EFL Teachers' Cognition and Actual Classroom Practices of Reading Instruction in Secondary Schools at Akaki-Kality Sub-city Addis Ababa: Grade 9 and 10 in Focus

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Abstract

Knowing teachers' cognition and practices is important for understanding and improving educational processes. Over the last four decades, researchers have emphasized the significance of disclosing teachers' cognition and their actual classroom practices in better understanding the reality of the classroom and improve educational process. The main purpose of the study was to investigate secondary school EFL teachers' cognition and classroom practices of reading instruction at Addis Ababa City. To this end, the study employed descriptive research design. To gather data, three data gathering instruments, i.e., questionnaire, interview and classroom observation were used. The questionnaire and interview were used to explore EFL teachers' cognition of reading instruction whereas classroom observation was conducted to see teachers' actual classroom practices of reading instruction. Regarding the research site and participants, 70 English language teachers of grade nine and grade ten across eight secondary schools at Akaki-kality sub-city were made to involve in filling the questionnaire. Interview and classroom observation were arranged with eight teachers (one from each eight schools). To gather the required data, the participants of the study were selected purposively. Finally, the data attained by using questionnaire, interview and classroom observation was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative data (data from questionnaire) was analyzed by using SPSS version 20, whereas the qualitative data (data from interview and classroom observation) were narrated and described.

The finding revealed that EFL teachers' conception of reading instruction was found to be the bottom-up lower level process approach of reading instruction which gives much priority

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to the language clues the text supplies in understanding a text. The finding also showed congruence between teachers' cognition and their actual classroom practices.

1. Introduction

Up to the late 1970s, L2 teaching was considered as a skills-based profession. During this period, teachers were not considered as having 'mental lives' (Freeman, 2002). Teacher education programs consisted of prescriptive techniques in which teacher trainers determined the desirable teaching behavior by carefully shaping teaching skills. In this case, until the mid-1970s teachers were viewed as performers and skill learners who were reciting other people's ideas. This thinking saw teachers like robots which did not have thought of themselves but programmed to perform.

Parallel to this, the focus of research on teachers' education prior to the 1970s was on teachers' observable classroom behavior which was called the process-product approach to the study of teaching. This approach was mainly concerned with the relationship between teachers' classroom behavior, students' classroom behavior and students' achievement (Clark & Peterson, 1986). This paradigm viewed teacher behavior as the cause and student learning as the effect. From this perception, learning was seen as a product of the behaviors performed by teachers in class (Borg, 2006). Teachers' thought processes, i.e., their thinking, decision-making, and judgments, were massively ignored during that period (Erkmen, 2014).

Later, in the 1970s, influenced by the advances in the cognitive psychology, the popularity of ethnographic and qualitative methodology, and the conception of teaching as a thoughtful profession, teacher education researchers have demonstrated an unprecedented interest in and enthusiasm about certain aspects of teacher cognition and their relationship to sound pedagogical practices in the classroom (Fang, 1996). This marks a new dimension of research in second language teaching. So, from this period onwards, the focus of research on teaching learning shifted from observable teacher behavior with student achievement to a focus on teachers' cognition (thinking, beliefs, planning and decision-making processes.)

The emergence of a substantial body of research now referred to as teacher cognition is the most significant advancement in the field of L2 teacher education. These studies of teacher cognition have helped capture the complexities of "who teachers are, what they know and believe, how they learn to teach, and how they carry out their work in diverse contexts throughout their careers" (Johnson, 2006). According to Harste and Burke (1977) Teachers make decision about

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classroom instruction in light of cognition they have about teaching and learning. Hence, teachers' cognition influences their goals, procedures, materials, classroom instruction patterns, their roles, their students and the school they work in.

According to Golombek (1998), language teachers' cognition (attitudes, values, and beliefs combined with their experience and theoretical knowledge), usually guide their instructional practice. The interrelationship between cognition and practices is more commonly understood in terms of teachers' beliefs or personal constructs determining how they approach their teaching. Teacher cognition becomes particularly important in classrooms when they are dealing with complex, ill-defined situations. At this point, according to Nespor (1987), cognition has a great value in determining practices and behaviors.

In the area of language teaching, researchers have examined how cognition (beliefs and knowledge) have informed the instructional practices and decisions of teachers of English as a second language (e.g., Borg, 2003; Golombek, 1998). There has been a good deal of empirical evidence that highlights the significance of teacher cognition in understanding teacher behavior. Kagan (1992), for example, highlights the relationship between teachers and classroom instructions pointing out that a teacher's cognition tend to be associated with a congruent style of teaching. Similarly, Pajares (1992) also notes that the cognition teachers have influence their perceptions and judgments which consequently affect their behavior in the classroom. Richards (1996), whom he refers teachers' cognition as maxims states that maxim is developed from their experience of teaching and learning, their teacher education experiences, and their own personal beliefs and values systems; they function like rules which guide their instructional decisions and pedagogical choices. According to him, identifying the maxims which teachers have might provide a useful perspective on teachers' understanding of teaching and motivation behind their actions.

Teachers are important agents in developing students' reading skills and teachers' cognition could be an influential factor in their teaching and reading practice (Borg, 2006). It can be said that the fact that teachers develop or hold beliefs regarding knowledge, instruction and students which in turn positively or negatively influences their classroom practices.

Such study of EFL teachers' cognition and practice in the context of Ethiopian education seems scanty. Classroom teachers tend to be disregarded in educational decision making processes like in curriculum development, textbook and material preparation and instructional designing (Birhanu, 2006). As Seyoum (1996) indicates, the overall education system seems to reflect a top down curriculum that gives little room to entertain teachers' beliefs, opinions, suggestions, and comments. Even, still the trend of studies on the teaching of English as a foreign language in

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secondary school persists to be the process-product paradigm focusing on what teachers did in the classroom and what students achieved. So, by focusing exclusively on EFL teachers' cognition and practices regarding reading instruction, this work has provided insights into how cognition shapes instructional decisions teachers made. Furthermore, investigating the interplay between language teachers' cognition and their classroom practices in specific language skills such as reading is valuable; they can lead to findings which are significant to the field of language education (Borg, 2003).

Thus, the study intended to find answer for the following research questions.
1. What are EFL teachers' cognitions about reading instruction?
2. How do teachers conduct instructional practices in teaching reading?
3. Is there any relationship between teachers' cognition and their classroom practices?

2. Review of Related Literature
2.1 Concept of Teacher Cognition
The concept of cognition has been defined and conceptualized differently by different scholars. For example, Borg (2003) defines teacher cognition as teachers' beliefs, knowledge, theories, attitudes, images, assumptions, metaphors, and conceptions, perspectives about teaching, teachers, learning, students, subject matter, curricula, materials, instructional activities and self (p.41). According to Kagan (1992), teacher cognition includes teachers' thoughts about instruction and beliefs about students, classrooms, learning, and their own teaching performance. Still many others use different terms to define teachers' cognition, for example, "teachers' personal theories" (James, 2001), "teacher knowledge" (Freeman, 2002), "teachers', theories" (Borg, 1999). These terms, including teachers' beliefs, teachers' knowledge and teacher thinking, comprise the broader concept of teacher cognition.

One of the most reputable researchers in the field, Borg (2006) proposes a framework of teacher cognition. In his cognition framework there are four main aspects which need to be addressed when investigating language teacher cognition: teacher's prior language learning experiences, conceptualizations of second or foreign language teaching during teacher education, contextual aspects, and classroom practices.

Teachers' concepts about teaching and learning are established early on in schooling experience. These early concepts may continue to be influential throughout their professional lives. Teachers' concepts about teaching and learning may be affected by later by professional preparation programs in which they receive training, teaching apprentices, and new pedagogical orientations. However, when teachers are at work, some contextual elements such as curriculum

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and teaching culture also influence their practices which may be more or less congruent with their underlying cognition. Meanwhile, teachers' ongoing experience in classrooms may simultaneously shape their cognition unconsciously or consciously through reflection.

2.1.1 Teacher Cognition and Prior language Learning Experience

Beliefs established early on in life are resistant to change even in the face of contradictory evidence (Nisbett & Ross, 1980 cited in Borg, 2003). Such beliefs take the form of episodically stored material derived from critical incidents in individuals' personal experience (Nespor, 1987). Supporting this fact Lortie (1975) claims that there is what is called "apprenticeship of observation" where teachers learn a lot about teaching through their vast experience as learners. Thus, teachers' prior language learning experience influence teachers' cognition about learning, which forms the basis of their initial conceptualizations of EFL teaching during teacher education, and which may continue to be influential throughout their professional lives (Borg, 2003). For example; Bailey et al (1996) asked seven MA candidates to write autobiography on the role of their language learning histories in shaping their current teaching philosophies and practice. As a result, the writers identified several factors related to teaching and learning situations which had made their own language learning experience positive. These factors are:

1. Teachers personality and style mattered more than methodology;
2. Teachers were caring and committed, and had clear expectations of their students;
3. Teachers respected, and were respected by the students;
4. As students, their motivation to learn enabled them to overcome inadequacies in the teaching; and
5. Learning was facilitated by a positive classroom environment

By exploring their experiences in this manner, Bailey felt that they were able to begin to articulate their own theories of teaching and to become aware of their origins.

2.1.2 Teacher Cognition and Teacher Education

There is a dividing opinion among scholars on the significance of relationship between teacher cognition and teacher education program. Mainstream educational research has shown that at the start of teacher education program, students may hold inappropriate, unrealistic or naïve understandings of teaching and learning, which has been proved to be true in the field of language teaching (Freeman, 1992; Borg, 2003). In terms of the impact of teacher education on

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teacher cognition, an influential review by Kagan (1992), often referred to in language teaching studies, suggested that the relationship is not significant.

However, a study by Richards, Ho & Giblin (1996) proved kagan's claim wrong. After offering an introductory teacher training course for five students, they found out cognition change in relation to such points as their conception of their role in the classroom, their professional knowledge, their concerns for achieving continuity in lessons, and the manner in which they evaluated their own teaching. In terms of cognition change, they concluded that though the trainees, did not change in a homogeneous way; there was variability in the extent to which each of the trainees mastered the principles underlying the course, with each interpreting the course in individual ways on the basis of their teaching experiences and their own beliefs and assumptions about themselves, teachers, teaching, and learning (Borg, 2003).

Although there is no agreed statement on the relationship between teacher cognition and teacher education program, various studies do reflect the eclectic feature of teachers' cognition under certain teacher education program, which may well elicit some pedagogical implication. Moreover, although pedagogical knowledge is seen by Richardson (1996) as the least powerful factor affecting beliefs of teaching in teacher education program, studies indicate considerable differences between pedagogically and non-pedagogically educated teachers in terms of their classroom behavior. In this case, EFL teacher cognition should be surfaced and acknowledged during the teacher education program if the program is to make a difference in the deep structure of cognition held by the student teachers.

2.1.3 Teacher Cognition and Classroom Practices

During the past 40 years, research on teacher education has made major advancement in studying the complex relationship between teacher cognition and classroom practices, acknowledging the interactive relationship between them. Given the effect of cognition on people's behaviors, researchers have long assumed that teacher cognition influence the way they design and interact in their classes. Moreover, collective studies from the mainstream literature show that language teachers' classroom practices are shaped by a wide range of interacting and often conflicting factors and teachers' cognitions emerge consistently as a powerful influence on their practices (Borg, 2003).

Cognition is often identified as precursors to behavior (individual enact practices based on the beliefs that they hold (Pajares, 1992). What teachers do in the classroom is said to be governed by their cognition and these cognition often serve as a filter through which instructional judgments and decisions are made: a cognition about language learning and teaching that they

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apply when they plan their instruction; choose the teaching strategy, the media, the material and the type of resources; interact and communicate with their students in the class; manage classroom; and react to whatever possible conditions in the classroom. Being aware or not by certain cognition in their mind, the teachers are influenced by this belief when they think, react and respond during their professional routine tasks and performance. In line to this Richards (1998) stated that a primary source of teachers' classroom practices is belief systems: the information, attitudes, values, expectations, theories, and assumptions about teaching and learning that teachers build up over time and bring with them to the classroom.

Researchers discovered that teachers' classroom practices were found to reflect their cognition. For example, a study by Johnson (1992) about the relationship between ESL teachers' theoretical beliefs and their classroom practices examined that the majority teachers held clearly defined theoretical beliefs: skill-based (emphasizing the practice of discrete skills, attending to the accuracy of language production, and promoting memorization), rule-based (focusing on the learning of grammar rules and the practice of structures in meaningful contexts), and function based (promoting the use of authentic materials, communication-oriented activities, and the appropriate use of language in real situations) approaches, which reflect their preferred teaching approach. The observation result with three teachers showed that teachers who possessed clearly defined theoretical beliefs revealed that the teachers designed their reading and writing activities in accordance with their beliefs. Thus, Johnson concluded that there is such a relationship between cognition and practice.

2.1.4 Contextual Factors Affecting Classroom Practices

Within the framework of education, the context in general may have several interpretations and implications. It may concern the classroom itself and every component within this setting, for instance, facilities, materials, and physical resources (e.g., classroom, board, markers, equipment, and environmental conditions and location in respect to other classrooms). Institutional context may refer also to the school regulations, philosophy, materials, facilities, libraries, and whatever other component exists of the school beyond the classroom that affects teachers and their practices. Context, from a broader perspective, can also refer to the atmosphere outside the school, for instance school location, neighborhood, and norms, to mention just a few. Institutional contexts can, therefore, be viewed from different perspectives, as they play an important role in relation to teachers' work.

Numerous theorists and researchers, working in the field of education, have emphasized the effects of social, cultural, and economic contexts on teaching and learning. Borg (2006) claimed that there are relationships between teachers' cognition, practices, and context. He explains that

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these relationships are not unidirectional or linear, and thus this may occur in a variety of ways in an infinite possibility of contexts and situations. In discussing the impact of context on language teachers' practices in particular, Borg notes that the social, institutional, instructional, and physical settings in which teachers work have a major impact on their cognition and practices. The study of cognition and practices in isolation of the contexts in which they occur will inevitably, therefore provide partial, if not flawed characterizations of teachers and teaching.

Some studies have explored the relationships among the context, teachers' cognition, and teachers' practices. For instance, the Johnson et al. (2012) study draws on a questionnaire with 87 items and examines the views of over 25,000 teachers across the United States. Outcomes from the study revealed that work context has a strong influence on teachers' work, even more than financial considerations. All in all, contextual factors emerged as a key variable in teachers' choices, not only within the boundaries of the classroom, but also in their teaching careers.

2.2 Approaches of EFL Reading Instruction

"A reading approach is theory of what is going on in the reader's eyes and mind during reading and comprehending (or miscomprehending) a text" (Davies, 1995, p.59). Approaches of the reading process try to explain and predict reading behavior. They are the bases on which reading instructions are built. At this section, the researcher made an attempt to explain what strategies each of the three models is based up on.

2.2.1 Bottom-up Approach

The bottom-up approach, some calls it, the traditional approach, views reading instruction as a passive lower-level decoding process. A bottom-up approach focuses on linguistic clues to comprehend a text (Carrell, 1988). This means that this approach sees reading primarily as a process of reconstructing the authors intended meaning by recognizing the printed letters and words, and building up the meaning for a text from the smallest textual units at the "bottom" to the largest textual units at the "top." Traditional approach advocators argue that if a person is able to correctly decode a text, meaning and understanding will follow. The text contains the message and through the act of decoding the text, the reader discovers what the message is. Kuzborska (2011) point out the roles students and teachers should do in the classroom in the skill-based approach reading instruction. He pointed out that students should read words accurately by focusing on pronunciation. They must also know all words in a text in order to understand it by learning a lot of vocabulary. In addition to that, they should learn grammar to help their reading comprehension and use translation to improve their comprehension.

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On the other side, teachers should transmit necessary knowledge and skills, frequently ask students to read aloud, teach word chunks in English such as prefixes and base words, follow textbook by covering all possible material and activities, ask factual questions on some details in a text, teach new vocabulary before reading, immediately correct student's oral mistakes, discuss a text with the whole class and use textbooks that are graded and sequenced in terms of language structure and vocabulary. Teachers do those things with the purpose of helping students read accurately, pass exams, understand grammar, improve students' vocabulary and their reading fluency. Ibid

2.2.2 Top-down Approach

As opposed to bottom-up approach, in this view, reading is not just extracting meaning from a text but a process of connecting information in the text with the knowledge the reader brings to the act of reading. Reading, in this sense, is a dialogue between the reader and the text (Grabe, 1988,). It is seen as an active cognitive process in which the reader's background knowledge plays a key role in the creation of meaning. Reading is not a passive mechanical activity but "purposeful and rational, dependent on the prior knowledge and expectations of the reader (or learner). Reading is a matter of making sense of written language rather than decoding print to sound (Smith 1994, 2).

Another theory closely related to top-down processing also had a major impact on reading instruction. Schema theory describes in detail how the background knowledge of the learner interacts with the reading task and illustrates how a student's knowledge and previous experience with the world is crucial to deciphering a text. The ability to use this schemata, or background knowledge, is fundamental for efficient comprehension to take place.

Kuzborska (2011) suggests that under this approach there are different roles given to students and teachers. For example; students should create their own meaning of a text, relate their background knowledge and experience to a text, guess unknown words by using context, read extensively and silently in and out of classroom with no exercise after reading, read a text selectively by focusing on certain parts that are interesting to them, develop their learning of reading naturally with little explicit teaching of reading, role-play what they understand from a text, discuss their reading in a working group, and reading texts that are interesting to them and chosen by them.

Whereas the roles of teachers under this approach are to assess students on their writing, speaking, and performing rather than multiple-choice or short-answer tests, use do pre-reading activities such as looking at graphs and headings, ask inferential questions, teach vocabulary

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incidentally when meeting new words in a text and when students ask. Teachers do those things with the purpose of developing students' reading interest.

2.2.3 Interactive Approach

The word interactive in this approach refers not to the interaction between the reader and the text as in schema theory but to the interaction between bottom-up and top-down processing skills. Interactive approach, some calls it the balanced approach, is derived from interactive models that view reading as a combination of both higher and lower-level processes. It acknowledges that lower level processing skills are essential for fluent and accurate reading; it also emphasizes that as bottom-up processing becomes more automatic, higher-level skills will become more engaged. In this regard, Eskey (1988) explains that the interactive model takes into account the continuous interaction between bottom-up and top-down processing in the construction of the meaning of a text. Although good readers decode automatically with little cognitive effort, second language learners need help in decoding, since for them language is a key problem that cannot be solved by guessing.

Grabe (1988) also explains that the reading process in interactive approach is not simply a matter of extracting information from the text. Rather, it is one in which the reading activates a range of knowledge in the reader's mind that he or she uses, and that, in turn, may be refined and extended by the new information supplied by the text. During reading, the reader constructs a personal interpretation of a text; there is an interaction between the reader and the text. The reader also tries to get at the author's original intensions; there is an interaction between the reader and the author. And there is also a constant interaction between the lower-level bottom-up strategies and the higher level top-down strategies the reader employs.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1 Research Design

The main aim of the study was to seek data from participant ELT teachers about their cognition and practices of reading instruction and to explain the relationship between their cognition and actual classroom practices. To this end, descriptive research design with mixed method was employed. Mixed methods is an emergent methodology of research that advances the systematic integration, or "mixing," of quantitative and qualitative data within a single investigation or sustained program of inquiry. The basic premise of this methodology is that such integration permits a more complete and synergistic utilization of data than separate quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis do (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2017).

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3. 2 Setting and Participants

This study was conducted at Addis Ababa, Akaki-Kality Sub-City. The population of the study comprised of secondary school (grade 9 and grade 10) teachers who were working during the second semester of the year 2021 G.C.

The participants of the study were grade 9 and grade 10 English language teachers. Seventy (70) English language teachers at public schools of Akaki-Kality sub-city were involved in this study.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sub-city used for this study (Akaki-Klity sub-city) is one of the ten administrative sub-cities under Addis Ababa City which is the capital city of Ethiopia. From those ten sub-cities, Akaki-kality Sub-city was selected for the study purposively because as part of community service, the researcher provided training on reading in the secondary schools of Akaki-kality where the problem was spotted. In the sub-city there are eleven public schools administered by the Addis Ababa bureau administrative office. From those eleven schools, eight of them were again selected purposively. So, seventy English language teachers who were teaching in those eight schools in the year 2020/21 G.C were included for the study whereas for in-depth study one teacher from each eight schools (8 teachers in gross) were randomly selected.

3.4 Instruments of Data Collection

To obtain the required data from the selected participants, the study employed three data collection instruments namely questionnaire, interviews, and classroom observation. With the questionnaire, more numbers of teachers were addressed to see their conceptions of reading instruction. Furthermore, interviews and classroom observation were employed for in-depth investigation of teachers' cognition and classroom practices. In the following section, a detailed discussion of each instrument was given.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaire was one of the instruments used for this study. Eighteen close ended questionnaire items were used for the current study. It was employed for a number of reasons. Firstly, as Dorneyi (2007) stated, questionnaire could help the researcher to gather data from relatively large number of research participants. In this case, it was managed to collect data from 70 research participants. Secondly, constructing a questionnaire and analyzing data collected

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through it are relatively easy and more manageable. Thirdly, it is quicker to code up and analyze than word base data. More specifically, questionnaire was designed to figure out their cognition about reading instruction.

3.4.2 Interview

Interview was another instrument used for the current study. It was employed because it helped the researcher to conduct an in-depth investigation on participant teachers' conception of reading instruction. A semi-structured interview format as a guideline with a set of specific questions where the respondents were free to say whatever they liked was employed. As Dornyei, (2007) states that in semi- structured interviews the interviewer designs pre-planned guiding questions for prompts that encourage interviewees to express their ideas on certain issues in an elaborated manner.

These pre-planned guiding questions were intended to find out basic information for the research objectives by eliciting their perspectives. As Gradman and Hanania (1991) state, one of the advantage of an interview over a questionnaire is that interaction with the respondents can improve the chances that the information elicited is accurate and complete Interviews were held with 8 volunteer teachers from eight secondary schools to supplement information and to cross-check the data collected through the questionnaire and the classroom observations, i.e., it was done to support it with information obtained from the questionnaire and classroom observations. More specifically, the interview was used to get information about their cognition of reading instruction, their

3.4.3 Classroom Observation

Classroom observation was another instrument used for this study. It was used to see what was actually happening in the classroom while the reading lesson was going on. According to Best and Kahan (1989), observation gives the firsthand account of situations under study and when combined with other data collecting tools, it allows for a holistic interpretation of the situations which are being studied. It also helped to examine the extent to which teachers' cognition were compatible with their actual classroom practices. To this end, the researcher prepared classroom observation checklist based on the objectives of the study. Moreover, in order not to miss some major instructional events while the teaching learning was going on, the researcher also used an audio-recorder.

Then, eight (8) teachers were randomly selected for classroom observation. Classroom observations were conducted in the above eight aforementioned secondary schools. One teacher

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from each school was observed twice each. Thus, the researcher carried out 16 classroom observations in gross.

4. Results and Discussion
4.1 EFL Teachers' Cognition about Reading Instruction
The following diagram presents EFL teachers' cognition about reading instruction. Eighteen questions were prepared and used to investigate their cognition about reading instruction.
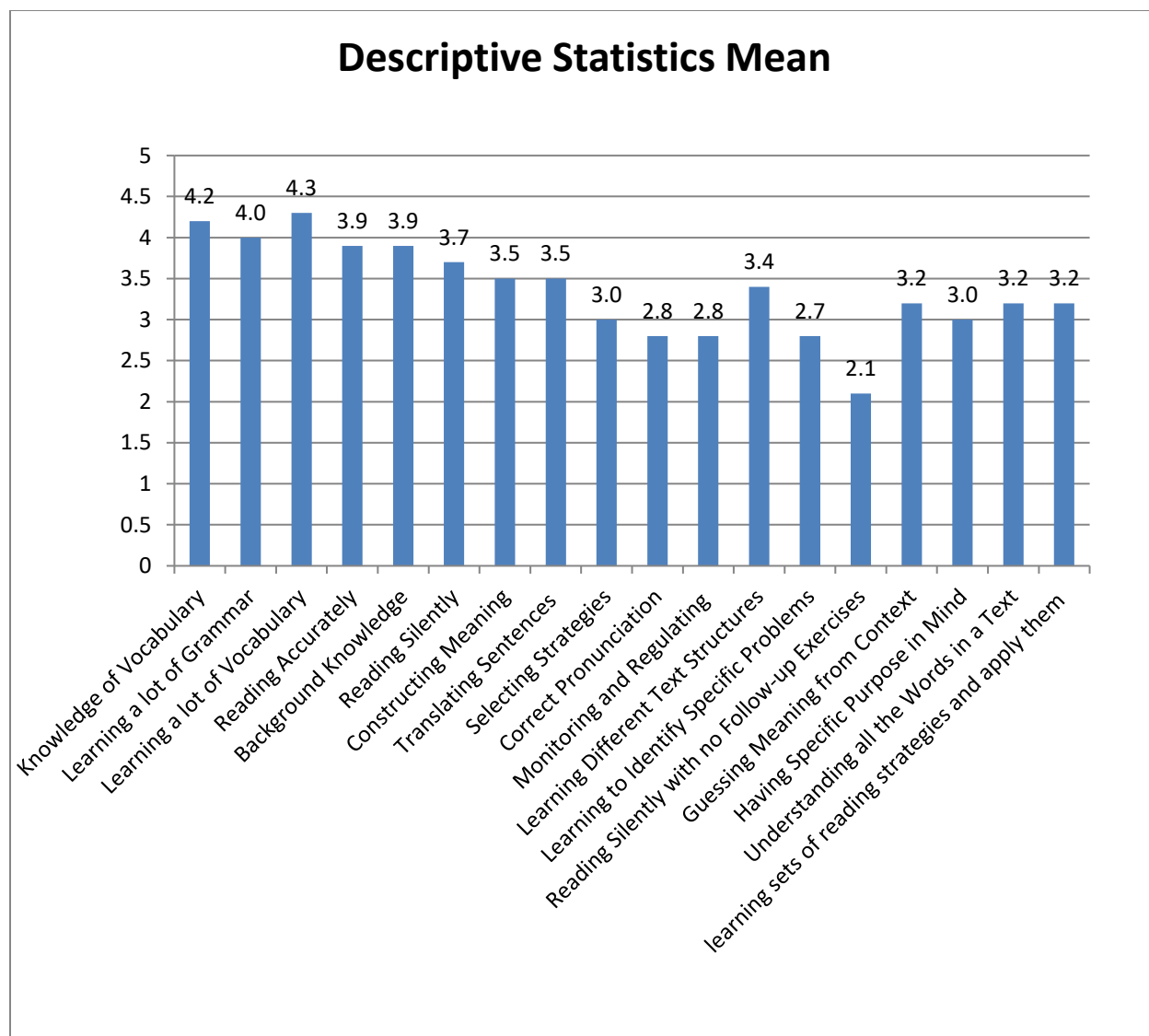

Descriptive Statistics Mean

Category	Mean
Knowledge of Vocabulary	4.2
Learning a lot of Grammar	4.0
Learning a lot of Vocabulary	4.3
Reading Accurately	3.9
Background Knowledge	3.9
Reading Silently	3.7
Constructing Meaning	3.5
Translating Sentences	3.5
Selecting Strategies	3.0
Correct Pronunciation	2.8
Monitoring and Regulating	2.8
Learning Different Text Structures	3.4
Learning to Identify Specific Problems	2.7
Reading Silently with no Follow-up Exercises	2.1
Guessing Meaning from Context	3.2
Having Specific Purpose in Mind	3.0
Understanding all the Words in a Text	3.2
learning sets of reading strategies and apply them	3.2

Figure 1: EFL Teachers' Cognition about Reading Instruction

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As shown on figure 1, from 18 items, five responses have considerably high mean responses which range from 3.9 to 4.3. These are; instructing a lot of vocabulary words in order for students' reading comprehension to improve, understanding of the text comes from the words of which it's composed, instructing a lot of grammar in order for the students' reading comprehension to improve, getting meaning from a text by working out how to read words accurately, and relating ideas in a text to the students' background knowledge (which have means of 4.3, 4.2, 4.0, 3.9, & 3.9 respectively). This, in other way round, indicates that the teachers tend to belief in bottom-up reading approach of teaching reading skills which sees reading primarily as a process of reconstructing the authors intended meaning by recognizing the printed letters and words, and building up the meaning for a text from the smallest textual units at the bottom to the largest textual units at the top. In this category, except one of the items which has mean response of 3.9 (relating ideas in a text to the students' background knowledge), most of the teachers' responses reveal that the roles of grammar and vocabulary in understanding a text are higher than anything else.

On the contrary, four of the responses have relatively low means. These are;, paying more attention to the correct pronunciation of the words than to the meaning of a text when reading a text silently, monitoring and regulating one's reading comprehension, identifying specific problems when comprehension breaks down and to take steps to solve them, and reading silently in every lesson with no follow up exercises after reading (which have means, 2.8, and 2.8 2.7 & 2.1 respectively). This indicates that the teachers ignore the role the students themselves play during reading, the knowledge the students bring during reading and the strategies they employ to tackle comprehension problem or when comprehension breaks down.

On the remaining items, participants showed uncertainty especially on five of the items. These are; skipping unknown words and guessing meaning from a text (i.e., by looking at words near to it), understanding all the words in a text in order to understand the meaning of a text, instructing sets of reading strategies and applying them when reading a text, moving through a text with specific purposes in mind, and selecting strategies and use them to work out the meaning of a text (which have means of 3.2, 3.2, 3.2, 3.0, 3.0 respectively).

Moreover to investigate teachers' cognition of reading instruction, interview was conducted. From eight teachers interviewed, five of them reported that in reading instruction the focus should be on vocabulary, grammar and factual questions in order to help learners acquire vocabulary and reading skills. They said that the purpose of reading instruction is to build learners vocabulary and grammar. They also narrated that students must read loudly in the classroom in order to improve their confidence and pronunciation. Whereas the remaining three participants said that reading instruction should involve constructing the authors intended

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meaning not answering factual questions. They further narrated that reading should involve finding the deep or implied meaning of the text not the surface meaning. They also said that in the process of reading, teachers should help learners to integrate the background knowledge they already have related to the text and encourage them to make prediction about the story of the text before they start reading. They also narrated that in reading instruction students should be encouraged to deal with difficult vocabulary items from the text than looking at dictionary.

4.2 Thematically Categorized Teachers' Cognition about Reading Instruction

The following figure presents the grand mean or cutting point of teachers' responses about their cognition of teaching reading skills.

Eighteen items were prepared to identify teachers' cognition of teaching reading skills. These eighteen items were then categorized into two thematic categories of bottom-up and top-down reading approaches. This was done in order to see the cutting point of teachers' response about their cognition in terms of reading approaches. The grand mean response of the two approaches is presented below.
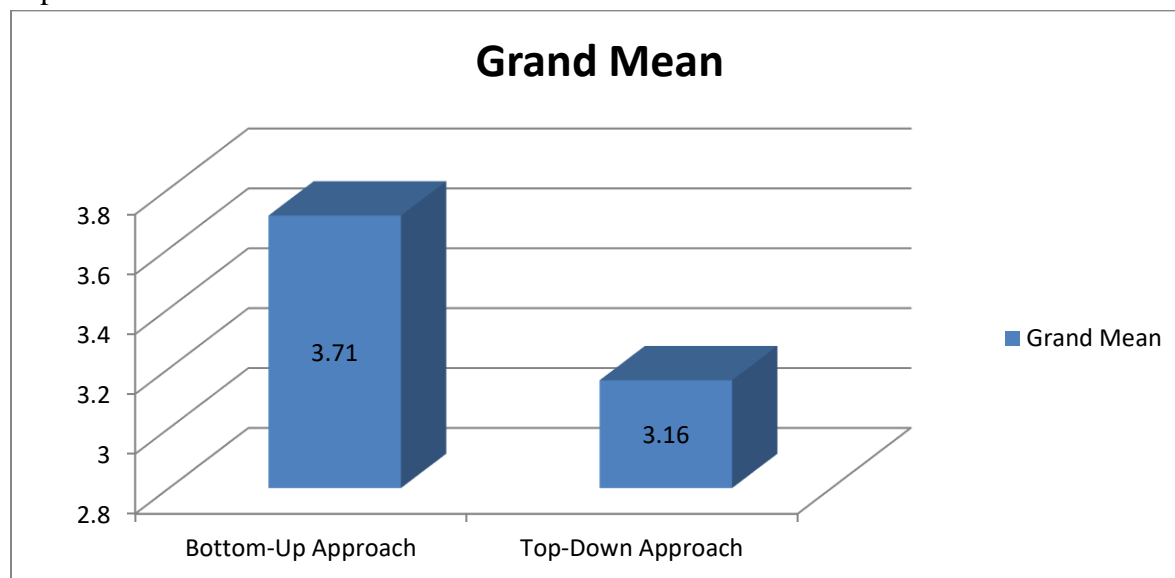

Figure 2: Thematically Categorized Teachers' Cognition about Reading Instruction

As figure 2 specifies above, the teachers' grand mean response to the bottom-up approach of teaching reading skills is 3.71 where as the top-down approach of teaching reading skills lies on 3.16. This, in other way round, means that teachers showed agreement on items of bottom-up approach to teaching reading skills. However, they revealed uncertainty on the items of top-down approach to teaching reading skills. This denotes that the teachers seemed to think that

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bottom-up approach to teaching reading skills enabled students to comprehend the text effectively.

4.3 How do Teachers Conduct Instructional Practices in Teaching Reading Skills?

To find out the teachers' actual classroom practices of reading instruction, eight teachers' reading lessons were observed. They were observed twice each. So, in total, sixteen classroom observations were conducted. The observation found out that, six teachers out eight followed similar procedures in teaching reading. They entered to the classroom; they reminded the students about the previous lesson. Then, they wrote the reading title on the board and asked the students to take out their textbooks and read the reading text in group or individually. After sometime, the teachers ordered the students to read it loudly to the classroom and when they had time they discussed the reading activities with the students, otherwise; they gave them as homework. They followed traditional way of teaching reading skills. Conversely, two of the teachers conducted reading lesson differently. They just first wrote the reading title on the board and asked some few questions which are related to the title. By doing so, they just tried to activate the students' background knowledge. They also wrote some few vocabulary questions which were drawn from the reading text and which possibly hinder students from understanding the text. They also made the students to predict about the reading story or content. In the middle of reading instruction, they encouraged the students to use contextual meaning whenever they faced difficult vocabularies.

4.4 Is there any Relationship between Teachers' Cognition and their Classroom Practices?

The data from survey and interviews revealed that teachers have cognition of bottom-up approach of reading instruction. Similarly, the actual classroom practices indicated that teachers implement bottom-up approach of reading instruction. Hence, based on the qualitative and quantitative data, it can be said that there is a positive relationship between teachers' cognition of reading instruction and their actual classroom practices.

4.5 Discussion of the Results

As results from questionnaire and interview indicates that teachers' cognition of reading instruction lies on lower level process of reading instruction where teachers mainly focus on pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary teaching and stuff like that. So, this shows that teachers believe in the bottom up approach of reading instruction where the focus is on "linguistic clues to comprehend a text" (Carrell, 1988).

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There is a divided opinion among scholars about the relationship between teachers' cognition and their actual classroom practices. Some researchers claim that there is a fit between teachers' cognition and their actual classroom practices, but some others do not believe so. As to this finding, the actual classroom practices of teachers were found to be congruent with their cognition of reading instruction. As the checklist shows, most of the cognitions reported by teachers go with observed practices. In total, sixteen classroom observations were done. The results of those observations showed correspondence between their cognition and the ways in which they address reading instruction. Similar to their cognition, most of the observed teachers approached the reading instruction based on the bottom-up approach of teaching reading skills.

This finding is similar with a study carried out by Gardener (1996). His study reveals that there is no such significant difference between what they claim to know and what they do in the classroom. However, in some contexts there might be a misfit between teachers' cognition and their actual classroom practices. Chou's (2008) finding can be mentioned as an example. Such difference, of a fit or misfit between teachers' cognition and their actual classroom practices, occurred because of the various teaching context EFL teachers' experience. Such variations usually happed because of the textbook factor, students' language background, interest of learning a language and language curriculum.

5. Conclusions

This study thoroughly explored and analyzed high school EFL teachers' cognition and classroom practices about reading instruction.

As results from questionnaire and interview depict, the teachers were found to have cognition of the bottom up approach of reading instruction which see reading as lower level skill of understanding the author's meaning. Of course, lower level reading components of grammar and vocabulary are basic to understand a text, but the concept of reading goes beyond that.

The actual classroom observation also revealed that teachers' did reading classroom instruction based on the bottom-up approach of reading instruction. They claim understanding the grammar and words employed in the text sufficient to understand the meaning of the text. So, teachers' cognition about reading instruction was found to be compatible with their actual classroom practices.

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