading Strategy Questionnaire and the Reading Comprehension Test, supervised the distribution process. The Reading Comprehension Test took an average of forty five (45) minutes to finish under a complete condition of confidentiality. The Reading Strategy Questionnaire took thirty minutes as well to finish. A total of 120 Questionnaire were answered completely out of 200 distributed
ones. All 120 Reading Comprehension Test were answered completely. All Reading Strategy Questionnaires that were not fully answered were disregarded.

Data analysis was carried out using the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) version 19 to score the data and answer the research questions, in order to obtain descriptive statistics. First, Means, Standard Deviations, and Frequencies of data were computed to summarize the learners’ responses to the Reading Strategy Questionnaire (RSQ) with a view to presenting the strategy use of the Libyan EFL learners and hence to answer the first research question. Then, to determine any variations in strategy use due to gender, and English proficiency, several analyses of variance (ANOVA) were conducted to determine whether there were any significant differences among learners with regard to strategy use. NPar Tests (Mann-Whitney Test) were also used to determine any variations in strategy use due to gender and hence to address the second research question.

Finally, for learners’ Reading Comprehension Test scores, a visual banner features was utilized to determine the differences of strategy use among learners at different academic levels. Participants who scored between 2 and 14 were considered low level, between 15 and 20 were considered medium level, and between 20 and 30 were considered high level of comprehension.