The Effect of Cultural Schemata on EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension Ability

Hiba Bensalah
Department of English, Faculty of Foreign Languages
Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University
Mostaganem, Algeria

Noureddine Gueroudj
Department of English, Faculty of Letters, Languages, and Arts
Djilali Liabès University
Sidi-Bel Abbès, Algeria

Abstract
This research study aims to investigate the impact of cultural schemata on the process of reading culturally- loaded texts, and whether the use of pre-reading activities recompenses for the absence of cultural familiarity. In this regard, EFL readers bring to the text a wide range of experiences. Consequently, such diversity of prior knowledge influences their perception and interpretation of foreign language texts. Here comes the role of cultural schemata, which is indeed a very critical role. How do cultural differences in background knowledge influence student's reading comprehension ability? To recognize the effect of cultural schemata on comprehension, it is essential first to understand the significant role that background knowledge plays in the reading process. Therefore, to carry out this research, a selection of reading comprehension tests was assigned for an experimental and a control group in a quasi-classroom experiment of first-year EFL students at Ibn Khaldoun University (Tiaret). While the experimental group was provided with pre-reading tasks to activate their background knowledge, the control group received no treatment. We collected data from 40 participants, and the results show that many EFL learners belonging to the control group display a lack of cultural schemata since their prior-knowledge is not activated, which may well impact negatively on their reading practices. By contrast, participants of the experimental group performed better in the comprehension test than those in the control group. In brief, there is a correlation between activating students' background knowledge and the increase of reading comprehension ability.
Keywords: cultural schemata, conceptual knowledge, interactive process, reading comprehension, schema theory

Introduction

Reading comprehension is one of the fundamental language skills that EFL students should efficiently learn. Mainly, at the university level, a considerable concern is devoted to EFL students since they encounter various complex reading materials gradually than ever before. English as a foreign language (EFL) reading process is complicated since it requires the interplay of diverse factors, and absence or presence of any one of these factors can lead to success or failure of the reading process. Students in Algerian universities encounter deficiencies and reading obstacles in language skills, which are necessary for successful comprehension. Limited exposure to cultural-based texts, lack of motivation and cultural schemata, the inability to make inferences, analyzing concepts are some factors that have resulted in an inadequate performance of Algerian students in the reading skill. Although some learners master the English language appropriately, they cannot comprehend the meaning of written texts. The vocabulary and grammar are the basic units of any word. Without appropriate knowledge about these units, it seems impossible for learners to comprehend the topic they are reading. Furthermore, cultural experience influences the process of reading comprehension of cultural-based content. At least, readers' cultural schema is the crucial point in reading. If students hold sufficient cultural schemata, they will quickly understand the contents of the text. Therefore, there is a need to improve EFL reading practices in Algeria.

Scholars Anderson, Reynolds, Schallert, and Goetz (1976) studying the reading process have shown that participants' schemata affect their reading comprehension. Among other reading approaches, schema theory plays a significant role since it brings tremendous satisfaction to individuals. It enables readers to understand and learn how to attach meaning to reading materials. However, no study has been carried out in the Algerian context to investigate the effect of cultural schemata on EFL reading comprehension of first-year university students. There is a gap in the literature, and the present study aims to fill it.

Theoretical background
Reading skill
Harmer (2001) states that a reader uses a variety of clues to understand what the writer is implying or suggesting, in that way the reader is able to see beyond the literal meaning of the words. Schema, which is defined as background knowledge that enables the reader to make predictions for more successful interactions, plays a vital role in that interpretation since successful interpretation depends to a large extent on shared schemata Harmer (2001) states that a reader uses a variety of clues to understand what the writer is implying or suggesting, in that way the reader is able to see beyond the literal meaning of the words. Schema, which is defined as background knowledge that enables the reader to make predictions for more successful interactions, plays a vital role in thatminterpretation since successful interpretation depends to a large extent on shared schemata

This section reviews some of the theoretical perspectives on EFL reading before looking at the studies conducted in the use of schema theory for promoting reading comprehension. Reading methods have been in a state of change in the preceding century. The outcome is a multiplicity of definitions.Traditionally, experts in reading (Ruddell, 1976; Clarke and Silberstein,

1977) consider reading as a mere passive process in which the readers decode or decipher the written symbols without conveying their prior knowledge to interact with the text. Lately, reading has started to be described as interactive rather than simply being active. Kim (2010) argued, " a text by itself does not carry meaning, but rather guides readers in retrieving meaning based on their prior knowledge." (p. 36). For that reason, EFL readers may vary in the interpretation of the intended meaning. The reader contributes more information to comprehend what they read, relying on specific concepts that are already stored in their memories. This view is strengthened in the light of Harmer (2001), who claims that a reader uses a variety of clues to understand what the writer is implying or suggesting, In that way the reader can see beyond the literal meaning of the words. Schema, which is defined as background knowledge that enables the reader to make predictions for more successful interactions, plays a vital role in that interpretation since successful interpretation depends on shared schemata.

Several studies Anderson and Pearson (1984) Carrell and Eisterhold (1983) and others believe that readers' previous experiences, knowledge about the world play a significant role in comprehending texts. This was known as "schema theory." This paper takes into account those studies that deal with the impact of schemata on the process of EFL reading comprehension.

Schema Theory
Schema theory is one of the essential doctrines of learning that is applied to language skills learning and teaching. In this regard, the term schema was firstly introduced by the philosopher Kant (1781) and by the British psychologist Bartlett (1932). The philosopher Kant (1781) used the concept schema. He suggested that concepts could have meaning only when they were related to something the individual already knew. That is to say, the individual possesses general concepts to which he refers more specific ideas. Subsequently, Rumelhalt (1980) introduced the term in reading. In this vein, schema theory assumes that written texts do not carry meaning by itself. Instead, a text-only provides hints for readers as to how they should construct meaning relying on their previously acquired knowledge. This prior knowledge is identified as the readers' background knowledge or schema, which contributes fundamentally to the process of comprehension. In this respect, schema can simply refer to the connection of mental structures, signifying readers' understanding of everyday activities (Brown, 2001; Harmer, 2001; Nassaji, 2002). Moreover, An (2013) highlights the role of schema theory in reading comprehension. She proposes that a reader is involved in the process of constructing meaning through the interaction of pertinent schemata and elements of the text.

Schema Theory and Its Implication in Teaching Reading Comprehension
Different scholars conducted a variety of experimental studies, and the achievements have revealed that the theory plays a considerable role in improving learners' reading ability. It is the background knowledge that allows the reader to make expectations about the text and contribute to text comprehension and interpretation. This paper takes into account those studies that deal with the impact of cultural schemata on EFL learners' reading comprehension.

Gagné, Yarbrough, Ueidemann, and Bell (1985) conducted a study about the effects of text familiarity on recall. They find through this experiment that reader's exposition to highly familiar passages made sense to them, and they can learn as well as recall data in a meaningful way. In

other words, Gagné (1985) affirms that the knowledge a reader has about a subject promotes elaborative processing of novelties, which helps when reconstruction is required at recall or retrieval. This view is reinforced in the light of the experiment carried out by Johnson (1982). She inquired students to read a passage that enclosed familiar and unfamiliar information about the topic of Halloween. Half of the text is about things that they have experienced two weeks before and half about the facts of Halloween that are unknown even for native speakers. Results showed that students recall and comprehend texts significantly with familiar themes more rapidly than books with unfamiliar items. When the writer and the readers' cultural schemata are different, the readers usually do not comprehend the texts appropriately. Readers are estimated to reach the intended meaning by linking prerequisite knowledge with what they read (Nuttall, 1998; Anderson, 1999; Alderson, 2000; Grabe and Stoller, 2002).

Accordingly, Carrel (1987) examines the effects of both contents and formal schemata on the process of reading comprehension of EFL students. The results indicate that students encounter more difficulties with unfamiliar content than a familiar one. Furthermore, Students find the texts easy to read and perform better on the tests when the content and the form are both familiar, and even when the form is unfamiliar, but the content is acquainted.

All the studies reviewed in this section reinforce the importance of text familiarity and prior knowledge for comprehension and retrieval. In this light, the lack of background knowledge causes difficulty for the learners, especially while reading culturally-loaded texts with unfamiliar concepts. If the reader has no experience and prior knowledge about the content, then he or she will not be able to achieve the intended meanings that of the text.

Cultural Schemata and Reading Comprehension

Significant number of scholars (Anderson,1979; Johnson, 1982; Steffenson and Joag Dev,1984) have shown that cultural knowledge – which is part and parcel of background and topic knowledge is enormously significant in comprehending texts. Cultural schemas are interchangeably labeled cultural models, are schematic representations of generic concepts allocated among cultural members. Moreover, the anthropologist Palmer (1996) speculates that cultural schemata involve rituals like funerals, weddings, national holidays, and a host of other cultural phenomena. In this path, students belonging to different cultural groups may interpret the same text differently. So, it is vital to be aware of cultural diversity and its impact on the learning process. Another closely related view about the close relationship of cultural schemata to reading comprehension is the one suggested by Ozyaka (2001) that the concept of cultural schema is culture-specific world knowledge. This specific knowledge depends on ceremonial as well as historical culture.

For EFL learners, cultural-specific knowledge is fundamental in text comprehension owing to cultural differences between the target language and the native language. To illustrate, readers who have not grown up in American culture will encounter difficulties when reading, " I found coal in my stocking, cocked the tree over which started a fire, and my grandfather wore a red suit…" Readers with the cultural knowledge of Christmas morning in the U.S.A would have few problems understanding. In contrast, others might encounter serious problems, for they have no prior concept about Christmas experience schema that they can activate, which will hamper them

from processing the information they are reading more effectively. Thus, to comprehend a text, appropriate cultural schemata and scripts are considered necessary.

Unfortunately, in most Algerian EFL classes, teachers do not apply adequately warm-up activities to activate the reader's background knowledge or schema. When teachers use reading materials about the target culture or any topic, it is necessary to give background knowledge to students. Due to the shortage of research in this area in Algeria, this study seems significant. The primary purpose of the study is to determine whether schema activation has any effect on the reading comprehension ability of cultural texts among Algerian EFL learners or not.

Research Questions
The present research study attempts to answer the following research questions.
Q1 Does the cultural familiarity of EFL learners affect the process of reading comprehension?
Q2 Does the lack of cultural background knowledge of EFL learners affect their reading comprehension ability?
Q3 Does the activation of background knowledge of learners ensure a better understanding of reading comprehension texts?
Q4 Does the use of pre-reading activities influence the process of reading comprehension?

Methodology
For the sake of investigating the validity of the research questions mentioned above, empirical research conducted in the English language teaching department of Ibn Khaldoun at a state university in Tiaret.

Subjects recruited in this experiment are first-year university students of English. Participant's ages vary between 18 and 22 years old. Most of these participants are females. These EFL learners studied English as a compulsory school subject for almost seven years. (Four years at Middle School and three years at High School).They came from surrounding villages as well as nearby cities of Tiaret. They are assigned to different sections to form mixed-ability groups. Moreover, the participants belong to two groups experimental and control group, and each group involves 20 students.

An experiment conducted to examine the influence of cultural familiarity, and schema activation on learner's reading comprehension ability. Participants in both groups received the same tests; the only difference is that the experimental group received pre-reading tasks to activate their background knowledge on the topic. However, the control group doesn't receive any pre-reading tasks.

Procedures of the study
The researcher attained the permission of the head of the department to conduct the research with first-year EFL students. The researcher was a participant teacher because she was a part-time teacher in the English department. Thus, the participants (experimental and control group) received a reading comprehension test. The researcher exposed students in the experimental group to a text entitled "why people get tattoos?". The text portrays the story of Jack getting a tattoo, and tackles the various reasons behind getting a tattoo in North America. It entails cultural

information to furnish an image of the use of symbols by youth referring to peer pressure, media influence, and personal expression as the most common reasons for wearing tattoos. The students in the experimental group received pre-reading tasks. Prediction questions, pictorial context. Also, a picture was shown to the students to make them more familiar with the aspect of tattoos.

The researcher administered the while- reading task and post-reading task to check any potential short-term memory effects. While the experimental group was going through a treatment of pre-reading tasks, the control group received no particular treatment.

Results and Discussion

In the pre-reading task, the participants of the experimental group expressed their opinions about tattoos freely. Based on the answers, the majority of them said that they like tattoos to express their beliefs, feelings, and fashion too. One of the participants indicates that if she is allowed to wear a symbol, she will put a butterfly sign on her body. In addition to that, all the participants revealed that they do not have any tattoos on their bodies. In this case, the majority of EFL students like to have a tattoo on their bodies. However, they are not allowed by their religion. Indeed, this was the ultimate obstacle for EFL respondents to wear a symbol. Moreover, most of the participants (girls) demonstrate that they use another form for tattooing, which is called (Henna) with its reason of practice, such as in ceremonies of marriage,…etc.

In this vein**,** the question of wearing a tattoo has been raised, but this time is more particular to the learners' belief. Thus, the respondents belonging to the experimental group expressed their opinions differently as well as vividly. The majority of their answers reveal that they hold the view that tattooing is not only found in American society; it also exists in their culture. Despite the alleged religious prohibition, tattoos are common among people of Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey, and some Maghreb countries. Another participant states that *the fact of doing a tattoo is a sign of imitating non-Muslims*. Also, one of the respondents claims, " *tattoo is a symbol of imitating "Kuffar" because only non-believers adorn themselves this way."*

Concerning learner's reactions to this question, we notice a firm rejection of the act of wearing a tattoo. One participant indicated that "*wearing a tattoo causes a lot of diseases." So,* another category of students considers it as something dangerous and not suitable for their health. By contrast, student's answers belonging to the control group showed a sign of being too passive and no sign of enthusiasm, unlike the first group. They showed limited involvement through these statements: "Our religion doesn't allow us to wear tattoos." Another student said, "*I have seen somebody wearing a tattoo which contains the name of Allah."*

 3) Do you know anybody who has a tattoo? Describe it
As a response to this question, most of the participants state that many people wear tattoos regarding several myths and beliefs. For example, some of the participants described the emblems of their grandmothers like a symbol of the sun on the cheek. Another participant refers to his foreign friend Allen from America, who has a tattoo of a musical note, and he is studying music technology.

4) What is your general opinion of tattoos? Do you find them attractive, ugly…etc?

Based on this question, EFL participants revealed that visible tattoos are rarely widely accepted in the Algerian society, unlike other communities. Besides, each student has his/her vision of tattoos. A category of them (boys and girls) find symbols as something attractive to decorate their bodies. However, other participants find it ugly and consider tattooed people as risk-takers, promiscuous, heavy drinkers. According to participant's responses, we see two different views (positive and negative perspective).

5) Why do people have tattoos done?

The respondents react towards this question, referring to several reasons such as holding the attention of others, personal freedom like drawing the initial letter of their beloved one, and self-expression, visual display of political or religious affiliation.

Descriptive Statistics

Tables 1, 2, and 3 showed the distribution of data and their frequencies of the while-reading task and post-reading tasks among control and experimental groups.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of Experimental and Control Groups on the while-reading task

Task2 N° Q	EXPG True	EXPG False	CG True	CG False
1	20	0	20	0
2	20	0	20	0
3	20	0	20	0
4	20	0	20	0
5	20	0	19	1
6	19	1	18	2
7	18	2	16	4
8	17	3	16	4
9	15	5	12	8
10	13	7	12	8
Mean	18,20	1,80	17,30	2,70
Std,Dev	2,49	2,49	3,20	3,20

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics of Experimental and Control Groups on the while-reading task

Task3 N° Q	EXPG1 True	EXPG1 False	CG2 True	CG2 False
1	20	0	20	0
2	20	0	20	0
3	19	1	19	1
4	19	1	19	1
5	17	3	16	4
6	17	3	16	4
7	15	5	9	11
8	15	5	9	11
9	9	11	8	12
10	9	11	8	12
Mean	16,00	4,00	14,40	5,60
Std,Dev	4,11	4,11	5,27	5,27

The participant's while-reading task scores were analyzed through the use of SPSS to see whether there were differences among the experimental group and control group according to their gained scores. After the results of SPSS revealed that there were differences across the results.

Tables 1 and 2 demonstrates descriptive statistics giving the mean scores gained by each treatment group included in the study. As seen in the table, the experimental group had a higher

mean score than control group regarding the text of tattoos in the while-tasks (experimental mean = 18,20, control mean = 17,30 for correct answers), incorrect answers (experimental mean = 1,80, control mean = 2,70). Furthermore, in the third while- reading task (experimental mean =16,00, control mean = 14,40 for correct answers), incorrect answers (experimental mean = 4,00 , control mean = 5,60). It is clear from the comparative tables that the means of experimental group participants who received a pre-reading task outscored the highest mean scores. However, the participants who read the text without pre- reading tasks scored lower results. Although the students are familiar with the topic of tattoos, schema-based activities resulted in improving their comprehension of the reading materials. This result provides an affirmative answer to support the claim that schema activation can enhance comprehension ability among EFL learners. Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4 show the charts based on the results from the Tables above.
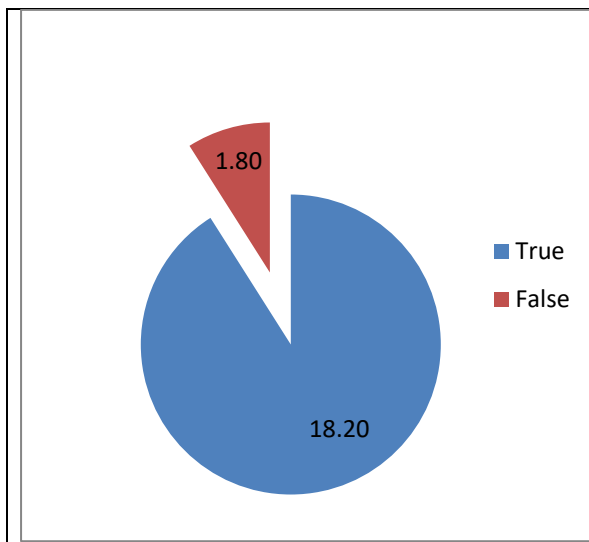

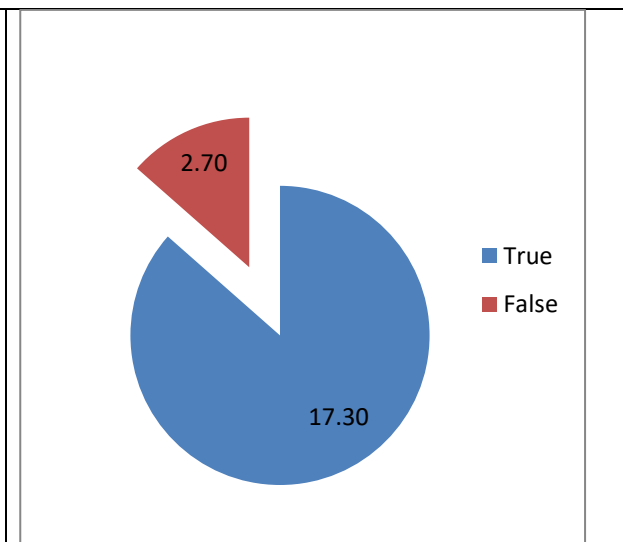*Figure 1* Mean Differences for Task 2 in Experimental Group

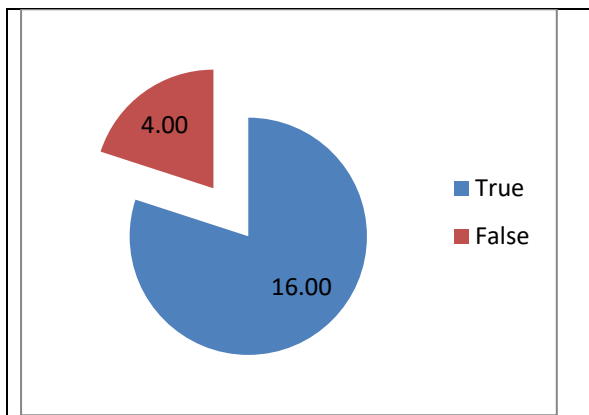*Figure 2* Mean Differences for Task 2 in Control Group

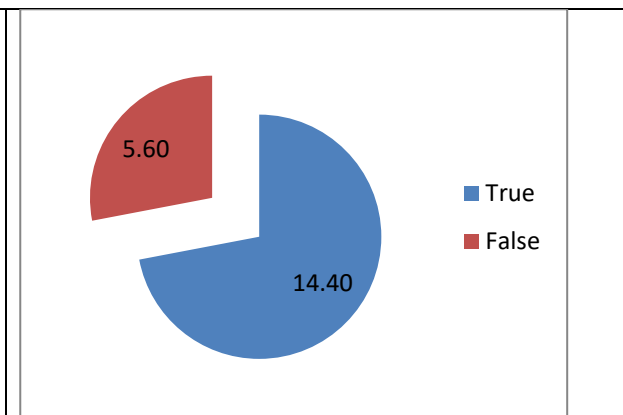*Figure 3* Mean Differences for Task 3 in Experimental Group

Figure 4 Mean Differences for Task 3 in Control Group

Table 3. *Descriptive Statistics of Experimental and Control Groups on the post-reading task*

Task4 N° Q	EXPG1		CG2	
	True	False	True	False
1	20	0	20	0
2	19	1	14	6
3	14	6	10	10
4	11	9	3	17
Mean	16,00	4,00	11,75	8,25
Std,Dev	4,24	4,24	7,14	7,14

The mean score of the experimental group on the post-reading task was 16.00 and 4.00. However, in the control group, most of the student's scores fell between 11.57 and 8.25 in the post-reading task. This table indicates statistically significant differences between groups. The results point out that the mean values of the treatment groups gained in the study are not the same.

The statistical information showed evidence that activating learner's cultural schemata via pre-reading activity instruction was successful. One can notice from the successful performance of the experimental group in the post-reading questions, which indicate that the participants benefited from pre-reading instruction in developing their reading comprehension.

Figure 5 Mean Differences for Task 4 in Experimental Group

Figure 6 Mean Differences for Task 4 in Control Group
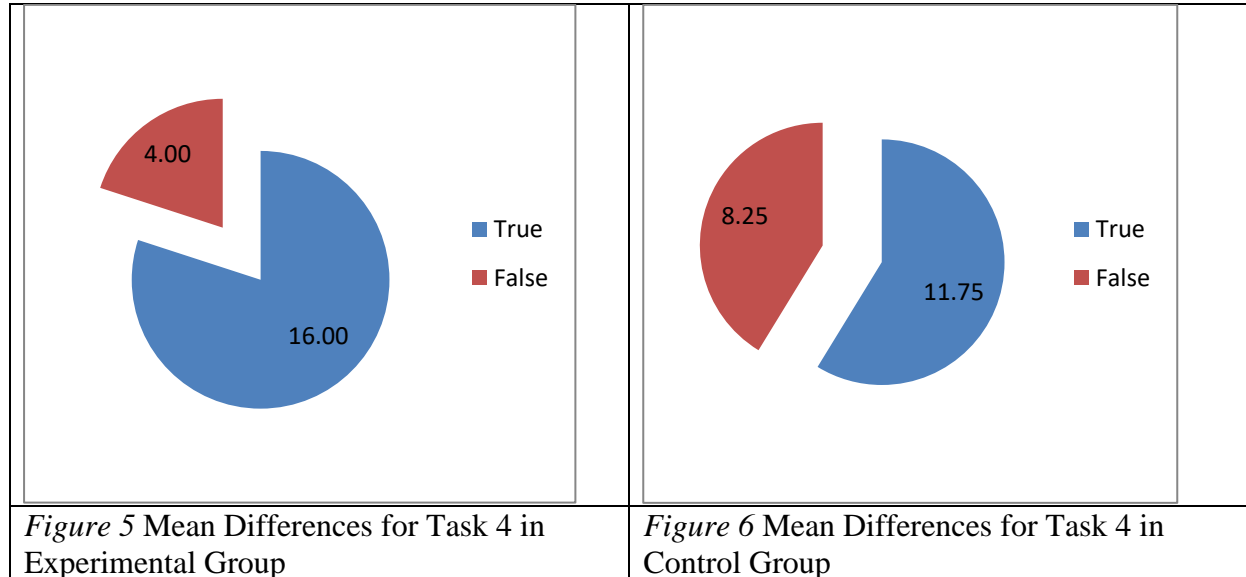
The present study investigates the effect of cultural schemata on the reading comprehension ability of EFL students. In general, the results indicate that reader's cultural background knowledge plays a significant role in their comprehension of culturally-loaded texts. It is noteworthy that the results of the current study are in line with those of Anderson (1979); Johnson (1982); Carrel (1987); Grabe and Stoller (2002), and Alptekin (2006) who point out that schema theory is valuable in helping learners to improve their reading ability. Every act of comprehension

encompasses learner's knowledge about words. The concept of the schema has been a significant theoretical construct in reading comprehension.

The difference between the control and experimental group's performances in comprehension proposed a strong probability that the students whose background knowledge of the reading text is activated, EFL learners can understand the content of the topic easily. Moreover, one assumed reason could be that the pre-reading task enables experimental group readers to activate their suitable schemata more efficiently than the control group readers. Furthermore, the experimental group who received a pre-reading task could likely recompense for the absence of cultural familiarity, and possible vocabulary deficiencies by relying on prior knowledge to deduce the meaning of the unknown words or expressions. This claim strengthened in the light of the empirical research of Pulido (2004, 2007), who claimed that the background knowledge of readers, can enable lexical inferencing during reading.

It is worthwhile concluding form the outcome of our reading comprehension test experiment that activating the background knowledge of readers can improve their reading comprehension ability of culturally-loaded texts. This conclusive evidence, in turn, confirms our hypothesis that helping learners activate their cultural schemata successfully reinforces their reading comprehension ability of culturally-loaded texts.

Conclusion

According to the results of this research study, we deduced the following summary. First, cultural schemata affect the reading process. If readers are familiar with the content of the topics, they will read the text easily. Second, activating learners' background knowledge is the initial step leading to comprehension. For that reason, the use of pre-reading activities prepares students for the content of the text, and while-reading activities contribute to reading comprehension. In the final step, post-reading activities enable readers to confirm and clarify any vagueness.

Despite that, reading activities enhance and facilitate the act of reading comprehension. The relevance of cultural schemata is an essential component for ensuring comprehensible input. In short, the results of this study give the impression to answer the research questions positively and firmly back up and validate the stated hypotheses. The outcomes of this research study suggest a positive relationship between reading comprehension and students' cultural knowledge. In other words, the student's comprehension ability will increase, and they will perform better if their background knowledge about western customs, attitudes, and ways of life is strongly activated.

About the Authors:

Hiba Bensalah is a high school teacher of English. She holds a masters' degree in Applied Linguistics and didactics form the University of Mostaganem, Algeria, as she is currently undertaking doctoral research in Didactics and Applied linguistics. Her main areas of inquiry are applied linguistics. ORCiD ID https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2135-1179

Prof. Noureddine Guerroudj is a lecturer in English at the University of Sidi Bel Abbes, in the West of Algeria, and a president of the scientific committee of foreign languages' faculty at the

same university. Prof. Guerrodj is also an editor-in-chief of the Languages and Arts Journal founded by Sidi Bel Abbes University. His main areas of interest include Applied Linguistics.

References

Anderson, R. C., & Pearson, P. D. (1984). *A Schema-Theoretic View of Basic Processes in Reading Comprehension*. Handbook of reading research, (1), 255-291.

Adams, M. J., & Collins, A. (1977). *A Schema-Theoretic View of Reading*. Technical Report No. 32.

Alptekin, C. (2006). *Cultural Familiarity in Inferential and Literal Comprehension in L2 Reading. The System*, *34* (4), 494-508

An, S. (2013). *Schema Theory in Reading*. Theory and Practice in Language Studies, *3*(1), 130-134.

Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy Second Edition*. New York: Pearson Education Company.

Carrell, P.L. & J.C.Eisterhold. (1983). *Schema Theory and ESL Reading Pedagogy*. TESOL Quarterly, *17*, (4), 553- 573.

Carrell, P. L. (1987). *Content and Formal Schemata in ESL Reading*. TESOL Quarterly, *21* (3), 461-481.

Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Grabe, W., &Stoller, F. L.(2002). *Teaching and Researching Reading*. Harlow, UK: Pearson Education.

Kim, M. (2010).Adult ESL Korean reader‟s responses about their reading in L1 Korean and L2 University.

Kim, M. (2010). *Adult ESL Korean Reader's Responses about their Reading in L1 Korean and L2 English* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3402930)

] Koh, M. Y. (1986). *The Role of Prior Knowledge in Reading Comprehension*. *Reading in a Foreign Language, 3*, (4), 375-380.

Kramsch, C. (2001). *Language and Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nassaji, H. (2002). *Schema Theory and knowledge-Based Processes in Second Language Reading Comprehension: a Need for Alternative Perspectives*, Language Learning, *52* (2): 439-481.

Pritchard, R. (1990). *The Effect of Cultural Schema on Reading Processing Strategies*. Reading Research Quarterly, *25* (4), 273-295.

Pulido, D. (2004). *The Effect of Cultural Familiarity on Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition through Reading*. The Reading Matrix, *4* (2), 20-53.

OZYAKA, Sidika Gaye (2001) The significance of cultural content in EFL reading

Appendix A

Task 1:
1. Do you like tattoos? Why, why not?
2. Do you have a t a t t o o ?
3. Do you know anybody who has a symbol? Describe it.
4. What is your general opinion of tattoos? Do you find them a t t r a c t i v e , ugly, e t c .

5. Why do people have tattoos done?

Task 2: Match the vocabulary word with the best synonym or definition.

1	Peers	**A.**	Rank or level in society.
2	Stranger	**B.**	People in a similar group usually based on age or status.
3	Identify	**C.**	People who are interested in issues related to protecting the environment.
4	Status	**D**	To be cut with a knife or sharp object.
5	Beliefs	**E**	A persons' values of right and wrong.
6	Media	**F**	Something that is unique to each person.
7	Bravery	**G**	A person that you don't know.
8	Environmentalists	**H**	Sources of communication such as TV, radio, or the internet.
9	Stabbed	**I**	Acting with courage and confidence, without fear.
10	Individuality	**J**	To show, or name, who or what something is.

Task 3:
   a) **Read the text and answer the following questions,**

1. According to the text, what are the three most common reasons why a person gets a tattoo?
A. pressure from their peers
B. it is healthy
C. influence from the media
D. a way of personal expression

2. According to the text, which of the following are common ways that people show they belong to a particular group?
A. wearing a tattoo
B. wearing special clothes
C. wearing a distinctive uniform
D. wearing a special kind of socks

3. According to the text, media images are linked to _____. Choose all that apply.
A. wealth
B. status
C. success
D. debt

b): Read again and answer the following questions.
   1) Why do people get tattoos?
   2) How does Jack think about people who get tattoos?
   3) What are the possible artistic reasons for getting a tattoo?

Task 5:
1. What are your personal beliefs about tattooing?
2. What has influenced your ideas on tattoos?
3. How does your particular cultural group view tattoos? (Ethnic, Religious, Youth vs. Adults,
4. **Express your opinion:** You work at a music store. Everyone dresses very stylishly. Most people have piercings and tattoos. You start to make new friends; they suggest you get a tattoo. You don 't like tattoos. What do you say.