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ЗАКАРПАТТЯ**

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**TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION TO YOUNG LEARNERS**  
**IN SCHOOLS OF TRANSCARPATHIA**

**Bachelor's Thesis**

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## INTRODUCTION

Knowledge of foreign languages is the key to success in today's world where communication in different languages is becoming increasingly important. The value of it in modern life cannot be overstated. A person who speaks a foreign language is more likely to produce profitable positions and communicate freely abroad in order to expand the social circle. Therefore, it is essential to encourage children in young age to learn foreign languages.

Reading is one of the four basic language skills, which is crucial for success in acquiring a foreign language. Reading indicates knowledge of a language, it enhances experiences, facilitates the intellectual development of the learner. Reading fosters students to expand their vocabulary, acquire new grammatical constructions, and develop fluency and accuracy of speaking. Moreover, reading is not about decoding words, but the goal of reading is understanding.

According to the definition, reading comprehension is the ability to read a text, process it, and to understand its meaning [58]. Reading comprehension is significant in foreign language learning considering its relation with the other language skills and effect on the learning process. It has an essential role in foreign language learning on the grounds that practically all learning begins with comprehension of the read text and it fosters language acquisition. After all, reading is the basis of instruction in all aspects of language learning: using textbooks for language courses, writing, revising, developing vocabulary, acquiring grammar, and using computer-assisted language learning programmes. Reading instruction, therefore, is an essential component of every foreign-language curriculum [7]. Moreover, according to Dr. West, a professor in Oberlin College, reading should be given more priority in the teaching process. He emphasizes that reading indicates knowledge of a language, enhances experiences, facilitates the intellectual development of the learner [51].

Reading comprehension is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought. This approach assumes that students learn to read a language by studying its vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure, not by actually reading it.

In order to understand printed words, a child must be able to decode the words on the page and comprehend exact meaning. Starting from a very young age, reading becomes one of the main means of getting information. So, reading comprehension affects our learning and teaching process.

An individual's ability to comprehend text is influenced by their traits and skills, one of which is the ability to make inferences. If word recognition is difficult, students use too much of their processing capacity to read individual words, which interferes with their ability to comprehend what is read.

**The current thesis deals with the following issues:**



- it outlines the general characteristics of reading comprehension and the young learner concept;
- it examines how reading comprehension is performed in schools;
- it considers the types of classroom reading performance;
- it studies the strategies used for reading comprehension development;
- it investigates the role of pre-, while-, and post reading comprehension stages;
- it contains the research on: the effect of pre-, while-, and post-reading stages on young learners' reading comprehension.

The **object** of the study is the current situation of teaching reading comprehension in schools of Transcarpathia; methods, techniques and strategies used in schools; the level of students reading comprehension accuracy and competence; the effect of pre-, while-, and post reading comprehension stages on young learners' reading comprehension as well as an overall and objective view of the given topic.

The **subject** of the present paper is the young learners of 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade and teachers of English as a foreign language in schools of Transcarpathia.

The **purpose** of the work is to conduct an overview of the main methods of teaching reading comprehension, to study the role of the three reading stages and observe the effect of it on young learners' reading comprehension.

The research part of the present thesis seeks to investigate the effect of pre-, while-, and post reading comprehension stages on the young learners' reading comprehension development.

The **aim of this research** is to determine the importance of teaching reading comprehension to young learners, to identify the level of pupils' reading comprehension in schools of Transcarpathia and answer the following question: what is the effect of pre-, while-, and post reading comprehension stages on the young learners' reading comprehension development?

The main **hypothesis** that was aimed to prove is that pre-, while-, and post-reading stages influence young learners' reading comprehension in the way, that first of all it prepares pupils for reading a text, it challenges their reading, asks questions which students are to consider before, while and after reading, thus they can develop their abilities of prediction, comprehension and reading competence in general. Secondly, it trains children for using reading comprehension strategies, what increases their understanding because they get used to constantly ask themselves questions connected to the text. And thirdly, using pre- and while- reading comprehension activities, may improve the results of post-reading activities.

In the present study two different **research methods** were used: theoretical as well as empirical methods. Among theoretical methods the analysis of literary sources, systematisation and generalisation were used. Among empirical methods two questionnaires were applied, one of them

was designed for teachers of English as a foreign language working in schools of Transcarpathia and the other one was designed for the young learners of age from 8 to 10 (11).

The **importance of the present thesis and research** lays in the fact that examining the role of three reading comprehension stages, teachers of English could realize the strong and weak points of their students and work on them in order to provide better conditions for reading comprehension development. Only by closely considering the issue of reading comprehension and the significance of it in language acquisition, the teachers may greatly emphasise the role of it in their lessons of English language. Hence the level of young learners' reading comprehension may increase.

The **theoretical value** of this study lays in the analysis of reading comprehension stages at the elementary level as a methodological problem and in the conducting an overview of the nature of the reading process. The material of the present thesis may be useful for young learners' reading comprehension development and it may become the basis for further investigations in this field of study that illustrates the **practical value** of the paper.

The **actuality** of the current thesis lays in the fact that many recent studies have focused on teaching reading comprehension to young learners, and this theme is popular among teachers of English as a foreign language as well, therefore a large body of the present paper is dealing with major methods and techniques of teaching reading comprehension to young learners.

The **aims** of the project are:

- to outline the general characteristics of reading comprehension and the young learner concept;
- to study the importance of reading in primary school;
- to study the main methods, strategies and techniques of teaching reading comprehension;
- to analyse the methods of teaching reading at the elementary level;
- to examine the role of pre-, while-, and post-reading stages and their effect in relation with reading comprehension competence;
- to present the level of young learners reading comprehension in schools of Transcarpathia and demonstrate teachers' professional concern of the given topic.

The **structure of this bachelor thesis** is the following: Introduction, Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3, Conclusions and Pedagogical Implications, the List of References, two Appendices and Ukrainian Summary.

The introduction states the topicality of the issue, the purpose and objectives of the research, defines the object and the subject of the course paper, expounds its practical and theoretical value and lays out the structure of the work.

Part 1 outlines, summarises the approaches towards teaching reading comprehension, analyses academic literature and peculiarities of teaching reading at the elementary level, it contextualizes the topic and presents the main issues of the research.

Part 2 deals with reading comprehension stages, describes its features, and presents the role of it in the concept of teaching English language to young learners.

Part 3 is the pragmatic section, which contains the research on the effect of pre-, while-, and post-reading stages on young learners' reading comprehension. This part is divided into two chapters: reading stages from the teachers' perspective and reading stages from the young learners' perspective. These two chapters include methodology, participants, research instruments, the procedure of the investigation and discussion and interpretation of results of the research.

The conclusion generalizes the results and findings of the research and summarizes all the information provided in the bachelor thesis.

The list of references comprises bibliography of literature used during the research.

Appendix A contains the teachers' questionnaire, which was designed for the teachers of English as a foreign language working in schools of Transcarpathia.

Appendix B contains the students' questionnaire, which was designed for the young learners of 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

## **PART 1**

### **PEDAGOGICAL VIEW OF TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION TO YOUNG LEARNERS**

The first part of the bachelor thesis deals with the general characteristics of reading comprehension and young learner issue. It signifies connections between reading comprehension and language acquisition, states the importance of reading in the young age. This section emphasises methods and techniques of teaching reading comprehension, generally used in primary schools, it gives an overview of types of texts, reading comprehension tasks and presents types of classroom reading performance.

#### **1.1 General Characteristics of Reading Comprehension**

Reading is one of the four basic language skills, which is important for success in acquiring a foreign language. Reading facilitates the intellectual development of the learner, fosters students to expand their vocabulary, acquire new grammatical constructions, and develop fluency and accuracy of speaking. The principle goal of reading is understanding.

Reading comprehension is the ability to read a text, process it, and understand its meaning [58]. Reading comprehension is significant in foreign language learning considering its combinability with the other language skills and effect on learning process. It has an essential role in foreign language learning on the grounds that practically all learning begins with comprehension of the read text and it fosters the language acquisition.

Reading consists of two complementary processes: word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language. Comprehension is the process of understanding words, sentences and connected text, coping with complicated grammatical structures, comprehending active and passive vocabulary, predicting the meaning of unfamiliar words, getting general idea of the read text (getting the gist) and finding special information. Readers typically make use of background knowledge, vocabulary, grammar, experience with text and other strategies to help them understand written text. Successful comprehension enables readers to acquire information, to experience and be aware of both real and fictional worlds, to communicate successfully, and achieve academic success [25].

Reading is an interactive process that goes on between the reader and the text, resulting in comprehension. The text presents letters, words, sentences, and paragraphs that encode meaning. The reader uses knowledge, skills, and strategies to determine what that meaning is.

Reader knowledge, skills, and strategies include:

- Linguistic competence - the ability to recognize the elements of the writing system; knowledge of vocabulary; knowledge of how words are structured into sentences;
- Discourse competence - knowledge of discourse markers and how they connect parts of the text to one another;
- Sociolinguistic competence - knowledge about different types of texts and their usual structure and content;
- Strategic competence - the ability of using top-down strategies, as well as knowledge of the language (a bottom-up strategy).

The purpose(s) for reading and the type of text determine the specific knowledge, skills, and strategies that readers need to apply to achieve comprehension.

Reading comprehension is thus much more than decoding. Reading comprehension results when the reader knows which skills and strategies are appropriate to use for the type of text and understands how to apply them to accomplish the reading purpose [1, p.164-165].

Many factors affect a child's ability to comprehend a text. These include:

- motivation, purpose, goals, engagement;
- vocabulary, word knowledge, background knowledge;
- automaticity of decoding;
- fluent reading;
- understanding and use of strategies employed by effective readers;
- the nature of the text itself (difficulty and interest);
- the type or genre of text (e.g. fiction, nonfiction, poetry) ;
- the amount of reading done [16, p.423].

## **1.2 Characteristics of Young Learners**

The young learner concept is crucial in foreign language acquisition, because the basic knowledge of the language is established at the beginning of the course.

Basically, "young learners" are usually defined as children from five to twelve years of age. This specific category is therefore broad and the distinction between five-year-old and twelve-year-old learners is significant. However, the age is not the only factor that influences differences between young learners. Sarah Phillips claims that acquisition of skills young learners need for the process of education or their possible absence can distinguish an individual young learner from the others [38]. Young learners have to go through several developmental stages. Spatial awareness, balance and control of their body movements have to be matured, social skills such as cooperation,

assertiveness, self-awareness of the children as members of society can help them to fit into their environment. Learning skills are considered to be important as well. The child should be introduced into variety of learning styles to find the most suitable for them. The language teachers should know that because they “have a much wider responsibility than the mere teaching of a language system: they need to bear in mind the education of the whole child when planning their teaching program.” [38, p.4].

The emotional, physical, social and intellectual development of young learners as well as their cultural and family background must be taken into account in the process of teaching. According to Scott and Ytreberg a teacher is “the only one who can see how far up the ladder the individual pupils are” [44, p.1]. The specifics of young learners should be noticed due to the impact they can have on the whole learning process.

Young learners’ attention and concentration span is quite short and “they rely on spoken word as well as the physical world to convey and understand meaning” [44, p.4]. They learn to work together, to cooperate with other people and to feel secure during learning they need simple rules. They prefer playing games to doing other activities, that is why is highly important to choose the games and activities that are simple enough but not considered by learners as “childish”. Phillips comments that using enjoyable activities is not only motivating for a particular lesson but also helps a young learner to adopt the positive attitude towards learning [38].

A considerable progress is achieved by the age of ten. The basic concepts such as understanding abstracts, symbols, generalizing and systematizing are formed, which is essential for language learning.

Most of the teachers know that young learners differ from other language learners and the teaching techniques and styles should be therefore adapted. Firstly, it is the need of using various types of activities in the classroom. The typical feature of young learners is that they like movement, using all their senses and involving real objects [38, p.6].

### **1.2.1 Total Physical Response**

One of the best teaching methods that involves movements, combines physical and mental activity is Total Physical Response (TPR). It is a method of teaching language using physical movement to react to verbal input in order to reduce student inhibitions and lower their affective filter. Total physical response was developed by James Asher, a professor emeritus of psychology at San José State University. It is based on the coordination of language and physical movement. In TPR, the instructor gives commands to students in the target language, and students respond with whole-

body actions. The method is an example of the comprehension approach to language teaching. The listening and responding (with actions) serves two purposes:

- It is a mean of quickly recognizing meaning in the language being learned, and a mean of passively learning the structure of the language itself;
- Grammar is not taught explicitly, but can be learned from the language input [19], [53].

Total physical response is often used alongside other methods and techniques. It is popular with beginners and with young learners, although it can be used with students of all levels and all age groups. In TPR teacher commands and learners do the actions, thus the teacher can easily get feedback of learners' understanding and knowledge [53].

Total physical response has positive effect not only on the learners' feelings and attitudes towards learning, but also on the teaching process in whole, because using this method of teaching from the very beginning of the language course and especially with young learners enables pupils to remember words and phrases learnt in the lesson. In total physical response young learners not only hear or see the words or phrases, they also have an opportunity to respond to them with movements and actions with the help of their bodies. As a result, new vocabulary and grammatical structures could be stored in long-term memory [19], [38, p.6].

### **1.3 Young Learners and Reading**

Both parents and teachers would like young learners read more but both of them know that sometimes learners consider reading to be boring and useless activity. Because of that there should be certain conditions created to improve the situation. From the pedagogical point of view young learners should be encouraged and educated "into the habit of reading". The teachers and parents should show them that reading strategy is a useful and could be pleasurable activity, that there is always a purpose for reading even if it is a mere pleasure and they should always bear in mind that reading cannot only educate the learner but also satisfies their needs.

To avoid considering reading as a difficult and boring activity, children should become familiar with reading from a very young age. At this stage parents play significant role in their child's learning styles development, then teachers are responsible for improving, correcting and developing reading comprehension and other crucial in learning skills.

Storytelling could be fine example how children can be introduced into reading as they simply like narratives and linking the reading activity with stories they enjoy, can encourage them to develop enthusiasm for reading. Carefully selected stories are motivating for young learners because they show them that reading can be a pleasurable experience and what books can offer them.

Ellis and Brewster, authors of “Teaching Young Learners Through Stories” and children literature specialists claim that it is better to start reading in English after the children’s mother-tongue literacy is developed. However, it does not mean that the reading skill cannot be expanded [18].

Young learners can find examples of written English in their environment, such as signs or advertisements. They can read them and together with picture dictionaries or flashcards they create the pre-reading stage of language learning. Followed by specific tasks (read and draw, read and colour, read and match and others) their reading strategies are developed.

John McRae suggests introducing reading texts into the language learning process after a few lessons because every new text invites young learner to the world of fantasy, imagination and discovery [30]. Using these texts regularly means that they would be a normal and pleasant part of the lesson with one great benefit – while the texts in the textbooks are sometimes not appealing to the pupils, the teacher can choose the reading texts that suit their learners’ needs and interests. For young learners that are used to reading frequently the reading activity can become a part of their life. This can be also achieved through extensive reading projects at schools that support the young learners’ independent reading and help them overcome the possible difficulties they can face [30].

To conclude, the encouragement for learners to read from a young age leads to their acceptance of reading as an enjoyable activity and their willingness to read outside the classroom.

### **1.3.1 The Role of Children’s Literature in Teaching Reading**

Children’s literature is a term that is used to describe literary texts written for children. It consists of fairy tales and stories that were written for adults but now they are considered as children’s.

There are several characteristics of children’s literature. This type of literature should be interesting for children, the expressions and language used there should be familiar with young learners and based on real children’s speech. As young readers do not like long complicated descriptions, the stories should be dynamic enough to hold their attention [54].

Young learners identify themselves with the characters so they should be attractive for children – like their friends or someone who is admirable – and what is not less important is that the borderline between good and bad characters should be clear for young readers.

“Children perceive the world mostly through pictures, noises, smells and touches, not through mere words. Therefore they want these sensual elements to be present in the texts as well. They like books full of concrete imagination, they like picture books and texts with funny graphics” [54, p.15].

Children’s literature is a valuable source for developing children’s enthusiasm for reading. Young learners can identify themselves with characters, enjoy a humorous, adventurous or dramatic



plot and gain unconsciously certain knowledge of language. The relevant texts for them should contain the illustrations or other visual clues, should be simply structured with an easily comprehensible plot and based on with their background knowledge and experience, because if the story would be about something very serious or difficult for children to understand they would consider a story to be uninteresting.

Using children's literature is obviously a vital part of teaching English as a foreign language. It can help expand pupils' vocabulary, strengthen the language and adopt the positive attitude toward reading. Young learners like listening to stories, fairy tales, nursery rhymes and therefore using such literature are highly motivating in teaching English as a foreign language.

"Young learners' motivation can be regarded as intrinsic, simply because of the children's interest in reading and listening stories written for them" [54, p.16]. Another benefit of using children's literature is that it enhances the young learners' imagination and fantasy. According to Susan Halliwell, the authentic literary texts play an important role not only in the process of developing language-learning skills but also in the children's lives [23]. Young learners delight in imagination and fantasy. It is more than simply a matter of enjoyment, however. In the primary school, children are very busy making sense of the world about them. They are identifying pattern and also deviation from the pattern. In the language classroom this capacity for fantasy and imagination has a very constructive part to play.

Although teaching reading should be concerned with a real life, a teacher should be aware that the reality for young learners includes fantasy and imagination. The importance of imagination is that it stimulates children's usage of real language.

To sum up, teachers should be familiar with children's literature in order to use effective methods and approaches as well as to keep learners' attention on the subject and deliver their interests. Not the least essential fact is that motivated pupils are better learners, thus a teacher's task is to motivate students with interesting and challenging tasks and make curious presentations, creating positive attitude to literature and reading, show learners that reading is satisfactory, enjoyable and involving activity that can be shared with others [54].

#### **1.4 Reading Comprehension in School**

At beginner and elementary levels the teaching program usually concentrates on vocabulary and grammar teaching. Therefore, texts are normally used as vehicles for the presentation of new language, whereas systematic receptive skills development is reserved for intermediate levels. Teaching materials involve some comprehension tasks usually questions after texts, but this alone hardly seems to constitute systematic skills development.

Although, texts could be used for the presentation of language items, it is not helpful to equate all text-based lessons with language work [29, p.103-105], [55, p.23]. The main objective of teaching reading comprehension is the development of the learners' ability to understand and interpret texts using their existing language knowledge. Teachers of English as a foreign language should remember that explaining all unknown lexis before learners read, will cancel out training in inferring the meaning of lexis in the text [21].

Organisation of reading habit is a significant factor in teaching reading comprehension. In classes where students are used to reading and after reading tasks and its procedure in the lesson, learners are free from anxiety and stress because they are already accustomed to these activities. However organisation and similarity should be present in the lesson, teachers should avoid making lessons boring for students, and this means that tasks and exercises need to be different and interesting for learners [20, p.8-9].

Starting from the beginner level of English language learning, learners are taught to work with texts of different types (depending on their age and level). Linguists, who work in the field of teaching English as a foreign language, believe that young learners should be able to:

- understand the main idea of the text, its facts and events;
- identify specific information;
- recognise feelings (of main heroes and the text itself), for example: it could be happiness or anger; attitude, for instance: friendliness, hostility, etc.

In school learners face different problems considering reading comprehension development, they are the following:

- learners read for the words not for the meaning;
- they get easily discouraged by lexis unknown for them;
- they do not make conscious use of their background knowledge and experience.

These problems mostly ground on the teacher's habit of explaining unknown lexis for learners before students even see the text itself, this demotivates them and prevent children from thinking for themselves or making guesses, or even from making out the meaning of unknown words from the context. Also, a teacher's attitude toward teaching influences learners' knowledge, the teacher as the head of class shows example for children, learners unconsciously copy the teacher's actions and behaviour and they feel the teacher's attitude toward teaching. That is why the teacher, teaching young learners needs to remember a crucial fact, that he/she is an example for learners and pattern for them.

### 1.4.1 Text Selection

Text selection is considered to be essential in teaching reading comprehension; texts which seem to be difficult to understand with complex plot and with unknown words is certainly should not be used with young learners. Texts selection depends on the teacher, thus responsibility for the learners' comprehension is laid on him/her because the teacher can determine the difficulty of the lesson by manipulating the level of the task [34, p.141-143]. Selected by the teacher, texts should not be too long because students' concentration span is limited and reading long texts they easily get bored and demotivated, therefore, texts should be short, suitable for learners' needs and interests. To the contrary to these statements, there are linguists who believe that successfully tackling longer texts will boost the learners' confidence [22, p.54]. It is important that texts mimic the layout of real-life text types and are accompanied by visual materials [4, p.58], [9, p.85-86]. Authentic-looking layout will help learners recognise different text types, and visuals will provide clear and helpful contextual support.

Apart from the obvious fact that texts need to be relevant to the learners' age and interests, there are other factors to consider:

- content may be familiar, so that learners can feel secure and utilise their background knowledge;
- texts may offer new facts to learn; a process which simulates children's real-life experience;
- content may be striking and/or fun to create interest and motivation [25, p.175].

### 1.4.2 Types of Reading Comprehension Tasks

These task types are considered to be helpful for learners to approach texts actively. Learners need: to predict elements of context/content by using visuals, title, key lexis; predict the continuation of a story.

Unfortunately, in schools of Ukraine these are rarely used, however using them would increase students' attention, motivation and willingness toward reading, doing this there is a chance to develop reading comprehension, because as it is known learners who are interested in the task have more productivity in their work, thus the teacher's task here is to compile tasks which would be challenging, motivating and interesting for young learners [8, p.168].

One of the most common reading comprehension task types are multiple choice, true/false and odd one out. They are frequently used during the lessons in order to check pupils' reading comprehension. Difficulty can be manipulated by changing the number of options given. It is important that the incorrect options are not distracting, and that the choice of the correct option

clearly indicates comprehension, or hints at the nature of the learners' problems [35, p.194-200].

Options can be:

- sentences, phrases or lexis expressing facts, feelings or attitude;
- visuals depicting shapes, objects, animals, people, facts, feelings;
- alternative titles, text-types, sources of texts, or contextual elements;
- words exemplifying different sounds or stress patterns.

Another type of task which is also very commonly used in schools of Ukraine in the lessons of English language is matching exercise. The teacher asks students to match: text to text-type, objects or animals to their owners, feelings and attitudes to characters, ingredients to recipes, etc. [22, p.52-60].

## **1.5 Types of Classroom Reading Performance**

### **1. Oral and silent reading**

At the beginning levels students are to be asked to read orally, especially young learners, at this level oral reading can:

- serve as an evaluative check on bottom-up processing skills;
- double as a pronunciation check;
- serve to add some extra student participation if teacher wants to highlight a certain short segments of a reading passage.

But teachers should also bear in mind disadvantages of oral reading, they are:

- while one student is reading, others can easily lose attention;
- it may have the outward appearance of student participation when in reality it is mere recitation.

Children need opportunities to read both silently and orally. Beginning readers often sub-vocalize when they read, which generally supports comprehension. Comprehension is also enhanced when children read in pairs, discuss their reading, and receive feedback from an adult or a peer [24, p.371-373].

### **2. Intensive and extensive reading**

Silent reading may be subcategorized into intensive and extensive reading. Intensive reading is usually a classroom-oriented activity in which students focus on the linguistic or semantic details of a passage. Intensive reading calls students' attention to grammatical forms, discourse markers, and other surface structure details for the purpose of understanding literal meaning, implications,

rhetorical relationships, and the like. Moreover, intensive reading may be totally content-related reading initiated because of subject-matter difficulty.

Extensive reading is carried out to achieve a general understanding of a usually somewhat longer text (book, long article, or essays, ect.). On the contrary to intensive reading, extensive reading is performed outside of class time. Pleasure reading is often extensive. In this type of reading the reader is striving for global or general meaning from longer passages, here, all concepts, names, dates, and other details need not be retained, students gain an appreciation for the affective and cognitive window of reading: an entree into new worlds. Extensive reading can sometimes help learners get away from their tendency to overanalyse or look up words they do not know, and read for understanding [24, p.312-313].

### 3. Interactive reading

Unfortunately, this type of reading is very rarely used in the lessons of English language; however it has so many advantages. Interactive reading is a form of reading in which students not just looking at words on a page to understand the text, but they rather read and ask questions, they think about what the author means and what is his purpose for writing. This type of reading allows students to stimulate their thinking as well as to help them to remember what they were reading [25, p.169].

## 1.6 Strategies for Reading Comprehension

Reading is one of the most effective ways of developing language comprehension, thus special attention must be paid on the reading comprehension and on its strategies. Here, in the following passage nine strategies for reading comprehension are presented [24, p.306].

### 1. Language learners should identify the purpose in reading

Efficient reading consists of clearly identified purpose before the students are going to read the text itself. This statement is grounded on the fact that when language learners are aware of their aim of reading, they will concentrate directly on subject of their interest and avoid unnecessary and sometimes otiose information. Hence, novice teachers should bear in mind, whenever he/she is teaching a reading technique: make sure students know their purpose in reading something.

### 2. Language teachers should use graphemic rules and patterns to aid in bottom-up decoding (especially for beginning level learners)

At the beginning levels young learners of English struggle different hardships in learning to read, principally in making correspondences between spoken and written language. In some cases, when learners are already acquired with spoken language, they may find it hard to learn and

recognize spelling conventions of English language. Therefore, a teacher's work here is to explain orthographic rules of English language in regards to learners' age groups and demands in reading.

### 3. Skimming strategy for searching the main idea of a text

Skimming is one of the most valuable reading strategies for foreign language learners. It consists of quickly looking through the whole text for the sake to get the gist. Skimming gives readers the advantages of being able to predict the purpose of the passage, its message, main topic and idea. This makes learners able to embark more focused and complicated reading. Teachers can use this strategy in the language lesson by creating a particular task for students in which they are given limited time to accomplish the reading exercise. For this type of practice consecutive advices should be followed:

- the teacher gives students 30 seconds to look through a few pages of written text;
- then, students are to close their books;
- after doing this, students retell what they were reading about and what they have learned.

Although, some linguists consider this type of exercises to be exclusively concentrated on what students remember from reading the text, this would be effective for teachers to check learners understandings. To avoid checking merely students' remembering the facts from text appropriative instruction should be given to them. Before reading a text, the teacher introduces the topic of the text, focuses students' attention on certain details of it, and in some cases explains the new vocabulary (if it is necessary for comprehending the context, not less important fact is that all reading must contain from 5-10% unknown for learners words), makes clear for students new or difficult to understand grammar structures. In this way, this type of practice would be applicable for developing reading comprehension.

### 4. Scanning strategy for searching specific information

As skimming, scanning is one of the most valuable reading strategies for foreign language learners. This is the type of exercise where learners need to read the text in order to find particular piece or pieces of information. In this type of exercise students could be asked:

- to find the names or dates;
- to give a definition of a key concept;
- or to list some details.

In this kind of exercises teachers should set clear questions before encouraging students to read and then give them time to look through the text and answer the questions. Here it is crucial for teachers not to cheat the learners asking other questions different from those which were set before the reading and not change them during the task, because doing this students become demotivated and would make them uninterested in any reading exercises as they will remember that once the teacher has cheated them.

## 5. The use of semantic mapping and clustering

Young readers can easily be overwhelmed by long stories and complicated ideas or events. The strategy of semantic mapping, or grouping ideas into meaningful clusters, helps the reader to provide some order to the chaos. It could be done either individually by a single student or making groups of several learners within the class encouraging them to work collectively to induce order and hierarchy to a passage. In the early stages these drafts would look like messy or weird notes taken by students, but over the time learners will benefit from it and for someone it could become learning strategy not only for reading comprehension but also for learning other language skills [24, p.306-311].

Semantic mapping is a procedure which actively involves students in their learning and helps to motivate their reading, writing and thinking processes. Semantic maps allow students to approach an activity in an individual way and require them to relate new ideas to their own background knowledge. Completed semantic maps show what knowledge students have about a particular topic. They provide a starting point for teaching and planning of themes and topics [26].

Semantic maps can be used to show growth in knowledge. If students have constant access to their maps they can add any new knowledge they acquire. Semantic maps represent information in a visual form which encourages recall and organisation of knowledge. Students at all levels of the primary school can use semantic maps as a means of recalling and organising their background knowledge and new information. Semantic maps can be made up of pictures and words or a combination of both, see Figure 1.6.1 [26].



**Semantic map [26].**

This semantic map on “caves” was completed by a fifth grade child. The map shows the information that students could recall about the topic and the new knowledge that was gained throughout the topic. This semantic map was started prior to reading a factual text on caves. The questions on the semantic map provided a focus for the student's reading. The map also encouraged the student to use appropriate vocabulary, related to the topic. Various activities followed on from the semantic map and students were able to add new knowledge at any time. Students do not just do these semantic maps; they use them in a way which meets their learning needs. To be able to do this

efficiently students need to understand why they are using semantic maps and how they can help them with their learning. Students are encouraged to explore their thoughts about semantic maps [26].

#### 6. Guess if you are not certain technique

This strategy would be appropriate for those students who are suffering from the feeling that they will not understand every word from the text and something bad might happen. Learners can use guessing strategy to their advantage to:

- guess the meaning of a word;
- guess a grammatical relationship;
- guess a discourse relationship;
- infer implied meaning (“read between the line”);
- guess about the cultural reference;
- guess content messages.

For young learners this strategy would seem like a guessing game, however, it has serious effects on their prospective learning strategies. The sooner they understand this strategy, the better off they are. The key to successful guessing is to make it reasonably accurate. Teachers can help students to become accurate guessers by encouraging them to use effective compensation strategies in which learners fill gaps in their competence by intelligent attempts to use whatever clues are available to them. Language-based clues include word analysis, word associations, and textual structure. Non-linguistic clues come from context, situation, and other schemata.

#### 7. Vocabulary analysing strategy

One way for learners to make guessing pay off when they do not immediately recognize a word is to make it in terms of what they know about it. Here several techniques are presented:

- look for prefixes (co-, inter-, -un, ect.) that may give clues;
- look for suffixes (-tion, -tive, -ally, ect.) that may indicate what part of speech it is;
- look for roots that are familiar (for instance: intervening may be a word a student do not know, but recognizing the root of ‘ven’ comes from Latin “to come” would yield the meaning “to come in between”;
- look for the grammatical contexts that may signal information;
- look at the semantic context (topic) for clues.

#### 8. Difference between literal and implied meanings

English language has special stages of comprehension: literal and implied meanings, they are essential from the point of language learning, they improve learners’ comprehension competence, enrich their accurate knowledge of foreign language, and develop active vocabulary, add synonyms, antonyms and idioms. As well as mentioning these important factors, another side of



comprehension need to be emphasised, students should be familiar with both literal and implied meanings in order to be able to recognize and properly understand texts with special and sometimes hidden meanings. In addition to this statement it is also crucial in avoiding misunderstandings both in reading and comprehending texts, and in spoken language, it helps learners to communicate freely with native speakers and understand almost all what they mean by saying something that seems to be odd for foreign learners. This ability could help students to comprehend texts with indirect meaning, make clear special sayings of English language and make accurate translation from English into the learners' mother tongue.

The well-known fact that each language has its own special nature that is why students need to be introduced literal and implied meanings in order to be able to comprehend implied information and understand both direct meaning of word or of the whole sentence and also feel different shades of meaning in another contexts and be able to use them without hesitation.

#### 9. Discourse markers to process relationships

English language is rich-in discourse markers; they are significant not only in connected speech, but also in written texts. They are used to signal relationships among ideas in text, therefore they need to be dealt in teaching and learning foreign languages. Moreover, teachers should introduce discourse markers in the lessons, make clear for students discourse markers' meaning and usage, doing this students would be able to comprehend their meaning and importance in texts and in the long run learners would be accustomed to using them in their speech, as a result, their comprehension would be more accurate and learners' speech would be more extended, logically constructed and different ideas would be connected [24, p.306-311].

Dr. Schiffrin pointed out that discourse markers perform important functions in conversation because they provide contextual coordinates which aid in the production and interpretation of coherent conversations at both local and global levels of organization. However, Dr. Schiffrin focused on the functions of discourse markers in conversations and not in reading. Moreover, the emphasis of her work was merely put on English as a first language, rather than English as a second or foreign language.

In 2009, Dr. Martinez of Department of English Philology, Faculty of Philology University of Oviedo studied the effects of discourse markers on the reading comprehension of Spanish students of English as a foreign language [14]. According to Ana, she has found a significant correlation between the presence of discourse makers in the text and reading comprehension. In order to develop students' skills in gaining better reading comprehension, teachers should make their students be aware that both the formal schema and content schema can enhance their reading comprehension process [25, p.164-168], [52].

## 1.7 Developing Reading Comprehension Strategies

A meta-analysis conducted by the US National Reading Panel (2000) highlighted teaching techniques that have been shown to be effective in promoting reading comprehension, they are the next:

- comprehension monitoring;
- graphic/semantic organisers (diagrams) for learning new vocabulary;
- story structure training focusing on plots, characters and main events;
- question answering;
- question generation;
- summarisation (identifying and integrating details to create a coherent and succinct summary of a text);
- multiple strategy teaching [26].

In this section, the focus is on the essential elements of effective reading comprehension instruction that research suggests every teacher should engage in to foster and teach reading comprehension:

1. Build disciplinary and world knowledge.
2. Provide exposure to a volume and range of texts.
3. Provide motivating texts and contexts for reading.
4. Teach strategies for comprehending.
5. Teach text structures.
6. Engage students in discussion.
7. Build vocabulary and language knowledge.
8. Integrate reading and writing.
9. Observe and assess.
10. Differentiate instruction [26, p. 52].

In conclusion, it should be stated that reading comprehension is emphasized in schools and teachers put a lot of efforts in developing methods of teaching they used before. As the study has shown, reading skills help students to acquire language, enrich vocabulary and improve fluency and accuracy of other language skills. The most important that reading comprehension gives learners opportunity to gain valid information from the read text and critically analyse it. This assignment has explained the central importance of reading comprehension in frames of the English language lesson. This chapter has given an account of practical value of reading skills and its types that are performed in schools.

## **PART 2**

### **THE ROLE OF READING ACTIVITIES AND THEIR IMPACT ON YOUNG LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION**

The second part of the bachelor thesis aims to study stages of reading, their role and effect on reading comprehension of young learners. This part of the study elucidates the characteristics of three reading phases, it emphasises strategies and activities connected to pre-, while-, and post-reading activities as well as outlines its advantages and disadvantages.

The stages of reading have been classified into:

- pre-reading;
- while-reading;
- post-reading.

#### **2.1 Pre-Reading Stage**

One of the objectives of pre-reading or before reading stage is to corroborate different experiences and background knowledge that students already possess, as it greatly influences students' ability to read, comprehend and learn from a particular text.

There is an enormous significance of pre-reading phase in the process of comprehending the whole written work. Pre-reading phase activates learners' background knowledge, prepares the learners to reading. By knowing what students bring to a text the teacher can provide students with appropriate scaffolds to make links between what is already known and new information presented in a text. This technique can help teachers to facilitate students' learning and reading comprehension development as well.

Before reading promotes huge interest for students since by reading and comprehending a piece of written work, they are also expected to predict the content of a text. Here the teacher's choice of the text is consequential, insomuch as the text itself should consort with students' concerns. Many linguists believe that before reading is critical for comprehension to occur [25, p.181-184], [42].

##### **2.1.1 Role of the Background Knowledge in Teaching Reading Comprehension**

Reading comprehension is one of the main purposes of EFL teaching and learning. There are two main outlooks on reading. The first, a product-oriented approach to reading, assumes that meaning exists in the text itself, and it is text-based factors that determine meaning. Product-oriented

approach discerns pre-reading activities as an effective way of clarifying the meaning of difficult and unknown words or complex structures. On contrary to the first approach, for the second, process-oriented approach to reading, meaning is obtained through a successful interaction between the reader and the text, and it is inside-the-head factors that play prominent role in comprehension.

Accordingly, background knowledge will be of primary importance for EFL readers, and schema-based pre-reading activities should be used for activating and constructing such background knowledge [37].

The present-day researchers of EFL put a lot of emphases on the role of the prior knowledge of young learners. The same view was presented in the late 1781, when famous philosopher Immanuel Kant claimed that new information, new concepts, and new ideas can have meaning when an individual can relate the information to something which he/she already knows [27]. Presently, Anderson et al. have restated this notion: "Every act of comprehension involves one's knowledge of the world as well." [10, p.73]. Reading is a sampling process where the reader takes advantage or makes use of the prior-knowledge of vocabulary, syntax and the real world experience.

Many current researches on reading have agreed on the theoretical view that meaning is not found in the texts only. Researchers came up with the fact that understanding a reading text results from a communicative processes between readers and texts. Readers try to match their existing knowledge with the new information that they receive from the text. Rumelhart describes schemata as "the building blocks of cognition" [41].

### **2.1.2 Pre-Reading Activities**

According to Chastain the main purpose of pre-reading activities is to motivate students to want to read the assignment and to prepare them to be able to read it [11]. Pre-reading tasks are intended to construct background knowledge. The teacher becomes a bridge builder between what students already know about a concept - schemata - and what they need to know in order to understand a particular text, that is, the interaction between those schemata and the input coming from the text.

Pre-reading tasks are intended to prepare the learners for a reading selection in order to develop skills in anticipation and prediction for the reading, activating background knowledge, so they could later interact with the text. With these tasks, teachers give students meaningful pieces of information that they would encounter in the reading [45].

Ringler and Weber call pre-reading activities enabling activities, because they provide a reader with necessary background to organize activity and to comprehend the material. These experiences involve understanding the purpose(s) for reading and building a knowledge base necessary for

dealing with the content and the structure of the material. Pre-reading activities elicit prior knowledge, build background, and focus attention [40].

Pre-reading tasks have tended to focus exclusively on preparing the reader for linguistic difficulties in a text; more recently attention has shifted to cultural or conceptual difficulties. However, pre-reading activities may not just offer compensation for second language reader's supposed linguistic or socio-cultural inadequacies; they may also remind readers of what they do, in fact, already know and think, that is to activate existing schematic knowledge [25, p.181-184], [37, p.6-7].

### **2.1.3 Types of Pre-Reading Activities**

There are various pre-reading activities. The type of the activities depends on the teacher and the type of the text that learners will read. A teacher must provide pre-reading activities that would match with the text to be read. According to Tierney and Cunningham (1984) pre-reading activities act as a way to access the reader's former knowledge and "provide a bridge between his knowledge and the text". Tierney and Cunningham break up pre-reading activities in two parts: teacher-centred and student-teacher or peer interaction.

Teacher-centred is one-way question/answer activity. Student-centred activities are more apt to develop an independent behaviour from the beginning. Pre-reading activities can also be defined as warm-up activities which engage students in the preparation for a reading task. The activities may differ in their length and the amount of input required to complete it. The activities sometimes may require low-level student interaction (e.g. showing a picture to help understanding the context) or involving them to use other skills as well (e.g. asking students to complete a class survey about a relevant topic). The choice of the type of pre-reading activities will depend greatly on the kind of the text to follow and the types of the learners who will be doing the task and the aim of the pre-reading task.

Stoller shows some of the pre-reading activities along with its definition and benefits [49].

<b>Pre-reading Activity</b>	<b>Brief Definition</b>	<b>Benefit</b>
Semantic mapping	A graphical representation on a blackboard showing readers' prior knowledge in the form of connected categories to a given concept.	It helps learners bring their prior knowledge to the surface.
Study the layout of the reading passage.	Pass quickly by: the text's title, subtitles, headings and visual representation and guess what they hold as meanings.	Prompt learners to ask questions which they will try to answer.
Scan for details	Readers are asked to search for specific information in the text.	To make them search for specific information.
Examine the visuals	Readers exam the charts, graphs or figures.	It helps reader to guess the text's ideas.
Present main ideas	The teacher informs readers about the article's topic if they are unfamiliar with it.	Direct readers towards the text's key words and ideas.

#### 2.1.4 Pre-Reading Strategies

Auerbach and Paxton suggest the following pre-reading strategies: [5, p.237-260]

- Accessing prior knowledge;
- Writing your way into reading (writing about your experience related to the topic);
- Asking questions based on the title;
- Semantic mapping;
- Making predictions based on previewing;
- Identifying the text structure;
- Skimming for general idea;
- Reading the introduction and conclusion;
- Writing a summary of the article based on previewing.

**Previewing.** Swaffar et al. point out the benefits of previewing techniques that allow students to formulate hypotheses about the text [50]. By taking advantage of contextual clues – titles, headings, pictures, students are encouraged to draw inferences prior to reading. In addition, Swaffar views identification of text genre: articles, poetry, nonfiction, and plays, as a very important preview exercise. She suggests that engaging in this type of analysis enables students to identify the probable rhetorical grammar, stylistic markers and possible constraints on the development of ideas.

According to Chia, the aim of previewing is to help readers predict or make some educated guesses about what is in the text and thus activate effective top-down processing for reading comprehension [12, p.22]. Several stimuli in a text, such as the title, photographs, illustrations, or subtitles, are usually closely connected to the author's ideas and content. So, based on any of them, students can make predictions about the content of the text. To make more specific predictions, however, students need some guidance.

The following guidelines can help:

- First of all, the teacher may ask the students to read the title of the article. Then the teacher's task is the next: to reveal if the learners know anything about the subject?
- After dealing with the text title, the teacher can ask the students to read the first few paragraphs, which generally introduce the topics discussed in the text. Can they determine the general themes of the text?
- Then teacher may ask them to read the first sentence of each paragraph, usually the topic sentence, which gives the main idea of the paragraph. Can they determine the major points of the article?
- At the end learners should read the last paragraph, which often reveals the conclusion of the author. Moreover, it is vice to discuss how the author organizes the information to present his point of view.

**Questioning.** Some pre-reading activities simply consist of questions to which the reader is required to find answer from the text. Traditionally, these types of questions followed the text and were designed to test comprehension, but in more recent materials questions often precede the text and function as scanning tasks. Questioning can be regarded as another type of top-down processing activity. Questions may be generated by the teacher or by the students and should be done before the reading, rather than after the reading. Reutzel has proposed the Reconciled Reading lesson to help teachers form effective pre-reading questions [39, p.194-198]. Teachers who adopt the Reconciled reading questions from the comprehension questions that appear in the textbook after the reading selection or in the teachers' manual. A problem, here, is that not all the questions originally designed as post-reading exercises can be appropriately converted to pre-reading activities.

How do students generate text-related questions even before they read the passage? Williams gives an interesting three-phase (pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading) approach to reading, with particular attention to the pre-reading phase [57, p.1-7]. The approach begins by introducing the topic of the passage that students are going to read. Once the topic is presented, students are asked to work in groups and write a list in two columns. The first column lists things

about the topic that they are sure of, and the second lists things that they are not sure of or don't know.

For an instance here is presented a list about whales like:

Sure	Not Sure /don't know
1. Whales are not fish	1.How many kinds?
2. The largest are 40 meters long.	2. How long do they live?
3. There are different kinds.	3. What do they eat?
4. They are used to make soap	4. How fast can they swim?
	5. How heavy are they?

Williams suggests that each member of the group in turn volunteer a fact or question, so that no group member is neglected. Afterwards, the teacher asks a representative from each group to write one or two items from their lists on the board so that some interesting items, which other groups may not have thought of, can be included.

**Semantic mapping.** According to Chia, many teaching techniques have been developed to activate students' prior knowledge for effective top-down processing in order to facilitate reading comprehension [12]. Several of them have been empirically proven to be helpful, but some have not. Surprisingly, pre-reading vocabulary exercises, despite widespread use, do not improve overall comprehension. In fact according to Johnson, vocabulary study may result in a word-by-word, bottom-up approach that is detrimental to comprehension. But direct vocabulary instruction does not necessarily involve teaching specific words rather equipping learners with strategies necessary to expand their vocabulary. It is also argued that most vocabulary is learned through context, but that the learning-from-context method is at its best for teaching learning-to-learn skills not for teaching vocabulary [36, p.22; 231-243], [48, p.89-105].

Williams suggests that pre-teaching vocabulary probably requires that the words to be taught in semantically and topically related sets so that word meaning and background knowledge improve concurrently [57, p.1-7]. Zimmerman maintains that direct vocabulary instruction focusing on semantic mapping as an acquisition strategy is more effective than vocabulary acquisition activities that teach only words rather than strategies for acquiring words [60].

According to Wallace, one very popular kind of pre-reading task is "brain storming". This may take the form of giving the class a particular key word or key concept. Students are then invited to call out words and concepts they personally associate with the keyword or words provided by the teacher. Brainstorming has many advantages as a classroom procedure. First, it requires little teacher preparation; second, it allows learners considerable freedom to bring their own background knowledge and opinions to bear on a particular issue; and third, it can involve the whole class. No-one need feel threatened when any bid is acceptable and be added to the



framework. For example, these are the kinds of associations which might be called up by the key word money: ‘coin’, ‘bank’, ‘poverty’, ‘pay day’, ‘interest’, ‘purse’, and etc. These bids reflect very different categories and levels of generalization. However, the initial random association can be classified and subcategorized either by the teacher or the students, and additional contributions from class members or the teacher added to stretch existing concepts. The result of this kind of activity resembles what has been called “semantic mapping” [37, p. 6-11].

### **2.1.5 Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Pre-Reading Activities in the EFL Lessons**

Williams gives the following reasons for using pre-reading activities with young learners:

- To stimulate interest in the text: we seem to be more interested in what we are going to read if we already have an idea of what the text is going to be about. Moreover, researches show that when we are asked to guess about the happening in the text this facilitates our comprehension when we actually read it.
- To give a reason for reading: we do not read unless we have a reason for it. The reason might include pleasure, finding out some general or specific information. We do not read aimlessly, and thus learners too should have reasons for reading and this need to be genuinely motivated. One of the ways in which a pre-reading activity can provide a "reason to read" is by asking questions about the text and the other way is to create "information gap" activity where students have different information and they have read and exchange information to complete a task.
- To prepare the reader for the language of the text: teachers cannot expect learners to understand all the language presented in the text. Too much unknown language can present the learner with a heavy cognitive load and hinder comprehension. To avoid this, pre-reading activities can be used to prepare the reader for the language in the text. Such exercises might include pre-reading vocabulary by presenting key-words in a familiar context or contrasting them with known antonyms. They might also be used to pre-teach grammatical structures in the written piece of work. These types of activities might also involve a pragmatic approach such as helping learners to recognize what social context they are dealing with [57, p.16-17].

Although there are many affirmative approaches to the view that pre-reading activities are helpful but still there are negative views to this as well. Among those negative views are the next: pre-reading activities seem to be time-spending exercises, since they require more time during the lesson, that is the reason why many teachers tend to skip those pre-reading exercises before the text.

Moreover, in the study of prediction activities and prior-knowledge made by Valencia and Stallman in 1989 based on their experiment on reading, they came up with a view that prediction

activities that activate prior knowledge do not improve comprehension. They also stated that there were no consistent comprehension differences between students who engaged in pre-reading activities and students who did not complete any prior knowledge activity at all [31, p.18-19].

## **2.2 While-Reading stage**

While-reading (during, through reading) stage helps students to develop reading strategies, improve their control of the foreign language, and decode problematic text passages. During the while-reading stage, the teacher's job is to help students to understand the specific content and to perceive the rhetorical structure of the text. This stage, requires the teacher's guidance to ensure that students assume an active, questioning approach to the material. Such guidance can be supplied by a number of while-reading tasks. The simplest technique for this purpose is to gather major ideas of the text. For maximum benefit, the questions should address three levels of understanding: the explicit, the implicit, and the applied. The first solicits literally stated information that can be inferred, and the third necessitates relating new ideas to previous knowledge or experience [6, p.125].

During the reading process, students should be required to continually practice and apply the comprehension strategies that good readers employ almost subconsciously, such as making connections, monitoring understanding, and stopping to summarize, asking questions, etc. Teachers may provide specific during-reading strategies for helping students to practice these strategies effectively. When students engage in these during-reading strategies, a teacher also gets a view into the thought processes of his or her students, as their "thinking" becomes visible on paper and in classroom discussion.

It can be difficult to help students to employ while-reading strategies because individual students need different strategies. Nevertheless, the teacher can pinpoint valuable strategies, explain which strategies individuals most need to practice, and offer concrete exercises in the form of "guided reading" activity sheets. Such practice exercises might include guessing word meanings by using context clues, word formation clues, or cognate practice; considering syntax and sentence structure by noting the grammatical functions of unknown words, analysing reference words, and predicting text content; reading for specific pieces of information; and learning to use the dictionary effectively [17, p.23] [25, p.181-184].

### 2.2.1 While-Reading Strategies

In-reading strategies are those the reader applies while s/he is in the process of decoding the reading. This paper proposes the following in-reading strategies: guessing, silent reading, self-questioning, vocabulary attack skills, dictionary use, fact/opinion, text organization, underlining, note-taking, paraphrasing, graphic organizers, comprehension questions, cloze exercises, and inference [59, p.44].

**Guessing strategy.** An activity when a teacher asks learners to read the text in 'chunks' (an introduction, a paragraph, etc.) and stop after each one to talk about the main ideas and guess what comes next. This activity can be done in small groups or with the whole class. Stoller alleges that learners soon realize the different interpretations people give to the contexts. It is good to discuss these differences, and link them to the way people understand and analyse things depending on their previous experience [49, p.2-7].

**Self-questioning strategy.** According to Shih, skilled readers need to ask themselves mental questions not only at the pre-reading stage, but also at the in-reading and post-reading stages. Davey and Irvin claim that readers should ask themselves questions such as: What did I just read? Did I understand what I just read? What will come next? They assert that these questions are useful to monitor comprehension [46, p.289-311]. In addition to that, Stoller proposes asking learners to underline or highlight the answers to the questions they previously asked to themselves [49, p.2-7].

**Silent reading.** Morris and Zinn mention studies carried out by Coley and Farrell on this respect. According to Coley and Farrell, silent reading improves comprehension, vocabulary scores, and increases at-home reading. Hayes, on the other hand, states that silent reading increases the schemata (the knowledge readers have in long-term memory) [33, p. 26-27].

**Text organization.** Shih considers that it is important for students to be aware of certain textual signals and have text organization knowledge to better understand a text. This will let them establish certain relationships among the ideas in the reading. For instance, if a student is aware of the different types of patterns of organization writers use to organize the information such as: cause/effect, time order, definition, classification, listing, process, analogy, comparison/contrast, and description, s/he can analyse how the information has been put together and understand the passage s/he is reading better [46, p.289-311].

**Graphic organizers strategy.** While reading teacher may ask learners to scribble down a graphic organizer (e.g. draw a semantic map, fill in a chart or table on similarities and/or differences, put steps in order, arrange periods in chronological order, etc.) doing this, learners put the ideas together, establishing relationships among facts, and thus they understand the content better [59, p.46].

**Vocabulary strategy.** Vocabulary strategies are taught in the context of the texts being read and studied. The confirmation of it would be Clarke and Silberstein's opposition of giving lists of vocabulary with definitions out of context because, as they state words are vehicles of meaning and seldom appear in isolation [13, p.135-154]. Learners should be taught to identify key words basic for the comprehension of the text such as those in the title, headings, topic sentences, or words that recur. Once they did this, students should be aware of the different possibilities for guessing the meanings of words in context; for instance, the students continue reading and try to infer or obtain a general idea of the unfamiliar word. In addition, the teacher can give readers some clues on meaning such as: synonyms, antonyms, definitions, explanations, cause and effect, association between an object and its function, descriptions, examples, comparison/contrast and cause/effect relationships, etc.

**Dictionary use strategy.** For the use of the dictionary students should prioritize the unfamiliar vocabulary they encounter in texts. Some words can be inferred from the context, other words can be ignored. It is crucial to tell the students that they do not necessarily need to know every single word in the text they are going to read. Nevertheless, there are words that should be looked up in the dictionary. There should be a balance, students must not become completely dependent on the dictionary or completely detached from it. Students should use the dictionary as a last resort, only if context did not reveal the meaning of unknown words. The excessive use of a dictionary affects the reading process making it slow, tiresome, and boring.

Furthermore, young learners should be taught how to use the dictionary. It is essential to teach pupils how to discriminate among the different meanings the dictionary provides because they tend to pick the first meaning that appears in the entry and automatically discard the rest. It is useful to point out how the dictionary furnishes clues in parentheses to help the user find the adequate meaning according to the context of the word.

Another significant aspect is to let students know that depending on the reading purpose they may have, they need to look up for fewer or more words in the dictionary. If the learners are interested in reading to grasp main ideas or getting the gist, then they do not need to look up for the meanings of many unknown words. If the purpose of reading is much more serious then, the students have to search for the meanings of more words [59, p.46-48].

**Fact and opinion strategy.** For an additional in-reading strategy, Wiesendanger and Bader advise instructors to teach learners how to differentiate facts from opinions, and be able to draw them from the text. This type of strategy helps students to discriminate what information is relevant and what is not, notice similarities and differences, and learn how to select key words [56, p.399-400].

**Underlining strategy.** Shih mentions ideas of McAndrew which suggest that good strategies are better applied if the student owns the material and is willing to underline and annotate

in the margins[46]. Instructors should teach the students how to use these markings to enhance comprehension; otherwise, an incorrect application of them may hinder it. Underlining and note-taking serve two functions: as external storage mechanisms (helping the student to keep information for later study or use) and as encoding mechanisms during the reading process (helping the student to focus on the most important ideas or points). When students can discriminate main from secondary sentences, and they mark (underline or take notes) the main or the higher level superordinate sentences that require a deeper mental processing, they recall the ideas better and understand the text better.

In order to underline or take notes students have to read section by section, first reading and then rereading and underlining so that they have a clear and wider understanding of the content and know what ought to be underlined. Underlining and note-taking have to be in accordance with the task. If the learners are reading for personal interest they have to be able to set up their own goals.

Shih believes that underlining has a disadvantage because it does not separate main ideas from examples, or provide the opportunity to comment on or react to the material, whereas taking notes in the margin provides more valuable and meaningful information [46, p.289-311].

**Note-taking strategy.** Khan proposes certain features for note-taking: brevity, relevance, clarity, note form, and abbreviations and symbols. According to Shih, when taking notes for test purposes, the student should target definitions, examples, names, dates, events, lists, cause/effect, and comparison or contrast patterns. When the information the students need is specific, Stoller suggests that teachers prepare question grids or tables for the learners to fill out [28, p.18-19], [46, p.289-311], [49, p.2-7].

**Paraphrasing strategy.** Underlining and annotations are helpful tools for the students to monitor comprehension, but paraphrasing, which is another way of taking notes, makes the reader process the text at a deeper level. Paraphrasing means to write or retell the author's ideas in the students' own words without changing the original meaning. The teacher should teach how to paraphrase and provide the students with a lot of practice.

**Comprehension questions, cloze exercises, and inference strategies.** Inference is another skill that has to be developed in a reading class. Sometimes it is hard for the students to understand implicit information. The teacher can develop this skill by preparing comprehension questions that require students to infer information which is to be marked easily while reading the text, such as true and false, matching, multiple-choice, and cloze exercises. A cloze exercise is a text in which there are some missing words that the reader has to fill in, inferring the information from the rest of the text. These exercises will teach pupils how to infer words and phrases by context, and enrich the content by reading beyond the lines. The teacher can prepare a few of these types of questions per

paragraph so that they can be answered as the student is decoding the message or understanding the content of the text [49, p.50-51].

## **2.3 Post – Reading Stage**

The main purpose of the post-reading phase is to check for accurate comprehension of the text. Too often students are asked to read a selection and then never get a chance to discuss the piece they have read. By using simple post-reading strategies, the teacher can help pupils to derive meaning from what they have read and address any misunderstandings that they may have encountered [2].

Post-reading activities offer students the opportunity to make connections with the text(s) and their own experiences, self-expression, and creative responses in light of having read and analysed the text. These activities enable students to apply a more global understanding and interpretation of the text and integrate information from different parts of the text.

Post-reading or after-reading strategies are active reading strategies implemented after reading a book. Post-reading strategies are composed of reviewing assignments or activities that will prolong the official completion, but will anchor new concepts and sharpen opinions [3], [25, p.181-184].

### **2.3.1 Post – Reading Strategies**

Post-reading strategies are those strategies the reader applies after he has read the text and has a complete picture of it. The teacher can use these strategies for reinforcement, evaluation, and application. When reinforcing, the teacher can review vocabulary, grammar or reading comprehension strategies. When evaluating, the educator can verify if the students understood the content, or used the reading strategies, vocabulary and grammar correctly. S/he can do it through comprehension questions or other activities that may include round tables, debates, group work, discussion, etc. If the teacher notices that any aspect (content or strategy) was not mastered to the level s/he wanted to, s/he can go back and explain it again or provide more practice. When applying the content of the reading just read to new situations, the teacher can prepare solving-problem or critical reading activities.

To evaluate reading comprehension, it is of primary importance to pay attention to some suggestions expressed by authors on the design of comprehension questions. According to Kissok and Iyortsuum the type of questions the teacher asks, the information the learners draw, and the mental processes these questions activate determine the level of comprehension the instructor is

looking for [43, p.42-44]. The teacher should first choose the type of domain s/he wants to evaluate and then design the questions accordingly.

For Clarke and Silberstein if the instructor is going to ask for thorough comprehension, s/he should prepare comprehension questions that ask for accessible information. One way for the teacher to do this is by reading the text and writing comprehension questions about the main points s/he remembers. The students may not remember more than s/he does [13, p.135-154].

Moreover, teachers should be careful to write comprehension questions that develop such reading skills as finding main ideas, details, or arguments; guessing unknown words by using the context clues; and increasing linguistic competence (e.g. grammar and morphology). In addition, teachers should ask learners to answer open-questions that allow for different interpretations and points of view.

Another possibility is to ask questions in which the learners have to infer certain information from the text; for example, the author's attitude and purpose. Students should not be afraid to read beyond the lines, but at the same time they must know that inferences are educated guesses. A different option is to prepare a list of events from the reading and ask the learners to sequence them in chronological order. In addition, teachers should ask learners to check the previous assumptions they made during the pre-reading and during-reading activities, as suggested by Hind and Brancard [49, p.2-7].

But most essential is to take into account criterion tasks when writing questions. Anderson and Armbruster believe it is more important to focus on criterion task demands. A criterion task is a real task students want or need to do, so the act of reading a text is the answer or the solution for the task. If they read the text for a specific task (to look for specific information, to prepare a presentation, to study for an exam, etc.), the teacher should be aware of this and be ready to prepare questions that fit the task goals [46, p.289-311]. Dubin alleges that in post-reading exercises teachers should reintroduce words already studied in pre-reading and during-reading activities. This inspires learners to reinforce the vocabulary they already encountered in the text [15, p.37-49]. If the teacher emphasized a particular structure or lexis as a pre-reading strategy, post-reading activities are a good opportunity to review it in context. Cloze exercises work well to review structure and vocabulary [32, p.37-38].

It is essential to teach learners how to make their own conceptual maps, graphic organizers, semantic maps, cognitive maps, semantic organizers, networks, tables, graphs, etc. to organize the main ideas and the supporting details. They are helpful because they show a visual representation of the relationship of words and phrases.

The instructor should encourage students to make a summary. When students write summaries they rework in a deeper way the information included in the notes and match that

information with the reading tasks they had proposed. Shih believe that it is basic for students to write summaries to organize or rehearse the information of the text [46, p.289-311]. The instructor should guide students to write summaries. S/he should ask students to write careful notes from the information that is underlined, and from the notes written in the margin of the text or on separate sheets of paper. This information which is written in the form of comments, paraphrasing, and exact quotations is then put together in a cohesive, coherent way.

After reading the teacher may ask learners to extract the main idea of the text. During the in-reading process they searched for the main ideas of each paragraph, as a post-reading strategy they can discuss what the main idea of the whole text is [59, p.57].

To conclude, it should be highlighted that students know how to use reading strategies-how to combine and choose the appropriate strategies to accomplish a task. In this way, they can become more independent learners. The teacher, in its turn, should study what strategies the students lack, which work better for each task, and how their learning styles can affect their learning strategies through informal talking in the classroom, surveys, and observation. With the help of teachers and strategies, learners will understand the reading comprehension process better.



## **PART 3**

### **EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH**

The paramount objective of the present research is to study the role of reading stages in reading comprehension development and its effect on young learners reading comprehension.

The main hypothesis that we aimed to prove is that pre-, while-, and post-reading stages influence young learners' reading comprehension, in the way, that first of all it prepares pupils for reading a text, it challenges their reading, asks questions which students are to consider before, while and after reading, thus they can develop their abilities of prediction, comprehension and reading competence in general. Secondly, it trains children for using reading comprehension strategies, what increases their understanding because they get used to constantly asking themselves questions connected to the text. And thirdly, using pre- and while- reading comprehension activities may improve the results of post-reading activities.

#### **3.1 Methodology**

The theme of the present research is: the effect of pre-, while-, and post-reading stages on young learners' reading comprehension.

As the first and second part of the bachelor thesis dealt with major methods, techniques and strategies that are present and efficiently used for teaching reading comprehension, this study aims to examine how reading stages are taught in schools of Transcarpathia and what is the effect of it on the young learners' reading comprehension.

The objects of this study are the teachers of English as a foreign language, as well as students of third, fourth and fifth grades, who are from 8 to 11 years old. This age is appropriate for the research, because pupils are in the middle of the young learner concept.

The research was conducted in schools of Hungarian and Ukrainian language of instruction.

For the research teacher's (see Appendix A) and student's (see Appendix B) questionnaires were used to examine the usage of reading stages in the Transcarpathian region.

Among methods of investigation, data collecting and method of analysis were used.

#### **3.2 Participants**

For the research different schools of Transcarpathia were chosen, among them were schools with Hungarian and Ukrainian language of instruction. To complete the teacher's questionnaire 10 teachers of English as a foreign language were asked to participate in the current investigation.

Teachers, who participated in the present research, were from 4 different regions of Transcarpathia: 5 teachers from Beregszasz region, 2 from Szolyva, 2 from Munkacs and 1 teacher from Szőlős region.

The questionnaire aimed to study the teachers' professional opinion about teaching reading stages to young learners in schools of Transcarpathia and what effect/s it has on pupils' comprehension competency or whether pre-, while- and after reading stages have any effects at all on students' texts understanding.

To collect data for examining reading comprehension from the young learners' perspective different schools of Transcarpathia were chosen; among them were schools with Hungarian language of instruction, mainly situated in Beregszasz. 50 pupils studying from 3rd to 5th grade were asked to complete the questionnaire (see Appendix B).

The questionnaire aimed to study how pupils comprehend English texts, which kind of strategies do they use while reading, and the main problem stated in the current research is: what is/are the effect/s of pre-, while-, and post-reading stages on young learners' reading comprehension.

### **3.3 Research Instruments**

The instruments of this investigation are the teachers' and the students' questionnaires (see Appendix A and Appendix B), which were made to investigate how reading stages are taught in Transcarpathian schools and their effect on the young learners' reading comprehension.

The teachers' questionnaire was made in English; it consists of three blocks of questions of different nature and one question of creative nature, which was interested at whether pre-reading stage influences the results of post-reading stage and the comprehension of a text itself, and if influences, in what way.

The students' questionnaire was made in Hungarian, so that young learners could understand all the questions correctly and because Hungarian language is their mother tongue. The questionnaire consisted of 12 questions. The type of these questions was multiple choice. The first 3 questions are of general nature and the others are focusing on the matter of the present investigation.

### **3.4 Procedure of the Research**

The research was conducted in the period between 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2017 and 11<sup>th</sup> of April 2017.

First of all we managed to find 10 teachers of English and asked them to participate in the present investigation and to complete the questionnaire. The teachers, who agreed to participate in the

research, were from 4 different regions of Transcarpathia: from Beregszasz, Szolyva, Munkacs and Szőlős regions. The questionnaire was anonym, no names were required, thus strict and rigid atmosphere was abandoned. Collecting data in this way may give more reliable and sincere answers.

Then, 50 student-participants were chosen to make the research more objective. 2 schools of Beregszasz region were chosen for it, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades. At one of the lessons of English, students were asked to complete the questionnaire. Students were explained the purpose of the investigation, why they were asked to participate in it and it was also said to them that the questionnaire is anonym, they do not need to worry, and it is made just for the current study.

After collecting data, we started to analyse the given results of the research and summarize them.

### **3.5 Discussion and Interpretation of the Results of the Teachers' Questionnaire**

In the first block of questions the emphasis was put on the general essence of teaching reading comprehension to young learners in schools of Transcarpathia. These questions deal with the teachers' teaching experience, the number of students in a single group, the average reading comprehension competence of young learners and the frequency of practicing reading activities in the lessons of English language.

From the answers of the questionnaire, it can be concluded that the average teaching experience of those, who completed the questionnaire is 9 years of teaching, however the answers varied from 1 to 26 years. Considering this question, it should be mentioned that this number is not stable, due to the fact that teaching staff is changing annually and depends on a number of factors.

The second question was about the number of students in a class, the results have shown that the average number of students in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade is 18, in 4<sup>th</sup> grade – 16 and in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade it is 15 students. Answers varied from 11 to 26.

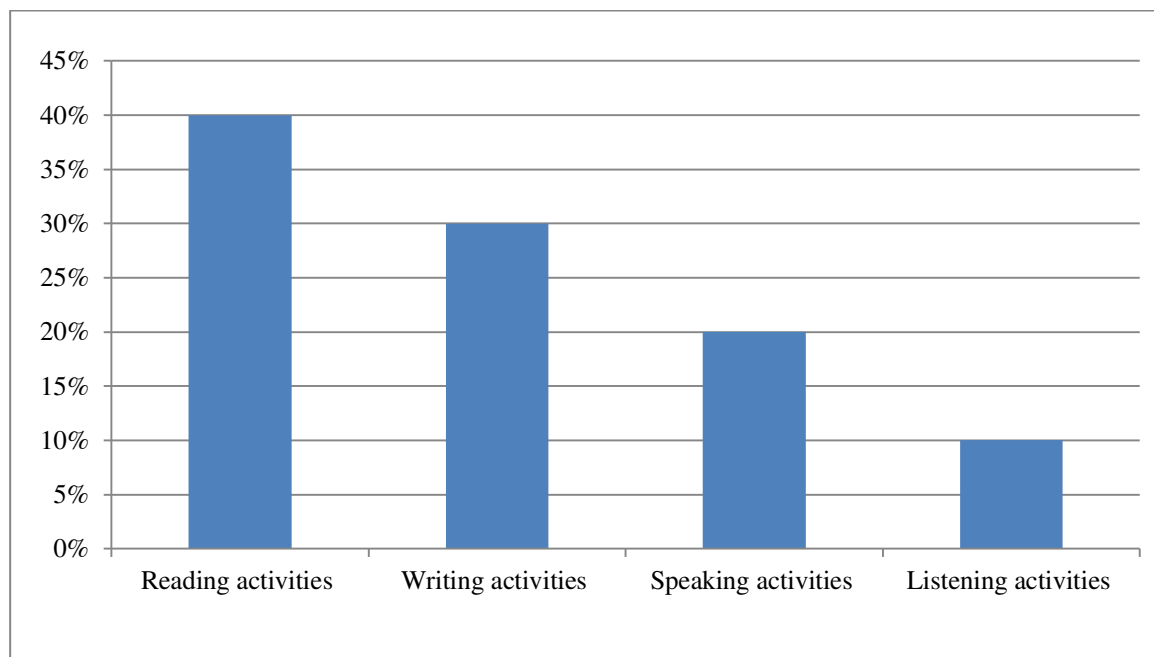
The next tendency could be noticed: the number of students in cities is higher than in villages.

For intensive language learning this number is too high, because the teacher has to work with the whole class and the more students are in a class the less time remains for each of them, thus it is difficult to work in big classes.

According to the teachers' experience it can be stated that the reading level of young learners in Transcarpathia is mostly average, relying on the fact that 6 out of 10 teachers chose this answer from the next ones: *above the average, average, below the average and reading level varies greatly*.

The 4<sup>th</sup> question was about the percentage of time teachers devote to the reading, speaking, listening and writing activities in a typical English language lesson. The research has shown that reading activities take 40 % of time in the lesson, while writing – 30%, speaking – 20%, and listening activities – only 10% of time. According to it, teachers devote most of the teaching time to reading and writing activities and the least attention is given to listening activities (see the figure).

**Figure 3.5.1 Teaching Language Skills in an English Lesson**



The last question in the first block was about how often teachers do reading activities in the class. 60% of teachers said that they do reading activities every lesson, 40% - do reading activities once a week. It means that teachers, who were asked to complete the questionnaire, consider reading to be an essential language skill, which needs constant practice, hence these teachers give learners opportunity to develop their reading comprehension.

The second block of questions was aimed to examine teachers' professional opinion about how reading stages should be taught to young learners in schools of Transcarpathia. These 13 questions of more particular essence contain questions connected mostly to pre- and partially to while- reading stages of reading.

Most teachers agree with the fact they may teach pre-reading strategies to pupils, as 3 out of 10 strongly agree with it, 3 – agree, and 4 teachers are neutral about that statement.

80% of teachers who completed the questionnaire believe, that while-reading strategies should be taught to pupils in school; 10% - neutral about the statement, and another 10% - disagree with the statement.

Moreover, teachers are also in favour of practicing post-reading strategies in English language lessons. According to the questionnaire, 30% of respondents strongly agree with the

statement that teachers of English as a foreign language may teach young learners some post-reading strategies, 60% of those simply agree with it, and the remaining 10% - is neutral.

30% of those teachers who completed the questionnaire strongly agree with the statement that teachers of English as a foreign language may do pre-reading exercises before reading the text, 50% of them also agree with it, and 20% of teachers are neutral about it.

The following statement was about students' background knowledge (Teachers of English as a foreign language may rely on the students' background knowledge when reading a new piece of written work). This statement was supported by the majority of teachers, due to the fact that 5 out of 10 teachers agreed on this statement, 3 were neutral and there were 2 respondents, who disagreed with the statement. Thus, the next conclusion can be made from this investigation: teachers of English rely on the students' background knowledge when reading a new piece of written work with restriction, because students' background knowledge is not always reliable and sometimes can even be misleading.

60% of teachers are neutral about the usage of prediction of unknown words' meaning with young learners; hence they rarely use this technique, while other 40% agree with the statement that teachers may rely on students' ability of prediction the meaning of unknown words.

Guessing strategy in reading is a controversial question, because the received answers differ greatly. Some teachers (30%) disagree with the statement that teachers of English may use guessing strategy on the lessons when dealing with reading a text, other 30% is neutral, 30% - agree and the remaining 10% - strongly agree with the statement in question.

80% of those who took part in this investigation supported the statement that teachers may give information about the subject of the text by using the title of it, and another 20% - is neutral.

The next statement: teachers of English as a foreign language may give information about the subject of the work using some related pictures is strongly supported only by 10% of teachers, who completed the questionnaire, but majority, which means 70% agreed with this statement, and 20% remained neutral.

Situation for classroom discussion on the title of the work is positively regarded only by 3 out of 10 teachers in total (1-strongly agreed, 2-agreed), 6 respondents are neutral and 1 disagrees with the statement that teachers of English may create a situation for classroom discussion on the title of the work.

All of the respondents agreed that a teacher of English may ask questions connected to the text using the question words like: how, why, where, who, what, when. It means that 70% of teachers answered that they strongly agree with this statement, and 30% also simply agree with it.

Furthermore, 70% of responders strongly agree with the statement that teachers may teach new vocabulary before reading, 10% - agreed, and 20%- is neutral.

The last statement of the second block was the next: teachers of English as a foreign language may do while-reading exercises when reading a text. This statement was supported by 40% of those who completed the questionnaire, whose answer was positive, as they agreed with the statement, another 40% - is neutral, and 20% - disagree with the statement.

The summary of the second block of questions of the teachers' questionnaire can be seen below.

**Figure 3.5.2 Summary Table of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Block of Questions in the Teachers' Questionnaire**

<i>Teachers of English as a foreign language may :</i>	<b>S. A.</b>	<b>A.</b>	<b>N.</b>	<b>D.</b>	<b>S. D.</b>
teach pre-reading strategies to pupils	3	3	4		
teach while-reading strategies to pupils		8	1	1	
teach post-reading strategies to pupils	3	6	1		
do pre-reading exercises before reading the text	3	5	2		
rely on the students' background knowledge		5	3	2	
rely on students' ability of prediction the meaning of unknown words		4	6		
use guessing strategy on the lessons when dealing with reading a text	1	3	3	3	
give information about the subject of the text by using the title of it		8	2		
give information about the subject of the work using some related pictures	1	7	2		
create a situation for classroom discussion on the title of the work	1	2	6	1	
ask questions using the question words: how, why, where, who, what, when	7	3			
teach new vocabulary before reading	7	1	2		
do while-reading exercises when reading		4	4	2	

\*Here *S.A.* is substitution for *strongly agree*; *A.* for *agree*, *N.* for *neutral*, *D.* for *disagree* and *S.D.* for *strongly disagree*.

The third block of questions was aimed at investigating while- and post-reading stages in more detailed way. Here 9 questions were stated and the task was to define what is specific to young learners when they deal with comprehending a text in English language. Teachers were asked to use percentage equivalents to illustrate the reading techniques the pupils use most frequently and give a vivid picture of how reading comprehension is set on the lessons of English language.

Based on the current investigation the following conclusions can be made:

- Young learners often need to read more than once to comprehend a text.

This conclusion results from the generalised answers of those who completed the questionnaire, which means that 64,5% in total stated that young learners often need to read more than once to comprehend a text.

- Sometimes pupils from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grade answer reading comprehension questions in a written way.

The present conclusion results from the generalised answers of teachers who took part in this study. According to this, 45% in total is the percentage equivalent of frequency of answering reading comprehension questions in written. Hence, this result can be regarded as general; furthermore they apply only to some schools of Transcarpathia.

- The most frequent tendency is answering reading comprehension questions orally. As the investigation has shown, very often pupils are asked to answer reading comprehension questions orally, this means that 69,5% is the frequency of usage this reading comprehension technique in practice.

This statement is concluded from the answers of responders, which were generalized so that conclusions can be made from the statements.

- 48,5% is the frequency of usage of the following reading comprehension technique: While reading young learners put themselves in the shoes of the characters and live through the story.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that sometimes young learners put themselves in the shoes of the characters and live through the story when they read a text in English. Obtained results are gained from English teachers' perspective.

- Most of teachers believe that their pupils want to predict the other parts of work they read after reading some parts of the text.

61,5% is the percentage equivalent of frequency of prediction technique usage. Thus, it could be stated that this reading comprehension technique is often used in schools of Transcarpathia.

- 55,5% is the percentage equivalent of how often pupils of 3<sup>rd</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade create their own interpretation about the piece of written work they are dealing with.

It means that according to teachers, who completed the questionnaire, young learners may sometimes have their own interpretation about the piece of written work they are dealing with.

- 54% is the frequency of how often students of 8, 9, 10 and 11 years try to understand each word in texts.

This investigation has shown that sometimes young learners try to understand each word from the text they read.

- 59,5% is the frequency of how often students of 8, 9, 10 and 11 years try to understand the work they read in general.

Based on the conclusions made above, it can be stated that more students try to understand the whole work in general, than focusing on comprehending every word written in the text. This conclusion is made from the English teachers' perspective and it is applied only to some schools of Transcarpathia, where the current research was done.

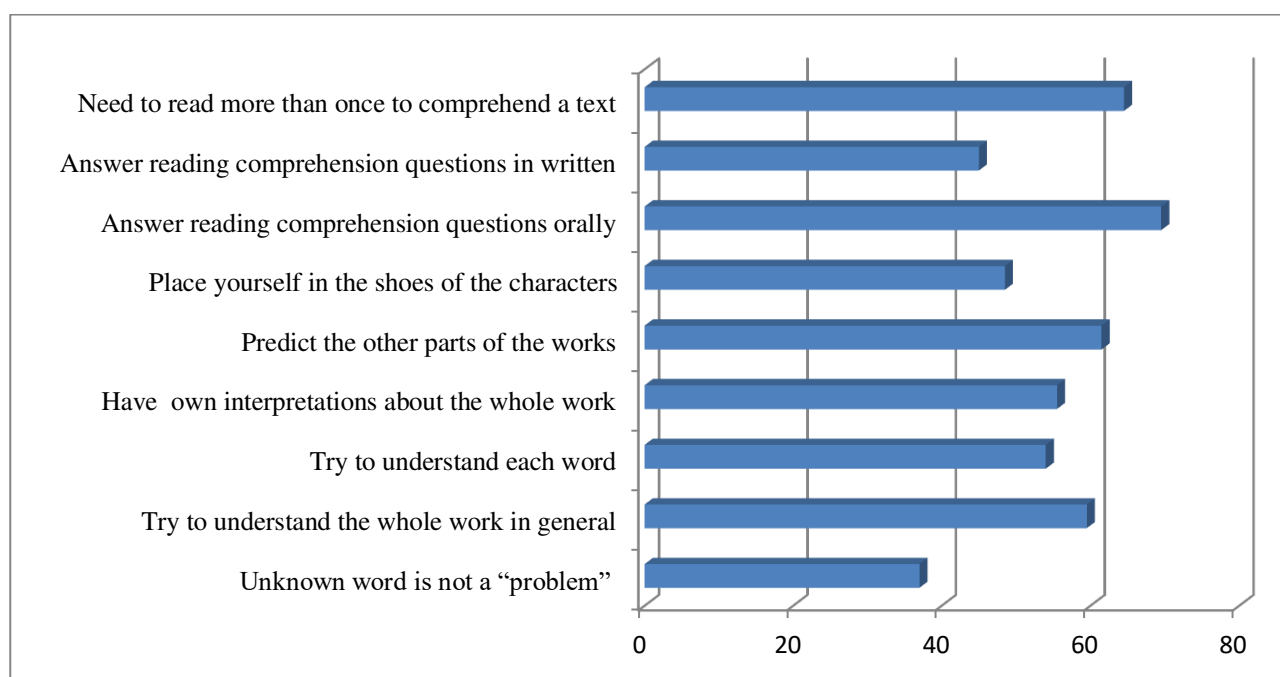
- Occasionally, unknown words do not cause any problems to young learners, but the percentage is very low. It means that only 37% in total do not consider an unknown word to be an obstacle in their comprehension.

On this ground, it can be concluded that young learners tend to see unknown words as hindrance of their understanding of a written piece of work.

The following percentage equivalences were used in the teachers' questionnaire:

100% - always	70% - often / frequently	10% - seldom
90% - usually	50% - sometimes	5% - hardly ever / rarely
80% - normally / generally	30% - occasionally	0% - never

**Figure 3.5.3 Summary Table of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Block of Questions in the Teachers' Questionnaire**



The last question was a creative one. Teachers of English were asked to express their own professional opinion about the following statement:

**From your personal experience, does pre-reading stage of reading activity influence the results of post-reading stage and the comprehension of the text itself? How?**

The teachers gave very valuable answers. The examples of these answers are the next:

- "It does in a way that if pre-reading stage or exercises are included, then students are more likely to understand the text or the reading material. Thus their task to do the post-reading exercises is facilitated, because they already have a clear picture about the whole text itself."



2. “Yes, it influences the results of post-reading stage, because their own predictions help them to understand and comprehend the text. They start to deal with and think about the topic, they may have an opinion about it.”

3. “I agree with the statement that pre-reading stage of reading activity effectively influences the results of post-reading stage and the comprehension of the text itself, because it makes the text easier to understand if you have a pre-reading stage.”

4. “It is better for students to get acquainted with the new vocabulary before reading a text for the first time. In my opinion it is easier for them to cope with the post-reading stage if they know beforehand what important parts should they notice while reading it.”

5. “No, it does not.”

6. “I think pre-reading exercises could help students understand the text. Doing pre-reading exercises could give hints to students.”

These were the answers given by teachers of English in schools of Transcarpathia. As it can be seen, most of the responders consider pre-reading comprehension activities to be significant part in reading comprehension development. Thus, based on the answers above, the next conclusion can be made: pre-reading activities influence young learners’ reading comprehension in the way, that it facilitates comprehension and gives young learners’ clear picture about the whole text itself; pupils’ predictions could be approved or disapproved; students think of the text in more detailed way and have their own opinion about it; pre-reading comprehension exercises make comprehension easier for pupils; young learners can focus on the most crucial parts of the text to comprehend the general idea or specific information; pre-reading exercises give young learners hints to comprehend a text.

Although, most of the answers were in favour of pre-reading comprehension activities, as 90% of teachers stated that pre-reading activities facilitate young learners comprehension, help them to understand a text and makes students focus on the most essential parts of the text; there was 10% of responders, who stated that pre-reading activities do not influence the results of post-reading activities.

### **3.6 Discussion and Interpretation of the Results of the Student’s Questionnaire**

In the study 50 students participated, they were aged from 8 to 10. The instrument used for the current study was students’ questionnaire (see Appendix B), which consisted of 12 questions, the first three questions of general issues and the others are focusing on the matter of the present investigation. Among 50 students there were 30 girls and 20 boys.

The students were asked of their marks that they usually get at the lessons of English language. The results are the following: 38 students replied that they get marks between 10 and 12; 12 students get marks between 7 and 9; and no one replied that he/she has mark from 1 to 6.

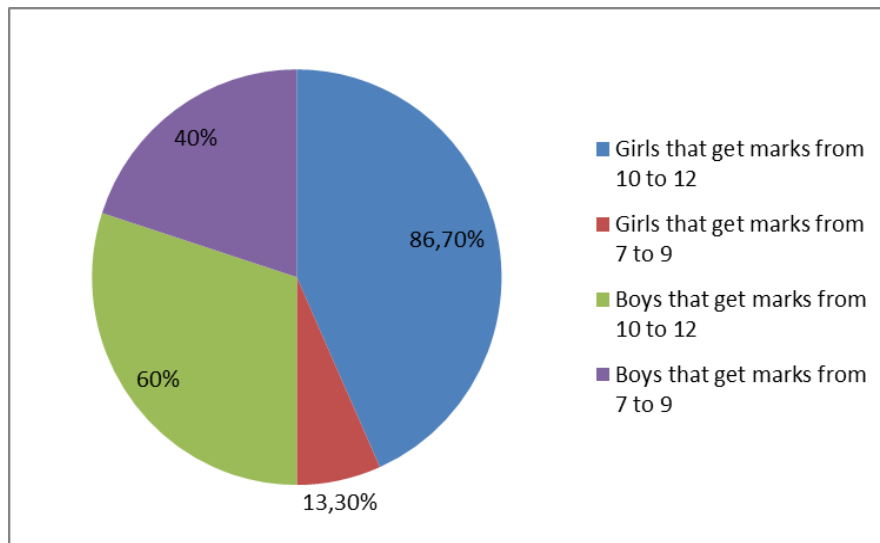
Here the fact of subjectivity should be taken into consideration. There are many factors that could influence students' replies, for instance, they were ashamed to admit that they have lower marks or they just wanted to seem to be better. Although, these results may seem to be not exactly objective, but this is a true tendency, that the young learners frequently get good marks, because teachers of English want to encourage them to study the foreign language. The other factor why young learners have good marks is the motivation towards learning; it means that giving pupils good marks teachers can motivate them. And the last crucial factor is the students themselves. Young learners are interested in learning the foreign, not similar to their language. They like to hear words in English, learn them, thus they can show their parents that they know a lot in English.

Apart from that, the study has also shown the following:

- 26 girls have marks from 10 to 12;
- 4 girls have marks from 7 to 9;
- 12 boys have marks from 10 to 12;
- 8 boys have marks from 7 to 9.

In percentage equivalents it means, that 86,7% of girls have marks from 10 to 12, 13,3% of them – from 7 to 9. 60% of boys have marks from 10 to 12, another 40% - get marks from 7 to 9.

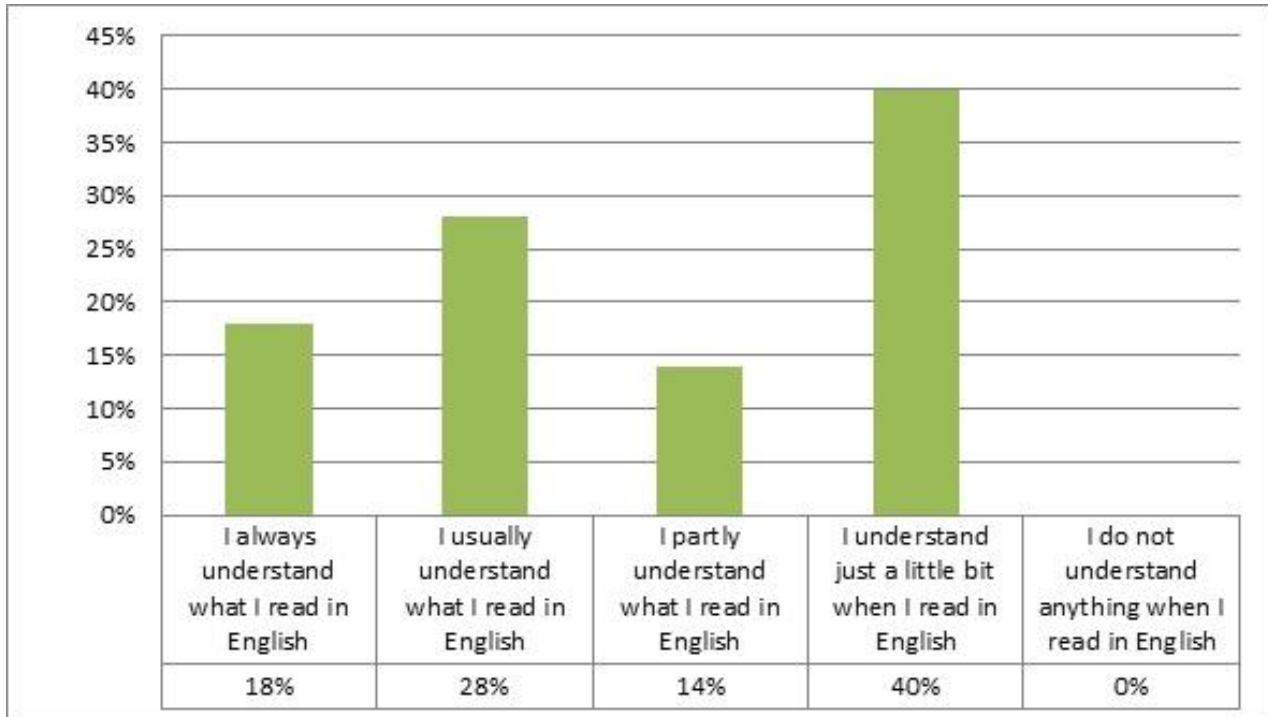
**Figure 3.6.1 Marks of Girls and Boys of the English as a Foreign Language**



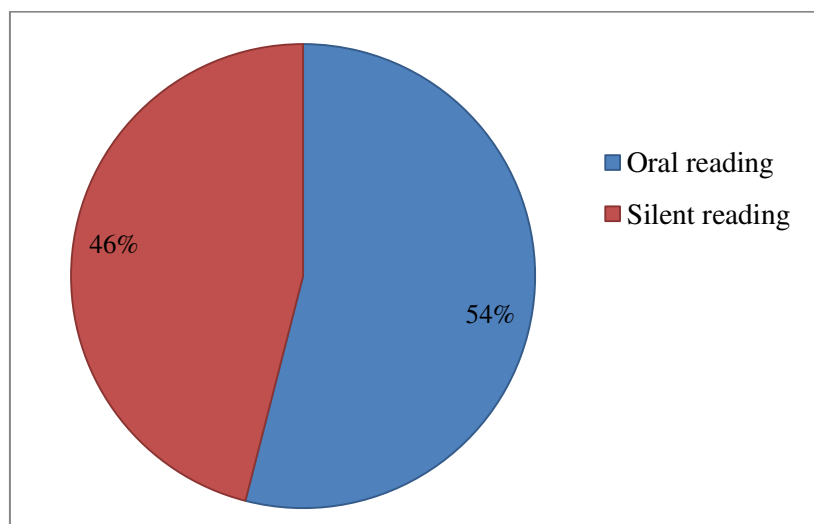
Based on these results, the next conclusion arrives: girls usually get better marks on the English lessons than boys, because as the study has shown 86,7% of girls get marks from 10 to 12, compared to 60% of boys who get the same marks. So, boys get worse marks due to the fact that, 40% out of 100% of boys get marks from 7 to 9, compared to 13,3% out of 100% of girls who get the same marks.

The next question was considered to how much students understand when they read a text in English. The present investigation has shown that most students (20 out of 50) understand just a little bit from the English text; 14 students said that they usually understand what they read; 9 out of 50 students state that they always understand the English text that they read; 7 students understand only some parts of the text.

Based on this ground, it can be concluded that most of young learners in Transcarpathia, reading a text in English can understand just a little bit from it. Although, the percentage of students, who comprehend a little from an English text is high 40%, but there are altogether 60% of students who can partly or completely comprehend what they read about.

**Figure 3.6.2 Learners' Comprehension of English Texts**

The next question in the students' questionnaire considered the way students can better comprehend in English. Students needed to choose one from the two options, whether they comprehend better when they use silent or oral reading technique. As it is revealed from the present study, the relation between oral and silent reading technique is almost identical, at least there is no huge difference in numbers of responders. 27 of young learners state that they comprehend better when they read orally, and 23 students replied that they can better understand if they read in silent.

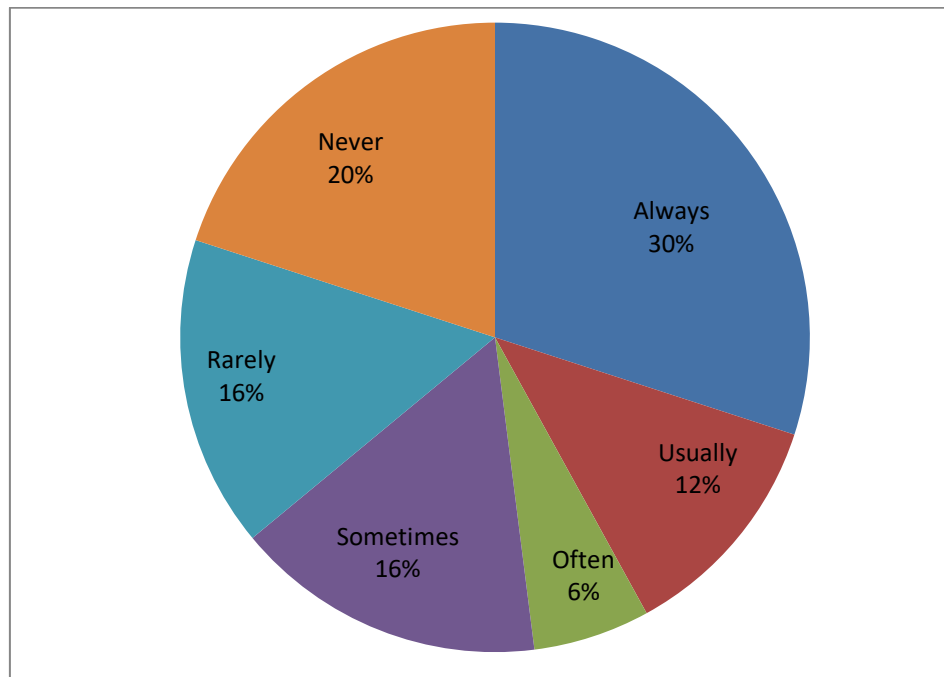
**Figure 3.6.3 Oral and Silent Reading**

The next question in the students' questionnaire considered the frequency of usage of illustrations and titles before reading a text in English to understand a text better. Most of the young learners (15 pupils) replied that they always use illustrations and titles for understanding a text

better; 6 out of 50 usually use them; 3 responders often use illustrations and titles for the texts; 8 students sometimes use it; 8 of the pupils rarely use illustrations or titles and 10 – never.

These results show us, that most of the students use illustrations and titles to comprehend a text better, however the frequency of usage differs, 80% of students use both titles and illustrations in order to deepen in their reading and understand the text better, other 20% never use them at all (see the figure below).

**Figure 3.6.4 Frequency of Using Titles and Illustrations**



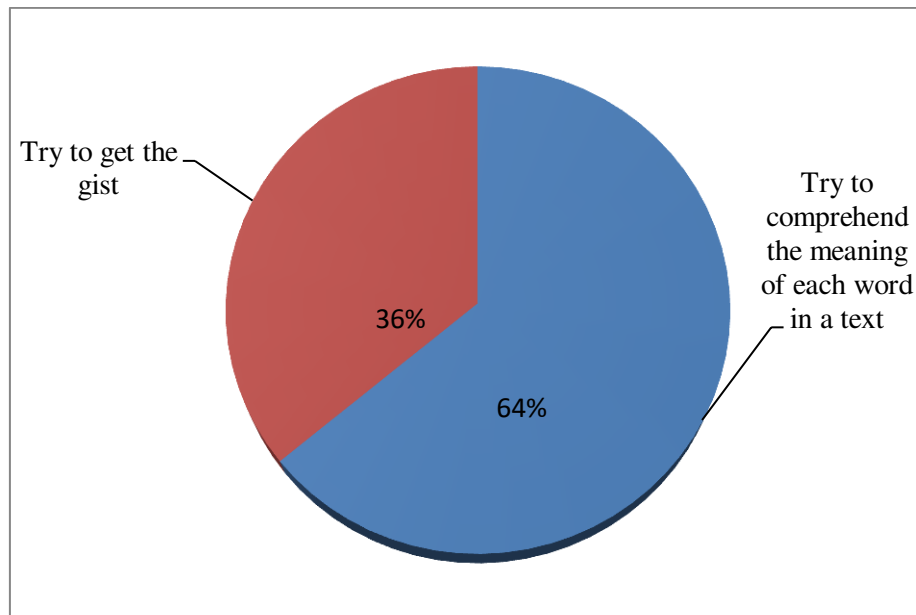
Question number 7 in the students' questionnaire considered the young learners' reading strategy. Students were asked how they read, whether they try to comprehend the meaning of each word in a text or they try to get the gist or in other words, to understand the meaningful parts from the text, comprehend its main idea. The results are the following: 32 out of 50 pupils try to understand each word in a text and the other 18 students try to get the gist (see figure 3.8.).

From this question it is also revealed that those who try to get the gist and do not try to comprehend the meaning of each word tend to get better marks at the lessons of English language. Thus, it means that in order to acquire a foreign language, young learners do not need to focus on the meaning of each of the word in a text, they need to comprehend the general idea, what the text is about.

From the current investigation, it was also revealed that those young learners, who concentrate on the meaning of each word in an English text when they read it, tend to consider those texts that they read at the lessons of English language in class to be boring and not interesting for them. Based on these results, it could be stated that the more young learners focus on the meaning of each word in a text, the more they get bored of it. Hence, teachers of English need to

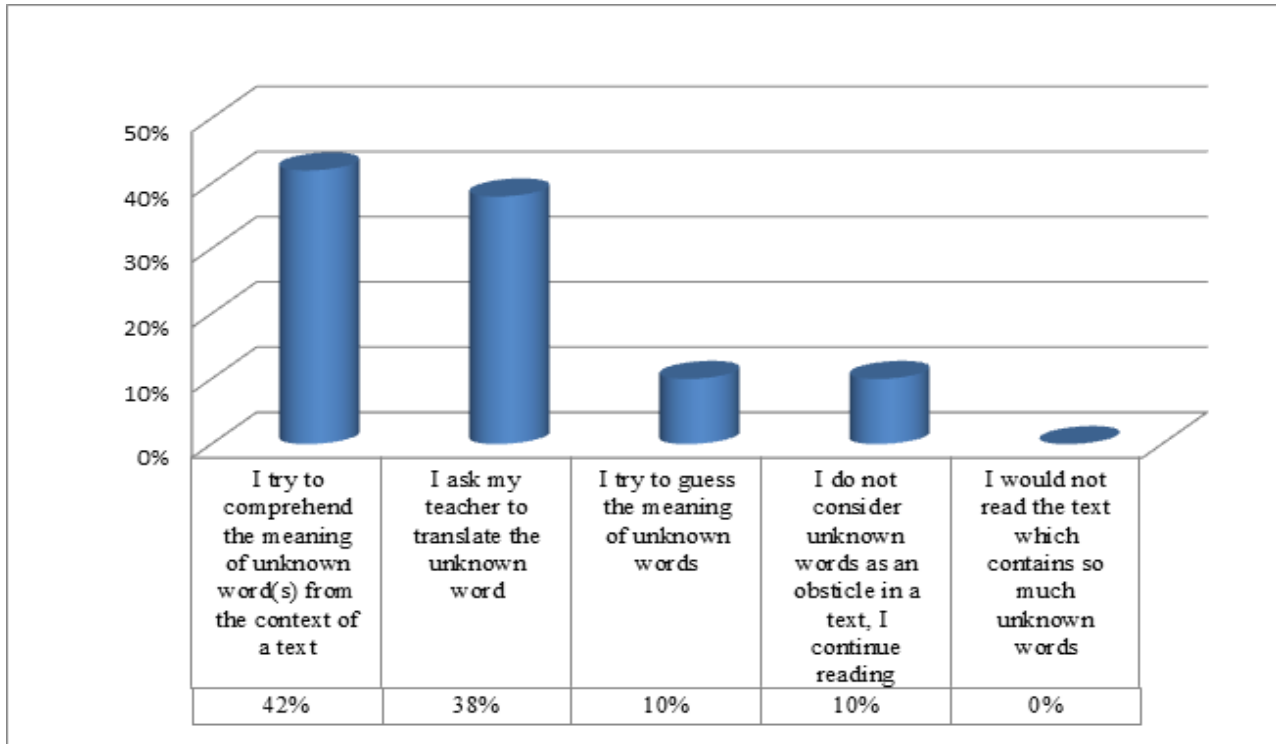
teach students, starting from the primary school, not to read for comprehending words, but for comprehending ideas, events that happened in the story which they read.

**Figure 3.6.5 Students' Comprehension of English Texts**



The next question (question number 8) in the students' questionnaire was to reveal what students do when they notice an unknown word in an English text. The study has shown, that most of the young learners (21 out of the 50), who participated in the present investigation, tend to comprehend the meaning of unknown words from the context of a text, but there was also a high number (19 pupils) of those students, who tend to ask their teachers for the meaning of those words. From the questionnaire it is revealed, that 5 out of 50 students try to guess the meaning of unknown words, and the other 5 pupils, - do not care about unknown words, they proceed on reading the text. No one from 50 respondents chose the option that they would not read the text that contains so much unknown words (see figure 3.6.6).

Based on the given results, it could be stated that most of the young learners tend to comprehend unknown words from the context of the text, try to guess the meaning of it or simply ask their teacher for giving the meaning of those unknown words. Hence, it could be said that pupils in primary school do not consider unknown words to be an obstacle in their reading process.

**Figure 3.6.6 Students' Reaction to Noticing an Unknown Word in an English Text**

Question number 9 in the students' questionnaire was connected to the pre- and while reading stage. The investigation had the aim to answer the question whether the pre- and while reading stages influence the young learners reading comprehension. The results from this study have shown that most of the participants use pre- and while reading strategies regularly when they deal with a text. This statement is based on the outcome from the present survey, as it is revealed, the young learners, who participated in the current investigation:

- a) focus on the title of the text and think what about it could be;
- b) sympathize the characters in the text;
- c) try to guess what will happen onwards in the text.

This research has found that most pupils focus on the title of the text and think what about it could be (21 out of 50); they sympathize the characters in the text (19 students from 50). Lower numbers of respondents try to guess what will happen onwards in the text (6 pupils from 50). Apart from it, there were young learners who indicated that they usually are not interested in the content of the texts, they read at the English language lesson. Among those, who indicated that they are usually not interested in the content of the texts, were three male pupils, two of them have grades from 7 to 9 and one pupil get marks from 10 to 12. Accordingly, the interest of young learners has a significant effect on the language learning and reading comprehension development itself.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded, that there is direct connection between pre- and while reading stages and reading comprehension, for the purpose, that it facilitates comprehension as well as helps learners to cope with a text. This statement is concluded from the

responses of the young learners, who took part in the present investigation. Since, only three students are usually not interested in the content of a text and two of them get lower marks, it could be suggested that the text type, whether it would be interesting for the learners or not, can influence their reading comprehension. As it has been noted before, those students who are interested in the content of the text have fewer difficulties in comprehending it, than those, who find texts, which are usually used in schools, not interesting.

Hence, the results of this research support the idea that pre- and while reading stages influence the young learners reading comprehension. Therefore, pupils rely on pre- and while reading stages to explore the text in deeper way and facilitate their comprehension.

**Figure 3.6.7 Summary Table of the Young Learners' Responses of Question 9**

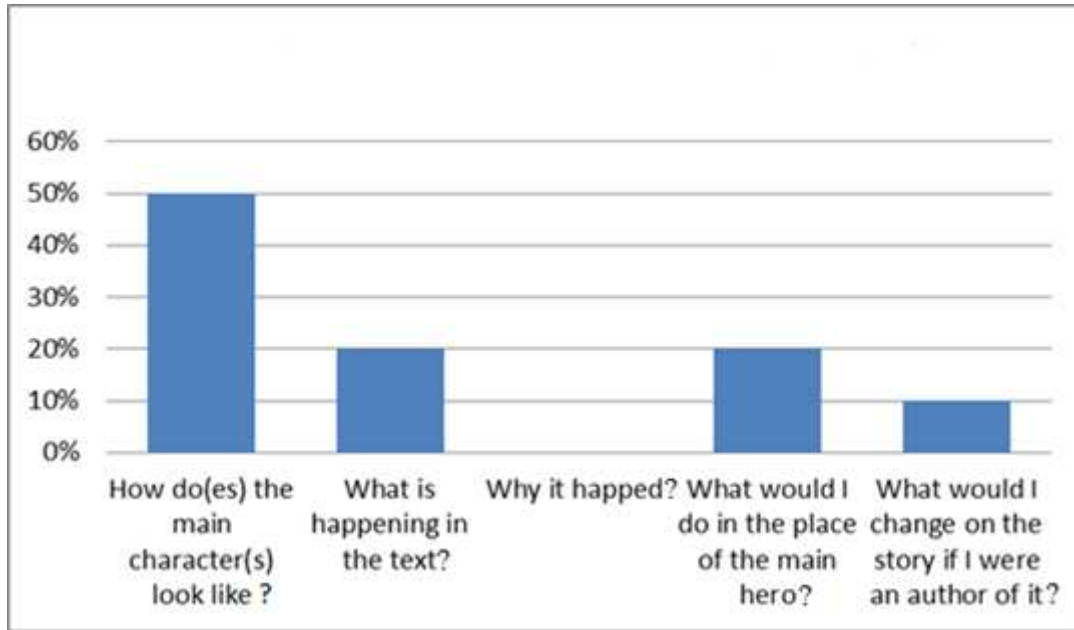
Statements	Number of students	In %
I focus on the title of the text and think what it could be about	15	30
I sympathize with the characters in the text	26	52
I try to guess what will happen onwards in the text	6	12
I am usually not interested in the content of the texts	3	6

The tenth question in the students' questionnaire considered the while reading stage. Students were asked what kind of while reading strategies they usually use when they read an English text. These findings have been emerged from the questionnaire: 25 out of 50 students ask themselves questions how could the main character(s) look like; 10 young learners ask themselves the following question during their reading: "what is happening in the text?"; other 10 students assume what they would do in place of the main hero; and 5 out of 50 learners consider what they would change on the story if they were an author of it.

Consequently, the while reading stage helps learners to control the flow of events in the story and give themselves feedback about their understanding of the text. In other words, for the young learners the while reading is something that constantly provides them with the profound knowledge and at the same time keeps readers' attention and regulates pupils' understanding of a text. It means that while reading stage can inform students about their understanding of a text and can also be as a backbone to improve comprehension in case when it is lost during the reading process, as the young learners can always go back to those parts of the text, which were not understandable for them, without losing connection with the other parts of the text.

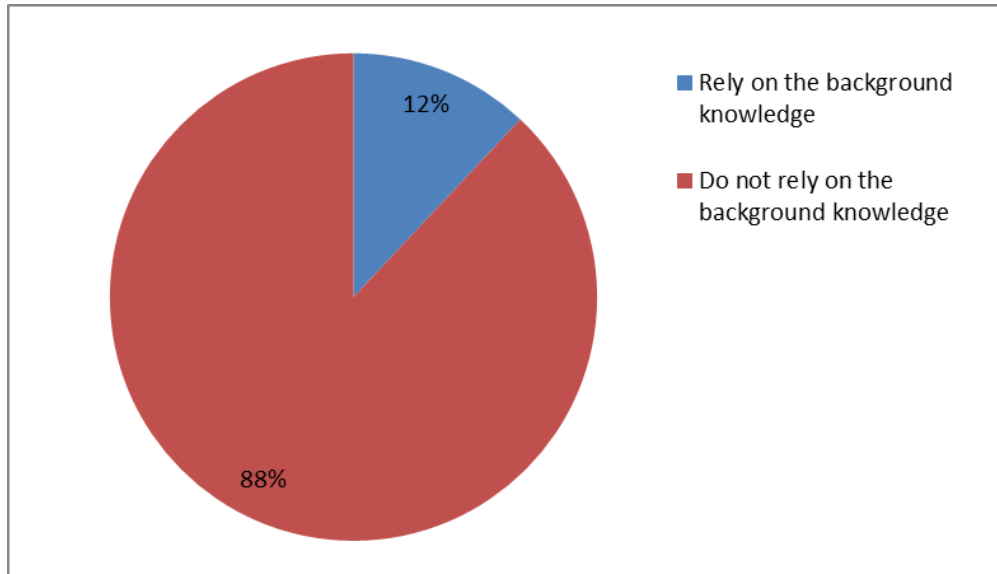


**Figure 3.6.8 Questions Young Learners Ask Themselves during the Reading Process**



As it can be seen from the diagram above, no one out of 50 participants chose the option of “Why it happened”. This means that the analysis stage is lacking in the young learners reading comprehension process. This deficiency may be explained by the next factors: the age factor and the subjective factor. First, the age factor could be expounded in the way that in too young pupils the ability of analysis is not developed yet. Second, the subjective factor, may be interpreted as the personal view of students towards reading, it means that they simply do not need the analysis of the text in their reading comprehension mechanism.

The next question in the students’ questionnaire was connected to the background knowledge of the young learners. The question had the purpose of revealing whether pupils of young age tend to rely on the background knowledge when they read a text in English. Contrary to the expectations, only 12% of respondents rely on their background knowledge when they read in English, other 88% do not rely on their background knowledge, they concentrate exclusively on the text itself (see the figure).

**Figure 3.6.9 Reliance on the Background Knowledge**

The 12<sup>th</sup> question in the students' questionnaire aimed at revealing whether young learners need to read more than once a single text to comprehend it. According to the answers, given in the questionnaires, it could be said that most of the young learners need to read the text more than once to understand it.

The study has shown, that 76% of students, who took part in the current investigation, need to read the text more than once, and only 24% of pupils are able to comprehend the text from the first reading. It reveals that the young learners need to read the text more than once, in order to comprehend it appropriately, inevitably, teachers of English need to pay their attention on this issue, and probably give young learners chance and more time at the lesson to read the text several times, only in this way the young learners' reading comprehension competence may increase. However, it is a questionable issue, whether the number of readings and the result of it are associated, it could be presumed that they are interrelated having effect on each other.

Returning to the hypothesis posed at the beginning of the study, now it is possible to state that pre-, while-, and post-reading stages influence young learners' reading comprehension. The present statement is based on the English teachers' responses, as: "...pre-reading stage of reading activity effectively influences the results of post-reading stage and the comprehension of the text itself, because it makes the text easier to understand if you have a pre-reading stage." and "I think pre-reading exercises could help students understand the text. Doing pre-reading exercises could give hints to students". As well as teachers actively use these three stages of reading at the lessons of English language and they consider pre-, while- and post reading stages to be inevitable part in the reading process.

Another confirmation for the hypothesis would be responses of the young learners, who took part in the research most of pupils of young age use three reading stages to facilitate their

understanding of the text, as it was mentioned, students of 8, 9, 10 and 11 years tend to use titles, pictures given to the story to predict what the text is going to be about. In while reading stage students ask themselves questions related to the text they read in order to proceed with reading and get the feedback of their comprehension during the reading process.

To summarize, pre-, while- and post reading stages play a significant role in the reading comprehension development in the young learners concept, as it prepares pupils for reading a text, it gives them hints and chance of prediction of the content of the story, and it challenges their reading. As well as, while-reading stage practices reading strategies and techniques, keeps pupils motivated and may improve the results of the post-reading activities. Moreover, post-reading activities give favourable feedback of the students' reading comprehension.

## CONCLUSION

The present Bachelor's thesis has demonstrated the central role of reading comprehension in the process of the young learners' foreign language acquisition. This study has justified the position of reading comprehension among the three basic language skills, as it has explained that reading comprehension provides students with profound knowledge of the text they read, it gives pupils of young age chance to develop their reading skills, strategies and techniques; as well as it enriches students' vocabulary, helps to improve fluency and accuracy of speaking. Thus, it is so influential to start teaching reading comprehension from the very young age in order to establish basic knowledge of reading skills.

This study has given an account of the three reading stages and their role in reading comprehension. Returning to the hypothesis posted at the beginning of the present study, after having read, summarized, scrutinized and generalized diverse ideas and thoughts of linguists, who had studied reading comprehension, as well as academic literature connected to the present issue, moreover having analysed two questionnaires' data and results, it is now possible to state that pre-, while-, and post-reading stages influence the young learners' reading comprehension in the following ways:

- the pre-reading stage prepares pupils for reading a text, provides some hints towards the content of the text, challenges pupils, furthermore it asks questions, which students need to consider before they start to read;
- the while-reading stage keeps learners' attention, directs them during the reading process, apart from it, in the while-reading stage young learners have possibility to practice reading strategies and techniques, and get decent feedback of their understanding of the text they read;
- the post-reading stage generalizes all the ideas of the text, helping the young learners to get the overall picture of it. The post-reading stage completes the comprehension of the text, it is logical finish line of the reading task.

Based on the results of the current research these conclusions can be drawn:

The present situation of the level of English language education in the Transcarpathian region is adequate, as the study has presented that teachers are mostly professionals, they possess considerable methodological knowledge of the methods, ways and strategies of teaching English as a foreign language to students of different age; as well as they own practical skills of teaching.

Furthermore, generally in schools of Transcarpathia the young learners have average level of reading comprehension, thus it means that there is perspective of improving the English language competency in our region.

Teachers, who took part in the current investigation consider pre-, while- and post-reading stages to be a paramount part of teaching reading comprehension. With no exception, all the teachers, who completed the questionnaire (see Appendix A) believe that pre-, while- and post-reading stages should be taught and practiced at the lessons of English language in schools of Transcarpathia.

Teachers also suppose that they may teach new vocabulary before young learners start to deal with the text, provide related pictures to the text, give students opportunity to predict some parts from the text. Although, not so many teachers are in favour of relying on the young learners' background knowledge as neither young learners tend to rely on it, some of those teachers who participated in this research try to provide situation for classroom discussion based on the topic of the lesson. It strengthens the statement that reading comprehension involves all language skills and can improve them.

Both teachers and students were asked whether the young learners need to read the text more than once to comprehend it, the answers were unexpected since more than 70% of those young learners, who took part in the investigation, need to read more than once to comprehend a text.

Both teachers and students were asked whether the young learners try to get the gist from the text they read or they try to understand each word in it. Comparing the teachers' and the young learners' answers, it can be stated that there is disagreement between the two, it lays in the fact, that teachers assume that approximately 54% of the young learners try to understand each words from the text, but in reality the number is even higher, for 10% , as the response of students mean 64%. This finding suggests that young learners generally try to understand words in the text and not the ideas presented there.

It was also revealed that those who try to get the gist and do not try to comprehend the meaning of each word tend to get better marks at the lessons of English language. Therefore, it means that in order to acquire a foreign language young learner do not need to focus on the meaning of each of the word in a text, they need to comprehend the general idea, what the text is about.

From the current investigation, it was revealed that those young learners, who concentrate on the meaning of each word in an English text when they read it, tend to consider those texts that they read at the lessons of English language in class to be boring and not interesting for them. Based on these results, it could be stated that the more young learners focus on the meaning of each word in a text, the more they get bored of it. Hence, teachers of English need to teach students, starting from the primary school, not to read for comprehending words, but for comprehending ideas, events that happened in the story which they read.

According to the answers gained from the teachers' and students' questionnaires, it could be stated that a very low number of young learners do not consider unknown word to be an obstacle in their comprehension. This number varies between 37% (as it was presumed by the teachers) and 10% (as

it was presumed by the young learners). On this ground, it can be concluded that young learners tend to see unknown words as hindrance of their understanding of a written piece of work.

Although, most of teachers-participants were in favour of pre-reading comprehension activities, since 90% of teachers stated that pre-reading activities facilitate young learners comprehension, help them to understand a text and make students focus on the most essential parts of the text; there was 10% of responders, who stated that pre-reading activities do not influence the result of post-reading activities.

The results of this research support the idea that pre- and while reading stages influence the young learners' reading comprehension. Therefore, pupils rely on pre- and while- reading stages to explore the text in deeper way and facilitate their comprehension.

The analysis of the results of the students' questionnaire has shown that girls usually get better marks in the English lessons than boys, because 86,7% of girls who took part in the present investigation get marks from 10 to 12, compared to 60% of boys who get the same marks. So, boys get worse marks due to the fact that, 40% out 100% of boys get marks from 7 to 9, compared to 13,3% out of 100% of girls who get the same marks.

One unexpected finding that revealed from the students' questionnaire is that the young learners comprehend in the same way when they read orally and silently.

The research part of the present Bachelor's thesis has explained that most of the students use illustrations and titles to comprehend a text better, as 80% of students use both titles and illustrations in order to deepen their reading and understand the text better, other 20% never use them at all.

The present study has explained the central significance of the three reading stages in the process of reading comprehension development and the English as a foreign language acquisition in the whole.

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## РЕЗЮМЕ

Знання іноземних мов є ключем до успіху в сучасному світі, у якому спілкування англійською мовою набуває все більшого значення. Тому, люди які говорять двома чи більше іноземними мовами мають велику ймовірність того, що вони зможуть розширити коло спілкування, дізнатись більше про світ; крім цього знання іноземних мов часто є необхідною умовою при влаштуванні на роботу. Саме тому знання іноземної, в тому числі англійської мови, є одним з найважливіших факторів всебічного розвитку сучасної людини.

Дана бакалаврська робота охопила питання розуміння прочитаного молодшими школярами у школах Закарпаття. Ця робота вивчила й узагальнила ідеї та праці лінгвістів, котрі займались вивченням читання, зокрема розумінням прочитаного молодшими школярами. Бакалаврська робота продемонструвала центральну роль розуміння прочитаного у процесі вивчення англійської мови школярами молодшого віку.

У ході вивчення проблеми розуміння прочитаного молодшими школярами, вдалось з'ясувати, що читання розвиває розуміння прочитаного, допомагає покращити спілкування учнів на англійській мові, а також збагачує словниковий запас учнів молодшого шкільного віку, допомагає краще зрозуміти граматичну систему мови. Таким чином, розуміння прочитаного є важливою складовою вивчення іноземної мови, зважаючи на це, необхідно вивчати розуміння прочитаного починаючи з молодших класів школи, для того щоб встановити базові знання навичок читання.

Мета цієї бакалаврської роботи полягала у проведенні огляду основних методів навчання розуміння прочитаного, а також у з'ясуванні того, яку роль відіграють етапи читання у ході вивчення мови. Дослідження полягало у визначенні важливості навчання розуміння прочитаного молодшими учнями, а також у з'ясуванні чи етапи читання впливають на розвиток розуміння прочитаного молодших школярів.

Завдяки детальному вивченню теми бакалаврської роботи, вдалось з'ясувати наступне: етапи читання готують учнів до сприйняття тексту на іноземній мові; дають деякі підказки щодо змісту текстів; мотивують школярів; пропонують запитання на які учні мають усно чи письмово відповісти перед, в ході чи після читання тексту; крім вище згаданого, етапи читання зберігають увагу учнів та спрямовують читання у правильне русло. Завдяки етапам читання учні мають можливість на практиці засвоїти методи і стратегії читання, а також дізнатись про рівень і правильність їхнього розуміння тексту. Завершальний етап читання узагальнює основну думку та ідею прочитаного твору, допомагає учням отримати цілісну картину прочитаного.

На основі проведених досліджень, можна зробити такі висновки:

Рівень знань англійської мови у школах Закарпаття є достатнім, адже як дослідження показало, вчителі англійської мови мають великий досвід навчання, вони володіють значними методологічними та практичними знаннями викладання іноземної мови учням різного віку (з молодшого шкільного віку до старшого шкільного віку). Більше того, у школах Закарпаття учні молодшого віку мають середній рівень розуміння прочитаного, що в свою чергу означає, що є перспектива підвищення рівню знань англійської мови в нашому регіоні.

Вчителі, які взяли участь у дослідженні, проведеному у цій бакалаврській роботі, вважають, що три етапи читання є невід'ємною складовою навчання розуміння прочитаного. Всі вчителі, котрі заповнили анкету(див. Додаток А) вважають, що вчителі іноземної мови мають навчати три етапи читання молодшим школярам.

Вчителі, які взяли участь у дослідженні, припускають, що вони повинні подати значення нових слів перед початком читання, забезпечити додаткові картинки пов'язані з текстом твору, а також дати учням можливість передбачати розвиток дій у тексті. Дослідження показало, що лише невелика кількість вчителів готова покластись на опорні знання учнів, так само і молодші школяри не звикли використовувати свої знання про світ, у процесі читання, це означає, що молодші школяри, читаючи текст на англійській мові, орієнтуються лише на текст. Деякі вчителі, котрі заповнили анкету, обговорюють прочитане з цілим класом, цим самим читання переходить з пасивної у активну діяльність учнів. Саме це підтверджує думку, що читання є активним заняттям і включає в себе всі мовні навички, розвиваючи їх.

Дослідження показало, що учні віком від 8 до 10 років мають прочитати текст на англійській мові хоча б два рази, для того щоб зрозуміти його, так як 70% учнів, котрі взяли участь у дослідженні, вибрали цей варіант відповіді.

Проведене дослідження виявило, що 64% учнів читаючи текст на англійській мові намагаються зрозуміти кожне слово, а решта учнів, головну думку твору. Такі результати показують, що учні молодшого шкільного віку зазвичай читають щоб зрозуміти слова, а не головну думку і тему твору.

Учні, котрі читаючи текст на англійській мові, намагаються зрозуміти головну думку твору, отримують кращі оцінки на уроках англійської мови. В свою чергу, ті учні, котрі намагаються зрозуміти значення кожного слова у тексті, отримують гірші оцінки з англійської мови. Спираючись на ці факти, можна стреджувати, що для того щоб оволодіти іноземною мовою, молодшим школярам не обов'язково розуміти кожне слово у тексті, що вони читають, радше треба звертати увагу на головну думку і тему твору.

Виходячи з цього, було досліджено, що ті учні, котрі зосереджують свою увагу на значенні кожного слова, вважають тексти, що представлені для читання, нудними і не цікавими для них. Отже, спираючись на отримані результати, можна сказати, що чим більше молодші школяри зосереджують свою увагу на значенні всіх слів, тим меншою стає їх увага і зменшується зацікавленість. Тому, вчителям англійської мови необхідно привчати учнів починаючи з молодших класів до того, що ті читали для розуміння змісту та головної думки твору, а не окремих слів.

Згідно з отриманими результатами дослідження 90% учнів, які взяли участь у цьому дослідженні, вважають, що незнайомі слова у текстах є перешкодою у процесі їхнього читання і розуміння тексту.

90% вчителів, які взяли участь у цьому дослідженні, підтримали використання трьох етапів читання на уроках англійської мови у школах Закарпаття. Вчителі вважають, що етапи читання сприяють кращому розумінню творів і зосереджують учнів на розумінні прочитаного. Решта 10% вчителів, не вважають етапи читання важливою частиною навчання розуміння прочитаного. В цілому, результати дослідження підтверджують думку, що три етапи читання сприяють кращому розумінню творів.

Дослідження показало, що зазвичай дівчата отримують кращі оцінки з іноземної мови, так як 86,7% дівчат, котрі взяли участь у дослідженні, зазвичай отримують оцінки від 10 до 12, порівняно з 60% хлопців, які отримують такі ж самі оцінки з англійської мови. Оцінки від 7 до 9 отримують 40% хлопців, порівняно з 13,3% дівчат, які отримують схожі оцінки.

Одним з найнесподіваніших результатів стало те, що школярі віком від 8 до 10 років однаково розуміють коли вони читають вголос і коли мовчки.

Дослідницька частина бакалаврської роботи виявила, що молодші школяри часто використовують ілюстрації та заголовки до тексту з метою глибшого розуміння його, так як 80% опитаних учнів обрали саме цей варіант відповіді заповнюючи анкету (див. Додаток В).

Отже, дана бакалаврська робота зуміла довести, що три етапи читання є невід'ємною частиною в процесі розвитку розуміння прочитаного і засвоєння англійської, як іноземної мови в цілому.

## APPENDIX A

Dear Participants,

This questionnaire is made for the current Bachelor thesis's research to investigate how reading comprehension is taught for the young learners in schools of Transcarpathia.

The fundamental objective of the current research aims to study the role of reading stages in reading comprehension development and its effect on young learners reading comprehension.

The object of this study is young learners, students between 8 and 10 (11) years.

This questionnaire was designed for the teachers of English as a foreign language, working in schools of Transcarpathia and educating the young learners.

To complete this questionnaire around 10 minutes are required.

### Teachers' questionnaire

*Answer the questions below:*

**1. How many years have you been teaching English to young learners?** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. How many students are there in the 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> classes?** \_\_\_\_\_

**3. According to your experience, how would you describe the reading level of the third, fourth and fifth grade students?**

*A) Most are above the average*

*B) Most are average*

*C) Most are below average*

*D) Reading level varies greatly*

**4. In the typical school week, what percentage of your time in class with students do you devote to the following activities?**

*A) Reading activities* \_\_\_\_\_ %

*B) Speaking activities* \_\_\_\_\_ %

*C) Writing activities* \_\_\_\_\_ %

*D) Listening activities* \_\_\_\_\_ %

**5. How often do you do reading activities with the students?**

*A) Every lesson*

*B) Once a week*

*C) Once a month*

*D) Seldom*

E) Never

F) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

*From your personal experience express your own view on the following statements.*

*Please, put a tick «✓» into the proper place.*

Teachers of English as a foreign language may :	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. teach pre-reading strategies to pupils					
2. teach while-reading strategies to pupils					
3. teach post-reading strategies to pupils					
4. do pre-reading exercises before reading the text					
5. rely on the students' background knowledge when reading a new piece of written work					
6. rely on students' ability of prediction the meaning of unknown words					
7. use guessing strategy on the lessons when dealing with reading a text					
8. give information about the subject of the text by using the title of it					
9. give information about the subject of the work using some related pictures					
10. create a situation for classroom discussion on the title of the work					
11. ask questions using the question words; how, why, where, who, what, when					
12. teach new vocabulary before reading					
13. do while-reading exercises when reading					



*Please, answer how often:*

*Use percentage equivalents*

*100% always*

*90% usually*

*80% normally / generally*

*70% often / frequently*

*50% sometimes*

*30% occasionally*

*10% seldom*

*5% hardly ever / rarely*

*0% never*

Statements	%
1. My students don't see the unknown words as "problem" while reading.	
2. While reading my students try to understand the whole work in general.	
3. While reading my students try to understand each word.	
4. While reading my students try to have their own interpretations about the whole work.	
5. After reading some sentences of the text, my students want to predict the other parts of the works.	
6. While reading my students put themselves in the shoes of the characters and live through the story.	
7. After reading a text my students answer reading comprehension questions orally.	
8. After reading my students answer reading comprehension questions in a written way.	
9. My students need to read more than once to comprehend a text.	

*Express your own opinion:*

**From your personal experience, does the pre-reading stage of reading activities influence the results of the post-reading stage and the comprehension of the text itself? How?**

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We are much obliged to those teachers, who took part in this research and completed the questionnaire.

Special thanks for cooperation.

## APPENDIX B

### Kedves Tanuló,

A nevem Popovics Mária, a beregszászi főiskolán tanulok angol szakon és jelenleg kutatást végzek a szakdolgozatomhoz, amiben az angol szövegek megértését tanulmányozom.

Kérlek, segíts a kutatásomban és töltsd ki ezt a kérdőívet.

A kérdőív anonim, nem jegyre megy. Kitöltése kb. 10 percet vesz igénybe.

### Tanulói kérdőív

**1. Hány éves vagy?** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Nemed:**

a) *fiú*                                      b) *lány*

**3. Milyen jegyeid vannak angol nyelvből?**

a) *1-6*                                      b) *7-9*                                      c) *10-12*

**4. Amikor angolul olvasok:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <i>a) mindig értem, amiről olvasok</i>     | <i>d) csak keveset értek abból, amit olvasok</i> |
| <i>b) általában megértem miről van szó</i> | <i>e) egyáltalán nem értem, amit olvasok</i>     |
| <i>c) részben értem, amit olvasok</i>      |  |

**5. Jobban értem, ha:**

a) *némán olvasok*                      b) *hangosan olvasok*

**6. Használok ábrákat és címeket, hogy jobban értsem, amit olvasok:**

a) *mindig*      b) *általában*      c) *sokszor*      d) *néha*      e) *ritkán*      f) *soha*

**7. Amikor angolul olvasok:**

a) *próbálok megérteni minden egyes szót*

b) *a lényegét próbálom megérteni*

### **8. Ha nem értek egy szót miközben olvasok:**

- a) próbálom megérteni olvasás közben, a szöveg segítségével*
- b) megkérdezem a tanártól a jelentését*
- d) próbálom kitalálni a jelentését*
- e) nem foglalkozom azzal az egy szóval, olvasok tovább*
- f) feladom az olvasást, ha túl sok ismeretlen szóval találkozom*

### **9. Amikor olvasok:**

- a) először figyelek a címre (képekre) és azon gondolkodom, miről is lehet szó a szövegben*
- b) olvasás közben beleélem magam a szereplők életébe*
- c) próbálom kitalálni, mi történhet tovább a szövegben*
- d) általában nem érdekel amiről olvasok*

### **10. Amikor olvasok ezeket a kérdéseket teszem fel magamnak:**

- a) hogyan nézhet ki a főszereplő?*
- b) mi történik a szövegben?*
- c) miért ez történt a szövegben?*
- d) ha én lennék a főszereplő, akkor mit tennék a helyében?*
- e) ha én lennék az író, hogyan írnám meg ezt a történetet, mit változtatnék rajta?*

### **11. Ha olvasok valamit, akkor:**

- a) támaszkodom a háttértudásomra*
- b) csak a szövegre figyelek*

**12. Többször el kell olvasnom a szöveget, hogy megértsem miről szól**

*a) igen                      b) nem*

*Köszönöm, hogy kitöltötted a kérdőívemet 😊*

## **NYILATKOZAT**

Alulírott, Popovics Mária angol szakos hallgató, kijelentem, hogy a dolgozatomat a II. Rákóczi Ferenc Kárpátaljai Magyar Főiskolán, a Filológia tanszéken készítettem, angol nyelv és irodalom tanári diploma megszerzése végett.

Kijelentem, hogy a dolgozatot más szakon korábban nem védtem meg, saját munkám eredménye, és csak a hivatkozott forrásokat (szakirodalom, eszközök stb.) használtam fel.

Tudomásul veszem, hogy dolgozatomat a II. Rákóczi Ferenc Kárpátaljai Magyar Főiskola könyvtárának Kézirattárában helyezik el.