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Exploring Egyptian EFL Upper Primary Teachers' Perceptions of the Reading Teaching and Assessment Methods in Governmental Schools.

A Thesis

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Exploring Egyptian EFL Upper Primary Teachers' Perceptions of the Reading Teaching and Assessment Methods in Governmental Schools.

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Abstract, This study aimed at investigating EFL Egyptian primary teachers' perceptions about teaching and assessing reading at the primary stage. It also examined the effect of Egyptian EFL primary teachers' gender, school context, teaching experience, and participation in language teaching and assessment courses on shaping their perceptions about teaching reading. It aimed to explore the reading teaching and assessment methods used by Egyptian EFL primary teachers. Participants comprised a random sample of (n= 354) EFL in-service primary teachers to collect data for the questionnaire, 40 teachers for the observation, and 6 EFL upper primary teachers for the interview. The study adopted an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. The results show that Egyptian EFL upper primary teachers have inconsistent perceptions about teaching and assessing reading in their classrooms. Their perceptions of teaching and assessing reading are impacted by many demographic variables such as the school context, years of teaching experience, and participation in language teaching and assessment courses. EFL upper primary teachers did not use a wide variety of reading teaching and assessment methods in their classrooms. The most common methods used to teach reading among Egyptian EFL upper primary teachers were reported to be asking students some comprehension questions requiring short answers and asking students questions before, during, and after reading the text. The results revealed that interactive reading tasks of short-answer, perceptive reading tasks of multiple-choice, and reading aloud were the most popular reading assessment tasks among Egyptian EFL upper primary teachers. Pedagogical implications and suggestions for further research are presented.

Keywords: *Analytical study, reading teaching methods, reading assessment methods, assessing reading, Egyptian EFL primary teachers.*

1.Introduction

The ever increasing demand for high levels of literacy in the 21st century makes reading at the heart of its core subjects and skills (Framework for 21st Century Learning (n.d.); Küçüköglü, 2013; Luna Scott, 2015). This increasing demand stems from the fact that reading is manipulated in all academic subjects (Cimmiyotti, 2013), and without reading, the skills required for (1) life and career, (2) learning and innovation, and (3) information, media and technology are negatively affected (American College Testing, ACT, 2006; Reid, 2016).

Moreover, as studies show, there is a significant correlation between the level of reading and school achievement as well as an academic success (e.g., Cimmiyotti, 2013; DiGiovanna, 1994; Espin and Deno – as cited in Cimmiyotti, 2013, p.13;). Also, "without the ability to read well, opportunities for personal fulfillment and job success inevitably will be lost" (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, as cited in Küçüköglü, 2013, p.1; ACT, 2006).

Many researchers have attempted to reach a definition of reading. According to Akyel & Bilikozen, (2014, p. 263), reading is " a multifaceted, complex process in that it involves the interplay of a wide range of components." That is, it includes the interaction between the reader, the text, and the interaction between the reader and the text (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 39; Medjahdi, 2015, p. 5). Serafini (2012, p. 194) introduces another definition " Reading is a process, a recursive cycle of generating meanings that changes each time readers transact with text across a particular context." Moreover, Woolley (2011, p. 15) defines reading as " the process of making meaning from text. The goal, therefore, is to gain an overall understanding of what is described in the text rather than to obtain meaning from isolated words or sentences " .

In many second or foreign language situations, reading receives a particular focus. Many reasons justify this importance. According to Richards and Renandya (2002), for example, reading is the skill that "foreign language [learners] ever want to acquire" because it is a top [the priorities], and it is strongly correlated with the process of second /foreign language acquisition, (p.273). That is, reading is considered a fundamental skill in language acquisition. Also, in 2000 the National Reading Panel claimed that reading comprehension is an essential part of literacy instruction. According to Krashen, 2004 (as cited in Bakke, 2010), p.13 " students who like to read score better in

most subjects than students that do not like to read." Another reason is that reading can help EFL students to understand the different patterns of writing. Simply, after reading, students can gain much information about how to write well; therefore, it can improve their writing and vocabulary skills.

Reading, which is a complex, invisible, yet interactive construct could be taught and assessed by understanding the skills and strategies used (Weir, 2005). In other words, " Since the process of reading is not directly observable"; hence, the teaching and assessment of reading are based indirectly on the skills and sub-skills (Coombe, Davidson, O' Sullivan, Stoyanoff, 2012; p. 212).

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Importance of Reading for EFL Primary Students

The second decade of the 21st century has witnessed increased demand for research, especially in the field of young learner second/foreign language learning. Many studies (Cable et al., 2010; Lawrence, 2017) have indicated the advantages of early language teaching: fluency in communication, allowing students' to approach new challenges effectively, shaping students' self-esteem, more enthusiastic, motivated towards language learning, and more self-confidence in expressing their beliefs and emotions. What is more, it is believed that early language learning can develop skills in one's mother tongue, fluency in communication, and accuracy in using the four language skills (European Commission, 2004).

The interactive relationship between the four language skills: Reading, writing, listening, speaking was stressed in many recent research studies. For example, Sadiku (2015, p. 29) illustrated that the integration of listening and speaking with reading and writing would make language learners good listeners, speakers, readers, and writers to communicate effectively. Teachers, for instance, should expose learners to different tasks and materials. Research has found that improvement in one skill has a positive and significant effect on other language skills (Bozorgian, 2012; Mart, 2012; Rost, 1994; Yalcinkaya, Muluk and Ashin, 2009).

2.2. Reading Types

The researcher in the present study reviewed all the reading taxonomies and found those of Brown, (2004); Brown & Abeywickrama, (2010) more related and comprehensive than other taxonomies of the types of reading. Moreover, this taxonomy is suitable for the study's purposes as it entails four types of reading with different assessment procedures or tasks. This classification of reading includes four categories: perceptive reading, selective reading, interactive reading, and extensive reading. Also, the researcher will adopt this classification in developing the study's questionnaire. Following is an elaboration of these types.

2.2.1. Perceptive reading [bottom-up processing]

Perceptive reading in a second or a foreign language is concerned with the basic or fundamental skills of a language. Namely, at this beginning level, the reader deals with fundamental literacy skills such as the identification of alphabetical symbols, uppercase, and lowercase letters, punctuation, words, grapheme-phoneme correspondences. The reader in perceptive reading tries to decode letters, grapheme symbols, and words, which are the elements of larger parts of a language. This type of reading involves bottom-up processing (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010, pp. 230-233). Perceptive tasks are also known as literacy tasks. Literacy tasks facilitate learners' language development. Assessments used to measure student's literacy skills can be implemented in several different ways, such as reading aloud [letters, words and /or short sentences], written responses [transfer what's read], multiple-choice items [identify same /different- circle the answer - choose the letter - match], and picture - cued items (Brown, 2004, Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010, p.230: 233).

2.2.2. Selective Reading [bottom-up & top-down]

Selective reading is the second level after perceptive reading that concentrates on the lexical and grammatical aspects of language (formal features of language). It involves the top down and bottoms up processing. Many EFL teachers believe that selective reading only includes testing students' vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. Lexical and grammatical aspects of language are the essential parts that are used to perform the four language skills (Brown &

Abeywickrama, 2010, pp. 234:241; Ketabi, 2016, p. 3, 4). The assessment tasks used for testing selective reading encompass multiple-choice format, matching items, editing tasks, picture-cued items, gap-filling items (Brown, 2004).

2.2.3. Interactive reading [bottom-up & top-down]

Interactive reading means reading longer texts that vary from one paragraph to various pages in a book or any texts. It involves the readers' psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic interaction with the text (Ketabi, 2016). It includes reading different genres, such as short stories, anecdotes, questionnaires, recipes, directions, and announcements (Brown and Abeywickrama, 2010). Interactive reading combines both form-focused and meaning-focused with attention to meaning. In interactive reading, the meaning is significant than form; so, top-down processing is involved in this type of Reading.

Brown & Abeywickrama, (2010; and Brown, (2004) indicate that the assessment tasks used for this type are Cloze tasks [fixed ratio deletion (the fifth, seventh or ninth words) or rational deletion], impromptu reading followed by comprehension questions, short- answer tasks, editing long texts, scanning for specific information, ordering events /sequences, and information transfer (reading charts, maps, or graphs) are some possible interactive reading tasks.

2.2.4. Extensive Reading

Extensive reading includes reading longer complex texts such as novels, journal articles, essays, short stories, and books. A global understanding of the text (top-down) is in focus in this type of reading (Brown, 2004). According to Ketabi, (2016), when readers are involved in extensive reading, they usually make use of top-down processing. As cited in Brown & Abeywickrama, (2010, pp. 253-256), assessments used for extensive reading are skimming tasks, summarizing, and responding to reading, note-taking, and outlining.

2.3. Stages of Teaching Reading

Helping the learners to acquire information from the texts effectively and quickly with clear understanding is the main aim of teaching reading in the ESL/ EFL context. The importance of teaching English to young learners is to convey the appreciation of literature and science. There are three main stages of

teaching reading skills inside the classroom: pre-reading stage, reading stage, and post-reading stage or follow up stage (Shastri, 2009; Susmiati, 2017).

2.4.2.1. Pre-reading Stage. This phase occurs at the beginning of the reading lesson, where teachers try to activate students' prior knowledge of the information being learned by planning the schema activity before teaching the reading lesson. In this stage, teachers motivate students by asking them some questions that trigger their interest while previewing the text. Then, they can discuss the answers and links it to the new words and ideas so that students will be ready to read the text and get it quickly. Also, teachers can tell them about the aims of the passage. During this stage, students use skim or scan strategies to be familiar with the text or to look for specific information. In the EFL context, most teachers neglect it by arguing that there is not sufficient time during the session (Alyousef, 2006; Shastri, 2009; Susmiati, 2017).

2.4.2.2. During or While Reading Stage. The purpose of the while reading stage is to increase students' ability and skills in approaching texts by developing their schematic knowledge and linguistic competence. During this stage, teachers start with the beginning lines or a short paragraph of the whole text /passage. They can illustrate new words by using a glossary or pictures/ flashcards. Moreover, they can give simple examples of difficult structures. Through reading the passage, teachers could explain the idioms that are from different cultures and the figurative language inside the text or passage. In this stage, teachers ask students to read silently with completely good speed while speed reading for learners should be timed. In this reading stage, the teachers' role is to facilitate the reading activity for the students and hence, teach them how to avoid the faults of Reading

2.4.2.3. Post Reading Stage (Follow - Up Stage). In this last phase, the teacher poses some challenging comprehension questions to check students' understanding of the text. These questions include asking students to analyze the text and elicit the topic sentence from the paragraphs of the text. Teachers also can ask students to tell the relation between the parts of the text through cohesive devices. Teachers can assess students by using several activities that increase comprehension. These activities include: asking students to answer multiple-choice questions, fill in the blanks, and true or false

questions. Moreover, teachers ask students to make a summary of the text (Shastri, 2009; Susmiati, 2017).

Despite having several instructional methods or strategies applied in the field of EFL reading in several studies, there are no qualitative studies "if any" that explore the methods of teaching and assessing Reading used by Egyptian EFL primary teachers, to the best of the researcher's knowledge. That is why the researcher in the current study aims to explore Egyptian EFL primary teachers' practices of the methods of teaching and assessing Reading in their classrooms at the upper primary stage.

3. Methodology

3.1. Design of the study

A mixed-method research design was used to identify, explore, find out, and integrate results from both quantitative and qualitative data within the stages of completing this research study. Based on Creswell's (2014) taxonomy of mixed methods research designs, this study falls in the classification of "explanatory sequential mixed methods." In the first phase, quantitative data were used to identify EFL primary teachers' views regarding the methods of teaching and assessing EFL reading skills in their classes and the variables affecting their practices of teaching reading at the upper primary stage grade (4-6). In the second phase, classroom observations were used to find out Egyptian EFL primary teachers' actual practices of teaching and assessing reading at the upper primary stage (six graders). In the third phase, qualitative data were used to get in-depth data about the most common methods of teaching and assessing reading at the upper primary stage (six graders). Namely, interviews were conducted to explore how EFL primary teachers' practices within the classrooms impacted by school context. The design of the study is outlined in the following Figure 3.1.

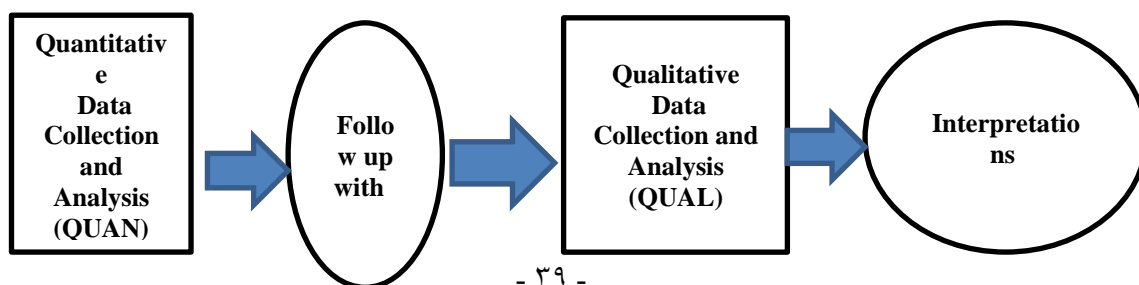


Figure 3.1. Research Design: Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods

Source: Creswell, 2014, p. 270.

3.2. Participants

Three kinds of participant samples were employed to achieve the purposes of the study. The first sample was 354 out of 379 in-service EFL primary teachers who taught EFL at Egyptian governmental schools. This randomized sampling was recruited to collect quantitative data by filling out a questionnaire. The participants of the second sample were 40 randomly selected in-service EFL primary teachers from 27 schools representing five directorates (North, South, Port Fouad, East, and Bahr El-Bakar villages) in Port Said. The forty teachers were chosen according to teaching upper primary (six graders). The third sample of participants (n=6) was purposively selected to collect qualitative data through an interview.

3.3. Instruments of the Study

Three instruments were used to achieve the purposes of the study and hence answering the research questions: a questionnaire, an observation checklist, and a structured interview (see appendices C, D, E for the actual instruments). These research instruments were used to elicit reliable information concerning teachers' perceptions of the teaching and assessment of reading.

3.3.1. Teachers' teaching and assessing the reading skills questionnaire was used to investigate Egyptian EFL primary teachers' perceptions regarding the methods of teaching and assessing their EFL students' reading skills at the upper primary stage (fourth, fifth, and sixth graders). Also, it was used to collect demographic data about teachers' gender, years of teaching experience, the school context where they teach reading, the highest educational level, and the number of participation in teacher training courses. The questionnaire was classified under two themes or domains: (1) Teaching Reading and (2) Assessing Reading.

3.3.2. Classroom Observation Checklist was used to collect qualitative data about Egyptian EFL upper primary teachers' practices of the methods of teaching and assessing reading in their classrooms. Moreover, it aimed at finding out whether their practices of teaching and assessing reading at the upper primary stages agreed with their perceptions as reported in the

questionnaire. The observation checklist consisted of four sections. Section 1 comprised the whole instructions for the checklist. Section 2 included teachers' biodata. Section 3 was meant for the beginning of the teaching reading practices under exploration. Section 4 was for the reading assessment practices. The items were grouped into four categories. These categories were perceptive reading tasks, selective reading tasks, interactive reading tasks, and extensive reading tasks (see Appendix D).

3.3.3. The interview was used to explore and understand EFL primary teachers' perceptions and practices of teaching and assessing the reading skills. This study adopted the standardized open-ended interview by Johnson and Christensen, (2017). The purpose of choosing this type of interview was its suitability for answering the research questions. The interview consisted of 18 questions divided into three sections (see Appendix E).

3.4. The Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

The three instruments were presented to a group of jury members to determine whether the items of the instruments represent what is supposed to test and whether they are linguistically and scientifically appropriate. **Intrinsic validity** for the questionnaire was also achieved through calculating the square root of Coefficient alpha, which was found to be (0.80), indicating a high validity coefficient. Furthermore, **construct validity** for the questionnaire was achieved by calculating the correlation coefficients between the degree of each dimension of the questionnaire and the overall degree of the questionnaire were estimated respectively by (0.852 and 0.877), at the (0.01) level of the significance level. Thus, there is a high validity of the constructs of the questionnaire. The **reliability** of the questionnaire was calculated through (Coefficient Alpha) which was 0.63 suggesting that the items of the questionnaire have internal consistency as a whole.

The **trustworthiness** of the observation and the interview was achieved by using the triangulation strategy. Namely, the researcher compared the data obtained from the questionnaire with that from the observation aligned with those from the interview (triangulation of sources quantitative vs qualitative) to check if the sources are in agreement or divergence. Moreover, the researcher's bias was considered by analyzing all the teachers' views and perspectives about teaching and assessing reading.

4.Results and Discussions

4.1. Results

The results from the questionnaire along with the triangulation of the observation with the interview revealed that there are statistically significant differences at the (0.0001) level between teachers' frequencies of responses on all the items of the questionnaire for the two domains. Thus, Egyptian EFL upper primary teachers have inconsistent perceptions about teaching and assessing reading in their classrooms. The findings confirmed that there is a gap between what EFL primary teachers say and actually do. They reported using various strategies during the interview that do not represent the status quo of teaching reading in their EFL classes.

In addition, the results of this study showed that Egyptian EFL upper primary teachers' perceptions of teaching and assessing reading are impacted by many demographic variables. These variables include the school context, years of teaching experience, and participation in language teaching and assessment courses which shape EFL teachers' perceptions about reading and hence affect their practices inside the classrooms.

The results also indicated that there were no statistically significant differences between EFL teachers' perceptions regarding teaching the reading skills at the upper primary stage according to their gender (males and females). That is, the majority of EFL primary teachers (males and females) shared the same perceptions about teaching and assessing the reading skills in their classrooms. Moreover, the results of this study indicated that the variable of school context (urban vs. rural) appeared to be sufficient to impact the practices and perceptions of the same teacher in Port Said, Egypt.

Professional development in the form of language teaching and assessment courses seemed to have no impact on EFL primary teachers' perceptions regarding teaching and assessing reading. Namely, there was only one statistical difference in teachers' responses, which related to the use of reading aloud to check student's fluency in reading. Teachers who have attended from 5-6 courses disagreed on using this technique, although the results of the observation and the interview revealed that reading aloud is the most common

method used by EFL primary teachers to assess student's reading skills in their classrooms.

The results also showed that teachers' teaching years of experience seemed to have little impact on their perceptions and practices of teaching and assessing the reading skills at the upper primary stage. The results also indicated that the most common methods/practices used to teach reading among Egyptian EFL upper primary teachers were reported to be asking students some comprehension questions requiring short answers, gives students questions before, during, and after reading the text. Similarly, the results revealed that interactive reading tasks of short-answer tasks and the perceptive reading tasks of multiple choice and reading aloud were the most popular reading assessment tasks among Egyptian EFL upper primary teachers. Also, interactive tasks of scanning and perceptive reading tasks of multiple-choice (for form-focused criteria) and written responses were less common than reading aloud, multiple-choice, and short answer tasks of assessing reading. In the same vein, the results of this study revealed that there is no significant correlation between EFL primary teachers' perceptions of teaching and assessing reading skills and their actual teaching and assessment practices at the upper primary stage as the total correlation coefficient value was (0.054).

4.2. Discussion of Results

In conclusion, in comparing the findings of the present study with previous research findings, the findings from the present study affirmed that Egyptian EFL upper primary teachers did not use a wide variety of reading teaching and assessment methods in their classrooms. This is due to the lack of knowledge about the methods of teaching reading and the traditional assessment system in Egypt, which consolidates the belief of teaching to pass the exam and hence affects EFL teachers' practices of teaching reading. This is dissimilar to Mahmud's (2019) study which showed that private high-school teachers in the UAE applied various reading strategies to teach reading. Also, they used formative and summative assessment strategies of reading to revisit concepts, modify plans and curricula, collect data, identify students' levels, and differentiate instruction.

In the same vein, the findings from the current study are in agreement within agreement with those of Ngorosho (2011) who asserted that one reason

for pupils' failure to acquire reading skills in primary schools includes teacher competence as teachers lacked appropriate pedagogical skills.

Moreover, the findings from the current study are similar to Rahman's (2007) findings which showed that teachers' activities in the classroom are disappointing as they do not follow the student-oriented techniques; instead, they use traditional teacher-oriented methods. Teachers do not engage their students in reading the text in the classroom. Therefore, students' reading skills do not develop at all.

Similarly, the results show that interactive reading tasks of short-answer tasks and the perceptive reading tasks of multiple choice and reading aloud, written responses were the most popular reading assessment tasks among Egyptian EFL upper primary teachers. The findings of this study also indicate that the unpopularity of selective and extensive tasks of assessment reading might be because most of the teachers indicated that they did not know exactly what are the methods and tasks of assessing reading skills while collecting data for the interview. Moreover, the findings of this study are consistent with Smilgienè's (2015) case study which showed that teachers' theoretically grounded approaches to teaching reading were not consistent with their personal beliefs about how to teach reading in their classrooms. Moreover, they lacked sufficient knowledge about the reading methodologies and how to meet the reading needs effectively.

The findings from the present study confirm the dire need for a reading teaching and assessment program for all Egyptian EFL primary teachers to be able to master the methods of teaching and assessing reading both theoretically and practically. The results also suggest that primary teachers need to use alternative assessment methods to assess reading. It also suggests designing a program for pre-service and in-service EFL primary teachers to be able to teach and assess EFL and ESL reading skills. These findings are in the same vein with those of Muñoz Marín 's (2009) findings, which showed that teachers at Universidad de Antioquia lack familiarity with the alternative assessment and affirmed the need to expand the teachers' assessment repertoire through in-service programs designed for the specificity of teaching reading comprehension skills.

Similarly, the findings from the current study are in agreement with those of Ketabi (2016), who asserted that the most popular task to assess reading among teachers of adult and young adult learners was reading aloud. Moreover, Ketabi's study indicated that Iranian teachers did not use a variety of reading assessment methods in their classes. Furthermore, Iranian EFL teachers reported that other methods of assessing reading – e.g., preparing summaries and oral questioning, journals, and portfolios were far less common than reading aloud.

5.1. The Main Findings of the Study

As revealed from the triangulation of data, the following list of findings seen pertinent:

5.2.1. Teaching Reading

- The most commonly used reading teaching practices:
 - Asking students some comprehension questions requiring short answers.
 - Giving students questions before, during, and after reading the text.
- The least commonly used reading teaching practices:
 - Reviewing previous lessons
 - Preparing students for the content of the passage
 - Identifying the main idea
 - training students for skimming, and scanning during reading.
 - Encouraging students to make guessing or predictions
 - Developing students' note-taking and summarizing skills

5.2.2. Assessing Reading

- The most commonly used reading assessment practices:
 - Oral questions requiring short-answers
 - Multiple-choice tasks such as true/false, circle the odd one out, choose the correct answer
 - Reading aloud the passage.
- The least commonly used reading assessment practices:
 - Multiple-choice tasks (for form-focused and vocabulary items)
 - Training students for skimming and scanning tasks.
- Most of the participants lacked knowledge about the terms evaluation and assessment.

- EFL primary teachers' participation in language teaching and assessment training courses have insignificant impact on EFL primary teachers' practices of teaching reading at the primary stage.
- Egyptian EFL primary teachers did not use a variety of techniques for teaching and assessing reading.
- Egyptian EFL upper primary teachers have inconsistent and different perceptions about teaching reading in their classrooms.
- EFL primary teachers' genders (male and female) have insignificant impact on their perceptions regarding teaching and assessing the reading skills at the upper primary.
- The variable of school context (urban vs.rural) appeared to be significant to impact the practices and perceptions of the upper primary teachers in Port Said.
- Teachers' teaching years of experience seemed to have insignificant impact on their perceptions and practices of teaching and assessing the reading skills.
- There is no significant correlation between EFL primary teachers' perceptions and practices of teaching and assessing the reading skills at the upper primary stage.

5.3. Conclusions

As results revealed, Egyptian EFL upper primary teachers have inconsistent perceptions about teaching and assessing reading in their classrooms. Furthermore, their perceptions of teaching and assessing reading are impacted by many demographic variables. The observation also showed that EFL upper primary teachers' practices of teaching and assessing the reading skills are not aligned with their perceptions as indicated by the questionnaire. Also, EFL upper primary teachers did not use a wide variety of reading teaching and assessment methods in their classrooms.

Moreover, the most common methods/practices used to teach reading among Egyptian EFL upper primary teachers were reported to be asking students some comprehension questions requiring short answers, giving students questions before, during, and after reading the text. Similarly, interactive reading tasks of short-answer tasks and the perceptive reading tasks of multiple choice and reading aloud were the most popular reading assessment tasks among Egyptian EFL upper primary teachers. Drawing on previously mentioned

results, it can be concluded that there is a gap between Egyptian EFL primary teachers' perceptions of teaching and assessing the reading skills at the primary stage and their actual classroom practices.

5.4. Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this study highlight that pedagogical approaches to teaching and assessing reading in Egypt needs special attention. Since this area of qualitative research on exploring teachers' actual practices is scarce, more research is essential and required to fill more gaps for the rest of the macro skills to ensure better teaching and learning circumstances for students. Instead of applying traditional methods in teaching and assessing reading, students should be trained to read extensively and use the reading skills correctly through the teacher's guidance.

5.4.1. For Faculties of Education

- Faculties of education should focus on training student teachers on how to teach and assess reading through the recent approaches to teach reading so that they can use them with their future students to help them learn the reading skills.
- Modifying the micro-teaching program to take into consideration teachers' perceptions about teaching all the macro skills.

5.4.2. Recommendations for EFL Teachers

- EFL teachers need a specific source of materials related to the methods and strategies for teaching reading. Moreover, they need to know more about the types of reading along with the different tasks for assessing these methods.
- EFL primary teachers in Egypt are in dire need of a practical reading teaching and assessment model to balance the syllabus content with the needed skills and components.
- A digital online platform that focuses only on teaching reading for all the stages must be created for EFL teachers. It should comprise multiple resources and ideas and link all Egyptian EFL teachers, supervisors, and learners through a forum. Such a digital platform would assist teachers of all stages in expanding their knowledge of the teaching and assessment methods for all skills in EFL classrooms.

- English teachers might need to enrich their methodology of teaching reading skills, especially with young learners, where the new strategies of teaching reading may support their practices in more motivation, engaging, and fruitful ways.

5.4.3. Recommendations for For EFL Textbook Writers

- EFL school textbook writers need more reading lessons and also various assessment tasks which target developing the reading knowledge and practices of EFL teachers. These assessment tasks must be more flexible and integrated into different teaching contexts .
- A long term plan of teaching and assessment tasks is needed to improve and build up the learners' knowledge of all the language skills in a longitudinal approach.
- Textbooks at the primary stage should be up to date as the current passages are very old. Topics of contemporary issues should be embedded in the current EFL textbooks for the primary stages.
- The amount of reading passages provided in the primary stage textbook is not sufficient for the upper primary grade level. Thus, the number of reading activities in English textbooks should be increased.
- Curriculum designers might need to consider teachers' perceptions about the curriculum as the central part when designing the tasks, especially for young learners.

5.5. Suggestions for Further Research

The following research issues are suggested for further research.

- Conducting a longitudinal study to observe whether Egyptian EFL teachers' perceptions of teaching and assessing reading change over time due to more training courses from the Ministry of Education.
- Mixed-methods research studies on other language skills are needed to explore pre- and in-service teachers' perceptions regarding teaching.
- Future research on learning strategies is needed to train teachers on how to teach English at the primary stage.
- Replication of this study is needed at various educational levels.
- Exploring various techniques for the assessment of the reading skills.
- Exploring the teachers' variables on a larger sample.

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