

## **Difficulties Encountering Multileveled Classes Teachers' in Teaching Reading Comprehension (A case study of Cambridge Training Centers and British Educational Institutes in Khartoum State, Sudan)**

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### **Abstract**

The study aims at investigating the difficulties encountered by English centers teachers of multileveled classes in teaching reading comprehension, and suggests some suitable strategies that can alleviate the problems. To run the study, thirty-four language center teachers' from Khartoum State are the sample of the study. A questionnaire, supported by classroom observation, was the collecting data tool. The quantitative method matches this type of research. The findings of the study reveal that the difficulties encountered by multileveled classes teachers' attributed to the students' limited vocabulary, poor background knowledge, annoying reading materials, lack of teachers' training, and adverse selection of suitable strategies. The findings of this study are of high value for syllables designers as well as multileveled classes' teachers. Teachers have to adopt adequate strategies, choosing attractive reading materials, and they should be equipped with the required training.

*Keywords:* Center teachers, EFL students, multileveled classes, reading comprehension, reading difficulties

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## Introduction

The language centers teachers' in this study are MA. Holders in the English language and they are teaching university students and university gradutors who finished their bachelor programs in different specializations, including economics, management, engineering, etc. The subject taught in these centers is the English language, focusing mainly on language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). The students enroll in this program to upgrade their standard to pursue profitable jobs.

In teaching fields, many challenges and difficulties face teachers and learners equally. Teaching a multileveled class is one of the problems that face teachers. Working as an English teacher, affords challenges every day. The teacher has to deal with many students at a time with different levels of ability, motivation, special interests, and experiences.

According to Jones (2007) very class is a multileveled, and even students who have studied together all the time will have varied mastery of the language. They bring their personalities, strengths, weaknesses, and learning style to the class. Ainslie (1994) sees that multileveled/mixed-ability types are classes where students differ significantly in ability, motivation for learning English, needs, interests, educational background, styles of learning, anxiety, experiences, and so on.

According to Bremner, (2008) multileveled classes is a universal phenomenon. Students generally are grouped in categories due to their age and other different considerations. They are classified randomly regardless of their accomplishment and levels of capability. In our real situation, all the students are equal in treatment, and no special attention for specific type of student.

Ur, P. (1996) lists nineteen factors that stand behind the differentiation of students' abilities. They are language learning ability, language knowledge, cultural background, learning style, attitude to the language, mother tongue, intelligence, world knowledge, learning experience, knowledge of other words, age or maturity, gender, personality, confidence, motivation, interest, independence, self-discipline, and educational level.

Language centers teachers' in Khartoum state noticed that they are facing difficulties in teaching reading comprehension classes for multileveled classes. To solve the problem, the researcher is motivated to conduct a study in this area.

Rivers (1981) argues that “reading is the most important activity in any language class, not only as a source of information and pleasurable activity but also as a means of consolidating and extending one’s which are knowledge of the language” (p. 147). Reading plays a crucial role in our educational, working, and daily life.

Krashen and Brown (2007) think that reading is the most critical skill among the four language skills as it can improve overall language proficiency. (Wixon, Peters, Weber and Roeber,

(1987) assure that the reading process constructs meaning through the dynamic interaction among the reader, the text, and the context of the reading situation.

Mercer and Mercer (2001) believe that typical reading difficulties of multileveled abilities include problems with vocabulary, word recognition, reading comprehension, and reading rate.

### **Research Objectives**

This study plans to achieve the following objectives:

- 1- To investigate the difficulties encountered by multileveled classes teachers' in teaching reading comprehension.
- 2- To introduce some strategies that the multileveled classes teachers can employ.
- 3- To explore whether the teachers are well trained to meet the needs of the students with different abilities or not.

### **Research Questions**

The study attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the difficulties that the multileveled classes teachers face in teaching reading comprehension?
- 2- What strategies do the teachers adopt to overcome these difficulties?
- 3- Do the multileveled class's teachers' receive a good training to run the courses?

### **Literature Review**

Multileveled classes took place when groups of students were not adequately fit according to their abilities. Multileveled class groups can be arranged on a random basis, for example, by form group, gender, age, and social relationships. The students will be in the same multi-ability group for all subjects.

Ur, (1996) believes that all classes of more than one learner are, multileveled classes. Since teaching processes face many challenges and obstacles, multileveled levels eventually are one of the crucial tasks that the teachers encounter. Mathews-Aydinli & Van Horne (2006) define multilevel courses as the classes where students with different levels are grouped. They differ in their levels of capability in listening, reading, speaking and writing. Valentic (2005) sees that students all over the world and at all levels differ in their language talent and they even differ in their attitudes towards learning a language, and in self- self-control.

Hedge (2000) thinks that teaching multileveled classes is a vital issue that teachers experienced daily, and the mixed-ability problem required severe attention from experts in the educational field. Ansari (2013) discusses vital point dealing with teaching multileveled classes; he assures that teachers face difficulties in planning effectively for their lessons to guarantee that all their students gain the required benefits from the experience. This is mainly a challenge for the language teachers who lack the required skills and teaching methods to deal with multileveled classes.

Ellis (1994) points out that language teachers feel disordered when some learners acquire language characteristics quickly while the other learners in the same class show no development. The cause may be the process of second language acquisition. Moreover, many aspects could affect learning outcomes in language classrooms. Learners' ability and motivation towards learning a new language are the main factors that affect their performance in language classes.

Baines, Blatchford and Kutnick (2003) claim that teachers generally prefer ability grouping to reduce the range of abilities within the course, allowing lessons to be at the right level. Furthermore, Muijs and Dunne (2010) prove that students benefited from working in a lesson surrounded by pupils of a similar ability. Hornby, Witte and Mitchell (2011) state that adverse effects of ability grouping have also been recognized regarding the motivational impact on students and low ability groupings were taught by less experienced or less qualified teachers. Also, Smith and Sutherland (2006) debate that the adverse effects of ability groupings have not been only restricted to the lower student, because studies have revealed that students at high levels have shown the pressure of being at the top.

However, Meijenen and Guldmond (2002) assure that mixed ability groupings benefit lower-achieving students a lot and have no harmful effect on the achievements of high-levelled students. Smith and Sutherland (2006) claim that there are other positive effects of mixed ability grouping including; fewer chances of students with a particular inferior level; it was possibly easier to preserve the motivation of students working at a lower level; it allowed for greater flexibility allowing students to go ahead with their rate; and students got advantages a lot from classmate support and confirm. Hallam and Ireson, (2013) think that students were more pleased with their lessons when they were among the mixed ability.

### **Reading**

Wixon et al., (1987 ) define reading a passage as a process of building meaning through the dynamic interaction among the reader, the text, and the context of the reading situation. (Manzo and Manzo,1993) define reading as the act of reading the tracks, reading between the tracks, and reading beyond the lines. Reading the lines is the way of decoding the words to rebuild the writer's message. Reading between the lines is the process of making inferences to reconstruct the writer's implicit messages. Learning beyond the tracks is the process of judging the implication of the writer's word and usefully relating it to other areas of knowledge and experience.

Gamham, (2011) states that the majority of researchers think that reading comprehension is not merely identifying individual words, or even understanding each separate concept as our eyes pass over it. All models of understanding identify the need for readers to build up a rational representation of text; it requires an integration of information, from lexical features to knowledge concerning events.

Gernsbacher, (1990) sees that mastering reading skills needs contact between the reader and the text. The reader has to interpret the meaning of the written words to be able to understand the writer's point of view. (Ehri, 1991) claims that there are four different ways to read terms;

decoding, reading by analogy, reading by the prediction made from context, and sight word reading. On the other hand, (Catts, Hogan & Adlof, 2005) confirm that numerous studies have revealed that decoding and linguistic comprehension represent the variance in reading comprehension.

### ***Different types of reading comprehension***

There are many different types and models of reading comprehension suggested by experts and linguists that can be employed by readers to achieve reading purposes. These models are used mainly in reading comprehension process and they prove effectiveness in grasping the required information.

- 1) Mental Models proposed by (Gernsbacher, 1990 and Johnson-Laird, 1983).
- 2) Construction-Integration Model proposed by (Kintsch & Rawson, 2005).
- 3) The bottom-up Models, The top-down Models and The parallel Models proposed by (Kahmi & Catts, 2012).

### ***Reading difficulties***

According to Mercer and Mercer (2001), between 10 and 15 % of students have reading difficulties. (Snow, Burns & Graffins, 1998) believe that students who are not talented with the form, content, and function of language have reading difficulties. The form includes phonologic, morphologic, and syntactic skills. Content refers to semantic, or vocabulary and the relationship among words. Capacity means a student's ability to use a language for practical purposes.

According to and Kolson, (1978), reading problems are attributed to many causes, and is a complex process, as many reading difficulties can occur. Bond, Tinkel and Wasson (1979) suggest the following classifications of the more dominant reading difficulties: faulty word identification and recognition, unsuitable directional habits, deficiencies in basic comprehension abilities, limited special comprehension abilities, weakness inability to adapt to reading needs of content fields, defects in the rate of comprehension and poor oral reading.

### ***Difficulties in teaching multileveled classes***

The problems that the multileveled classes teachers' face have two dimensions. Difficulties related to the teachers in running the course, and difficulties that the students themselves face in learning and taking parts in the classroom activities. Teachers struggle to provide effective teaching to multileveled classes. In multileveled classrooms, students with higher ability do not face problems in understanding the lessons and doing the required tasks effectively. On the other hand, the students with lower ability face problems in understanding the experiences and engaging in classroom activities. Therefore, when the lessons or activities are elementary, students with the lower ability find it useful, but the students with the higher knowledge find it jobless and boring. Finally, the two types of the students, being harmed of this situation and lose the motivation to study.

In multileveled classroom, it becomes noticeable that there is a considerable difference among the abilities of students. Consequently, the students of lower ability suffer from little self-esteem problems. On the other hand, students with higher capacity suffer from a lack of enthusiasm. Thus, the students no longer enjoy the learning process. Therefore, a multileveled classroom is most challenging for the teachers because they encounter many problems. The teachers find it difficult to ensure active learning for all the students equally and in a fairway. The higher ability students find it easy to go ahead with the lessons and instructions; whereas, the students with lower ability struggle. If the teachers pay attention to the students of higher ability, the lower ability students will find the tasks difficult and feel demotivated. On the other hand, if the teachers try to satisfy the needs of the lower ability students, the higher ability students will lose interest in the lessons. So, the teacher needs to make sure that the lessons or activities are not difficult for the lower ability students; and enjoyable for the higher ability students.

Tomlinson, (1999) believes that grouping students into different classes according to their abilities were investigated, and results reveal that students do not show enough improvement. On the other hand, (Kelly, 1974) criticizes grouping students into separated classes according to their standard. He claims that this can be harmful to the slow learners socially and emotionally because by placing them in a “slow class” they can think of themselves as different, challenging, inferior or other unfavorable terms.

### ***Suggested strategies for teaching reading comprehension to multileveled classes***

Since teaching reading comprehension to multileveled classes encountered by many difficulties, researchers and experts in the field started to design suitable strategies that the teachers can follow. These strategies are real contributions to facilitate the teaching process and to push the low-leveled students forward. (Vacca & Vacca, 1999) suggest some effective strategies as follows:

#### ***1- Scaffolding***

It allows teachers to help the varied learners and overcome difficulties in the text. Scaffolding is a process where teachers help students to solve a particular problem by a teacher or other person with more ability.

#### ***2- Think-aloud***

It is a strategy that helps students with learning activities, aims to recall important information from the texts given by the teacher, and understands reading texts.

#### ***3- Reciprocal Teaching***

It is a strategy that lets students and teachers exchange the role of a teacher by discussing a given reading. Reciprocal Teaching includes four strategies in the discussion: predicting, question generating, summarizing, and clarifying.

#### ***4- SQ3R***

It is a systematic reading strategy that supports you shape the reading process into manageable units. Students can use it to improve comprehension. It contains surveying, questioning, reading, reciting, and reviewing.

#### ***5- QARs***

It is a reading strategy to understand and analyze questions. It leads students to understand the questions to get information in the reading text.

(Duke & Pearson, 2005) think that it is important to teach the strategies by naming the strategy and how to use it. They suggest these six strategies as follows:

*1- Predicting*

(Block & Israel, 2005) think that predicting improves comprehension and helps the readers set a purpose for their reading. (Oczkus, 2003) claims that the strategy allows students' interaction, which raises students' interest and improves their understanding of the text.

*2- Visualizing*

(Adler, 2001) sees that the visualization process requires the students to construct an image of the text. Teachers can ask the student to write about the image after visualizing the text.

*3- Making Connections*

This strategy takes place when the students connect the ideas in the text to their experiences and the things happening in the outer world (Teele, 2004).

*4- Summarizing*

(Adler, 2001) illustrates that the procedure of summarization needs the reader to decide what is significant when reading and to shorten the information in the student's words.

*5- Questioning*

Students use the questioning before, during, and after reading. It requires students to ask questions to get meaning, improve understanding, find answers, solve problems, find information, and discover new information (Harvey & Goudvis, 2000).

*6- Inferring*

(Serafini, 2004) sees that inferring refers to reading between the lines. Students need to use their knowledge with information from the text to give their conclusions.

(Kelly, 1974) believes that giving clear information and instructions in easy and manageable ways is the most important strategy that can be adapted to deal with multileveled classes. It makes the students feel more interesting. (Dörnyei, 2001) recommends giving the students time to think and discuss with their classmates. Because of the task is not introduced to the students, and they face difficulties about how to go on with the task, it will produce a sad situation (Baker, 2000).

## **Methodology**

### ***Research design***

According to the nature of this study and the objectives that the research tries to achieve, the researcher has chosen the quantitative approach.

### ***Participants***

The participants of this study are language center teachers who are teaching multileveled classes in Khartoum state, Sudan. The total number of the respondents is thirty-four, distributed into three cities from eight language centers. These language centers and institutes are private ones, and the average of the students in each class is fifteen.

Table 1. *Distribution of participants*

Name of City	No. of institute/center	No. of teachers	Percentage
Khartoum	4	20	58.82%
Khartoum North	2	6	17.64%
Omdurman	2	8	23.52%

### ***Instruments***

To get authentic and reliable data, the researcher has to choose suitable devices. Because of the nature of the research and the expected outcomes of the study, the researcher has adopted the following tools for collecting the data:

#### ***1) Teachers' questionnaire***

Questionnaires are one of the most sensible ways to collect quantitative data. In this study, the researcher uses the Likert Scale Questionnaire. According to Dornyei (2003), Likert Scale Questionnaire is simple, flexible, and reliable. Likert Scale contains statements all of them are related to a specific goal, and the respondents are asked to respond to what they agree or disagree by marking one of the options ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. Then after the process of controlling the scale, each response option is given a number; it is usually 1 to 5 for strongly agree and strongly disagree.

#### ***2) Classroom Observation***

Cooper and Schindler (2006) claim that inspection takes place in the natural environment. It is a scientific method of data collection, and it has high validity in research conducting. The participant's ideas would not influence the collected data because there is no contact between the observer and the participants; in addition to that, collecting the information in real-time. Collins and Hussey (2003) think that there are some defects of this method such, as the limitation in the use of technology for a large sample.

The researcher as an instrument observed the process of teaching reading comprehension to the multileveled classes and the students' responses. Allwright (1988) recommends employing classroom observation as a data collecting tool and suggesting that view is the main procedure for many researchers who were not interested a lot in comparing approaches to find the most effective one.

### **Data Analysis**

After the process of collecting the required data, manipulation, and analysis of the data will take place in a satisfactory manner using SPSS.

#### ***Teachers' Questionnaire***

The researcher has introduced the survey to thirty-four teachers as respondents. The teachers are going to reply to the statements using a Likert- scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (SD) to Strongly Agree (SA). For more clarity of the data, the values will be displayed as follows: five



stands for Strongly Agree, four stands for Agree, three stands for Neutral, two stands for Disagree, and one stands for Strongly Disagree.

Table 2. Teachers' Questionnaire

No.	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
(A)	<b>Teachers' Difficulties in Teaching Reading Comprehension To Multileveled Classes</b>					
1-	Teaching multileveled class does not enable me to follow all the students.	22	7	2	2	1
2-	Many low-leveled students face difficulties in engaging in reading comprehension activities.	17	6	3	6	2
3-	There is a remarkable diversity among students' learning ability.	28	6	0	0	0
4-	Reading activities do not fit the diverse levels of all students in multileveled classes.	20	9	3	1	1
5-	I face difficulties to design a lesson that suits students with different abilities.	18	6	3	5	2
6-	I cannot introduce various classroom activities for multileveled students to get the same target.	15	6	4	5	4
7-	The existing reading materials do not supply enough effective strategies to help multileveled classes.	12	10	7	3	2
8-	It is difficult to find suitable reading resources for multileveled types.	11	8	6	5	4
(B)	<b>Multileveled Students' Difficulties in Learning Reading Comprehension</b>					
9-	Many of low-leveled students lack the confidence to interact positively in classroom activities.	23	9	2	0	0
10-	The majority low-leveled students lack motivation.	22	12	0	0	0
11-	Low-leveled students miss an interest in scanning activities.	16	11	3	2	2
12-	There is a difference among multileveled students' in learning comprehension lessons.	19	9	4	1	1
13-	Facilitating reading comprehension lessons for low-leveled students' affects the higher-leveled students' interest negatively.	14	10	5	3	2
14-	Low-leveled students think that they are unjustly dealt in reading comprehension classes.	12	9	5	5	3
15-	High-leveled students think they are unjustly dealt in reading comprehension classes.	15	12	3	2	2

The first part of the questionnaire consists of personal information of the respondents, including name, experience, educational qualification, training, if any, and the address of the school. In the second part of the questionnaire, the researcher has divided the inquiry into two sections, including teachers' difficulties in teaching reading comprehension to multileveled classes and multileveled students' difficulties in learning reading comprehension.

Table 3. *Descriptive statistics of teachers' questionnaire*

	Statement	N	Range	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
1-	Teaching multileveled class	5	22.00	4.35431	9.73653	94.800
2-	Many low-leveled students face...	5	21.00	3.94208	8.81476	77.700
3-	There is a remarkable diversity....	5	15.00	2.67208	5.97495	35.700
4-	Reading activities do not...	5	28.00	5.42586	12.13260	147.200
5-	I face difficulties to design.....	5	19.00	3.61109	8.07465	65.200
6-	I cannot introduce differently.....	5	16.00	2.88791	6.45755	41.700
7-	The existing reading.....	5	11.00	2.08327	4.65833	21.700
8-	It is difficult to find suitable....	5	10.00	1.93391	4.32435	18.700
9-	Many low-leveled students...	5	7.00	1.24097	2.77489	7.700
10-	The majority of low-leveled.....	5	23.00	4.37493	9.78264	95.700
11-	Low-leveled students miss.....	5	14.00	2.85307	6.37966	40.700
12-	There is a difference in...	5	18.00	3.38231	7.56307	57.200
13-	Facilitating reading comprehension	5	12.00	2.26716	5.06952	25.700
14-	Low-leveled students think that...	5	9.00	1.62481	3.63318	13.200
15-	High-leveled students thin..	5	13.00	2.78209	6.22093	38.700
	Valid N (listwise)	5				

Tables two and three show two parts of investigations regarding teachers' difficulties in teaching reading comprehension to multileveled classes and multileveled classes students' difficulties in learning reading comprehension.

About 85% of language centers teachers' in Khartoum state declare that it is difficult for them to follow all the students in multileveled classes, and all the teachers agree that there is an evident diversity in their learning abilities. Moreover, 23 of them think that it is challenging to engage the low-leveled students in reading activities. Nearly 85% of the teachers believe that the reading activities do not suit all the students, and at the same time, it is difficult for a teacher to design different activities to meet the needs of all the students. Almost 65% of the teachers see that the existing reading materials do not help to apply effective reading strategies. 32% of the teachers complain about reading resources rareness for multileveled students.

Regarding students' learning difficulties, over 90% of multileveled classes teachers believe that many low-leveled students lack confidence that enables them to take part in classroom activities, and at the same time, they are demotivated. Nearly 80% of the teachers noticed that the low-leveled students miss interest and get bored quickly in reading classes and face difficulties in following with their teachers. On the other hand, about 12% of the teachers think the opposite. Over 95% of the teachers agree that there is an apparent difference in the students' ability in reading comprehension.

Almost 71% of the teachers see that making reading comprehension classes easier to enable low-leveled students' to participate and negatively affects higher-leveled students' interest. Still only only 15% of the teachers think that facilitating reading comprehension lessons does not affect

the higher-leveled students' adversely. Both the low-leveled students and the higher-leveled ones claim that they dealt unfairly in reading comprehension classes.

### ***Classroom Observations***

The researcher runs the classroom observation for eight weeks period with the assistance of some colleagues in the same field. The total of the observed classes is 102. To get valid and reliable data, the researcher makes notes and completes checklist observation sheets. In some courses, a tape recording of teaching reading practice in the classrooms and the students' responses go through documentation for further analysis and study. Researcher adapts EFL Reading Comprehension Observation Protocol (ERCOP) and scaffolding instructions derived from Jerome Bruner, 1960. It is a kind of support given to students by their teachers during the learning process. It consists of six sections: instructions, explaining, hints, modeling, feedback, and questioning. Each chapter serves a particular area of our investigation. The teachers are supposed to fulfill these conditions in reading comprehension classes. The observer is going to make a tick to the applied requirement and across to the one that is not used. Every teacher was observed three times in three different classes. That is about one hundred and two classes. The total number of observed teachers are thirty-four secondary school teachers.

Table 4. *EFL reading comprehension observation protocol*

NO.	REQUIREMENTS	APPLIED ✓	NOT APPLIED ✗
(A)	INSTRUCTIONS		
1-	Introduces a good introduction to building interest.	42 (41.17%)	60 (58.82%)
2-	Relates reading material to students' background knowledge.	47 (46.07%)	55 (53.92%)
3-	Uses a flexible method to facilitate student's reading process.	37 (36.27%)	65 (63.72%)
4-	Makes the active students participants in reading lessons.	49 (48.03%)	53 (51.96%)
5-	It creates a supportive environment.	35 (34.31%)	67 (65.68%)
(B)	EXPLAINING		
1-	Trains students to use strategies to infer the meaning of new words.	36 (35.29%)	66 (64.70%)
2-	Teaches students to evaluate their reading.	39 (38.23%)	63 (61.76%)
3-	Presents vital words to understand significant ideas.	54 (52.94%)	48 (47.05%)
4-	Introduces useful phrases that related to the text.	46 (45.09%)	56 (54.90%)
5-	Explains the importance of vocabulary for the students.	41 (40.19%)	61 (59.80)
(C)	HINTS		
1-	It helps students make inferences from the text.	44 (43.13%)	58 (56.86%)
2-	Encourages students to get help from a peer.	56 (54.90%)	46 (45.09%)
3-	Encourages students to cooperate with peers.	55 (53.92%)	47 (46.07%)
4-	It helps students to analyze the text.	38 (37.25%)	64 (62.74%)
5-	It helps students to explain the text.	44 (43.13%)	58 (56.86%)
(D)	MODELING		
1-	It helps students to manage reading time.	31 (30.39%)	71 (69.60%)
2-	Uses visual materials (e.g., video, pictures, graphic organizers).	39 (38.23%)	63 (61.46%)
3-	It helps students to give output.	41 (40.19%)	61 (59.80)

(E)	FEEDBACK		
1-	Employs repetition technique.	48 (47.05%)	54 (52.94%)
2-	Handles clarification requests in L2.	33 (32.35%)	69 (67.64%)
3-	Uses plain correction of reading mistakes.	40 (39.21%)	62 (60.78%)
4-	Withdraws teacher's support from the reading task.	43 (42.15%)	59 (57.84%)
5-	Gives feedback on the students' learning process	47 (46.07%)	55 (53.92%)
(F)	QUESTIONING		
1-	Encourages students to generate questions about the text.	32 (31.37%)	70 (68.62%)
2-	Fosters students' interpretations of the book.	41 (40.19%)	61 (59.80)
3-	Asks students for opinions about text content.	38 (37.25%)	64 (62.74%)
4-	Checks students' understanding of the text.	53 (51.96%)	49 (48.03%)

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of classroom observation

Statement	N	Range	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Introduces a good introduction...	2	18.00	9.00000	12.72792	162.000
Relates reading material to....	2	8.00	4.00000	5.65685	32.000
Uses a flexible method to.....	2	28.00	14.00000	19.79899	392.000
Makes the students active....	2	4.00	2.00000	2.82843	8.000
Creates a supportive....	2	32.00	16.00000	22.62742	512.000
Trains students to use.....	2	30.00	15.00000	21.21320	450.000
Teaches students to evaluate....	2	24.00	12.00000	16.97056	288.000
1 Presents keywords to.....	2	6.00	3.00000	4.24264	18.000
Introduces useful phrases.....	2	10.00	5.00000	7.07107	50.000
0- Explains the importance of....	2	20.00	10.00000	14.14214	200.000
1- Helps students make inference....	2	14.00	7.00000	9.89949	98.000
2- Encourages students to get....	2	10.00	5.00000	7.07107	50.000
3- Encourages students to co....	2	8.00	4.00000	5.65685	32.000
4- Helps students to analyze...	2	26.00	13.00000	18.38478	338.000
5- Helps students to explain...	2	14.00	7.00000	9.89949	98.000
6- Helps students to manage....	2	40.00	20.00000	28.28427	800.000
7- Uses visual materials....	2	24.00	12.00000	16.97056	288.000
8- Helps students to give output.	2	20.00	10.00000	14.14214	200.000
9- Uses repetition.	2	6.00	3.00000	4.24264	18.000
0- Uses clarification requests....	2	36.00	18.00000	25.45584	648.000
1- Uses understandable correction.	2	22.00	11.00000	15.55635	242.000
2- Withdraws teacher's support...	2	16.00	8.00000	11.31371	128.000
3- Gives feedback on the.....	2	8.00	4.00000	5.65685	32.000
4- Encourages students to.....	2	38.00	19.00000	26.87006	722.000
5- Encourages students' interpret...	2	20.00	10.00000	14.14214	200.000
6- Asks students for opinions...	2	26.00	13.00000	18.38478	338.000
7- Checks students' understand.....	2	4.00	2.00000	2.82843	8.000
Valid N (listwise)	2				

Table four displays the classroom observation in percentage, while table 5 presents descriptive statistics of the data focusing on the range, the mean, the standard deviation, and the variance.

Table four shows that only 41.17% of the 102 observed lessons, those teachers present good introductions to the reading comprehension, while 58.82% of the experiences lack good introductions. Around 46% of the experiences that the teachers relate background knowledge to the reading material and only 34% of the experiences that teachers create a supportive environment. Creating attractive and supportive environment is a crucial element in education, but teachers do not pay attention to this area. In almost 65% of the lessons, the teachers do not train the students to infer the meaning of words. Moreover, in only 38% of the lesson where teachers teach the students to evaluate their reading. 61% of the experiences that teachers do not explain to the students the importance of vocabulary in understanding reading materials.

In only 44 of the observed lessons, teachers help students to infer meaning, while in 58 lessons, nothing has happened. In about 54% of lessons, teacher encourages the students to cooperate and work with peers, but only 37% of teachers help students analyze the text. In 71% of lessons, teachers do not help students manage reading time, and only 38% of the experiences where visual aids are present, and this is considered a significant defect in the teaching process. In around 53% of the experiences, teachers do not ask the students to perform repetitions, and in 54% of the experiences, the students do not give feedback to their learning. Seventy of the observed lessons witness no encouragement to the students to generate questions. In about 52% of the experiences, teachers check the students' understanding of the text.

### Discussions

Teaching reading comprehension to multileveled classes is a big challenge, not only to teachers but to the students and the syllabus designers as well. Experts designed many strategies and methods to put an end to this dilemma that disturbs all the members in the education society. In this study, the researcher tries to unveil the difficulties encountered by multileveled classes teachers' at secondary schools in teaching reading comprehension.

According to Webb, Baxter and Thompson (1997), multileveled teachers have to resort to group activities and making heterogeneous groups with the purpose to have the high-leveled students act as guides for the low-leveled students. Surprisingly, Lou (1996), Saleh, Lazonder and De Jong (2005) claim that this technique does not affect the progress of the high-leveled students. On the other hand, (Oakes, 1985; Hallam & Deathe, 2002) think that group activities have adverse effects on the low-leveled students.

The study reveals that the multileveled classes teachers' face real difficulties in teaching comprehension; this finding answers one of the research questions stated earlier. The teachers suffer from the diverse abilities that the students possess. The low-leveled students lack the essential vocabulary that enables them to understand the reading materials. They do not have enough background knowledge allowing them to trace the events and predict the subsequent results.

Employing the appropriate strategies in dealing with multileveled classes is the second research question. From the questionnaire, it appears that the teachers do not choose the adequate strategy in teaching reading comprehension. This is due to the lack of experience and the poor background of teaching methodology.

One of the research questions is whether the teachers receive proper training or no not. After analyzing the questionnaire and observing the teacher's performance, the teaching behavior of the teachers reflects an apparent defect of teachers' performance and their incapability of choosing suitable techniques to meet the needs of all the students. Education experts designed training programs to enable secondary school teachers' to run multileveled classes efficiently. According to the findings above, the Ministry of Education should take action to contain the situation through running intensive programs to upgrade the teachers' performance in multileveled classes.

### **Conclusion**

The researcher displays the findings that constitute a real contribution to the existing literature; moreover, the outcomes can be of high value for policy, practice, theory, and subsequent researches. Research implications are the conclusions that you get from your results. However, the effects have to be verified by evidence, and the explanation of the study limitations is crucial to avoid over-generalization of results.

The findings of the study answer the research questions directly. From the questionnaire, the teachers expressed to some extent their incapability in running multileveled classes appropriately. They complain of the low-leveled students, the rareness of suitable reading materials, the poorness of reading comprehension abilities, choosing suitable teaching strategies, engaging all the students in reading comprehension activities, etc. The problems above are attributed mainly to the lack of teachers' training and subsequently failing to employ suitable teaching strategies.

The syllabus designers have to take advantage of these types of studies to promote programs that can push forward the educational process. Attractive reading materials are essential to capture the interest of the students because many of the low-leveled students get bored quickly in reading classes. Furthermore, it is important to insert reading materials that touch students' interests like sports, fashion, and actions.

Choosing the appropriate teaching strategies needs deep thinking and a farsighted look. Education experts should hold brainstorm sessions accompanying the psychological factors of the students. We have to put in our consideration that the students are teenagers and are full of energy and enthusiasm. We can get benefit from these traits and guide the students, especially the low-leveled ones, to be lifelong learners.

### **Limitations**

The study addresses both the language centers teachers and multileveled students in Khartoum state -Sudan. The sample is bilingual teachers, male and female, and they are MA. Degree holders.

Because of the environment of the study and the nature of the participants, it is difficult to generalize the results of the survey to the teachers all over the world. Since the issue of teaching multileveled classes is still a grey area, the researcher sees that for further studies, researchers can investigate similar topics relating to speaking, listening, and writing skills.

Another limitation of the study is that the researcher uses two instruments as collecting data tools. For further education, researchers can add, for example, interviews. The teachers and the students in this study are both from private institutes, so that similar studies can focus on public institutes.

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Appendix A  
Teachers' questionnaire

No.	STATEMENT	5	4	3	2	1
(A)	TEACHERS' DIFFICULTIES IN TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION TO MULTILEVELED CLASSES					
1-	Teaching multileveled class does not enable me to follow all the students.					
2-	Many low-levelled students face difficulties in engaging into reading comprehension activities.					
3-	There is a remarkable diversity among students' learning ability.					
4-	Reading activities do not fit the diverse levels of the all students in multileveled classes.					
5-	I face difficulties to design a lesson that suits students with different abilities.					
6-	I cannot introduce different classroom activities for multileveled students to get the same target.					
7-	The existing reading materials do not supply enough effective strategies to help multileveled classes.					
8-	It is difficult to find suitable reading resources for multileveled classes.					
(B)	MULTILEVELED STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN LEARNING READING COMPREHENSION					
9-	Many of low-levelled students lack confidence to interact positively in classroom activities.					
10-	The majority of low-levelled students are demotivated.					
11-	Low-levelled students miss interest in reading activities quickly.					
12-	There is a difference among multileveled students' in reading comprehension lessons.					
13-	Facilitating reading comprehension lessons for low-levelled students' affects the higher-levelled students' interest negatively.					
14-	Low-levelled students think that they are dealt unfairly in reading comprehension classes.					
15-	High-levelled students think they are dealt unfairly in reading comprehension classes.					

Appendix B  
EFL Reading comprehension observation protocol

NO.	REQUIREMENTS	APPLIED ✓	NOT APPLIED ✗
(A)	INSTRUCTIONS		
1	Introduces good introduction to build interest.		
2-	Relates reading material to students' background knowledge.		
3-	Uses a flexible method to facilitate student's reading process.		
4-	Makes the students active participants in reading lessons.		
5-	Creates a supportive environment.		
(B)	EXPLAINING		

1-	Trains students to use strategies to infer meaning of new words.		
2-	Teaches students to evaluate their reading.		
3-	Presents key words to understand important ideas.		
4-	Introduces useful phrases that related to the text.		
5-	Explains the importance of vocabulary for the students.		
(C)	HINTS		
1-	Helps students make inferences from the text.		
2-	Encourages students to get help from a peer.		
3-	Encourages students to cooperate with peers.		
4-	Helps students to analyze the text.		
5-	Helps students to explain the text.		
(D)	MODELING		
1-	Helps students to manage reading time.		
2-	Uses visual materials (e.g. video, pictures, graphic organizers).		
3-	Helps students to give output.		
(E)	FEEDBACK		
1-	Uses repetition.		
2-	Uses clarification requests in L2.		
3-	Uses plain correction.		
4-	Withdraws teacher's support from the reading task.		
5-	Gives feedback on the students' learning process		
(F)	QUESTIONING		
1-	Encourages students to generate questions about the text.		
2-	Encourages students' interpretations of the text.		
3-	Asks students for opinions about text content.		
4-	Checks students' understanding of the text.		