

Physical needs حاجات جسدية
- (Yes/ No) need for varied activities , breaks, non threatening environment الحاجة لنشاطات متنوعة، وبيئة صافية سلمية، واستراحات

- The training received on the above is:
 - Weak - Satisfactory - Good - Very good
2. **Learning Theory:** if educated or trained on any of the items in the below list, please circle “Yes or No” then answer the question below.
- (Yes/No) Behaviorism النظرية السلوكية
- (Yes/ No) Schema Theory نظرية السكيماتا
- (Yes/ No) Cognitive Learning التعلم الإدراكي
- (Yes/ No) Social Learning التعلم الاجتماعي
- (Yes/ No) Learning Styles أساليب التعلم
- The training received on the above is
 - () weak - () satisfactory - () good - () very good
3. **Reading theory** if educated or trained on any of the in the below list, please circle “Yes or No” then answer the question below .
- (Yes/ No) Reading readiness الاستعداد للتعلم
 - (Yes/ No) The Reading process (decoding skills, encoding)
عملية القراءة (التفكيك والتركيب)
 - (Yes/ No) Methods for teaching reading (phonics “الطريقة الصوتية”, one word and sentence “طريقة الكلمة والجملة”, whole language “الطريقة الكلية”).
- The training received on the above areas is:
 - () weak - () satisfactory - () good - () very good
4. **Appraisal skills** مهارات تقييم مادة تعليمية The training teachers received to be able evaluate the adequacy of “English for Palestine“ material for first grade.
- () satisfactory - () good - () very good

Five years More than five years

3. Amount of Training (pre- service and/or in- service) to teach English (number of contact hours)

from 0- 19 hrs from 20- 39 from 40- 59 from 60- 79

from 80- 99 more than 100

B. Subject Competence

1. Tick your mastery of Reading, Writing, and Speaking

Reading Writing Speaking

Satisfactory

Good

Very good

C. Professional Competence

Part two: Training

1. Child Development: if educated or trained on any of the items in the below list, please circle “Yes or No”, then answer the question below.

Human development التطور الإنساني	
- (Yes/ No) stages of physical and emotional development	مراحل النمو الجسدي و العاطفي
- (Yes/ No) capabilities of different age groups	قدرات الفئات العمرية
- (Yes/ No) age when children are ready to learn a foreign language	العمر المناسب لتعلم اللغة الأجنبية
Basic Human needs الحاجات الإنسانية الأساسية	
- (Yes/ No) Need for love , security and affirmation	الحاجة للحب والحنان والتعزيز
- (Yes? No) Need for good role model and consistent guidance	الحاجة لقدوة جيدة وتوجيه دائم
- (Yes/ No) Need for success	الحاجة للنجاح في الحياة

Appendix 1

Questionnaire

Alquds University
Department of English

Research Title

Perspectives on Teaching EFL Reading for Palestinian first graders: Teacher's Experiences and Training

Dear Colleague

The researcher is conducting this research on first grade English language teachers' experiences and training. You are cordially requested to cooperate with the research team for the sake of educational research. You are not asked to provide your name.

Researcher
Omar Humos

Part one: Qualification and Experience

A. General Level of Education

1. Training to teach English (degrees)

- (SSC) Secondary School Certificate (DI) Diploma
 (PE) B.A in Primary Education (BA) B.A in English
 (MA) M.A in English
 (MAE) Masters in Education

Other...

2. Years of Teaching experience:

- One year Two years Three years Four Years

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4. Janzen, J. (2007) . Preparing Teachers of Second language Reading. TESOL Quarterly. 41 (4) : 707- 727
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8. Scott, A (2004) Teaching Reading to Speakers of Non- Romanized Languages. Forum, 42,3.
9. Walter, S & Davis, P. (2002) . Eritrea National Reading Survey. Curriculum Division, Ministry of Education- Asmara Eretria.
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learning material as follow; 30 % reported satisfactory, 58% reported that their training was good while %12 reported the training as very good.

Similarly, in the fourth area, appraisal skills, around one third of teachers rated their training received as satisfactory, while around % 60 percent said it was good

Conclusion and Recommendations:

This research has investigated teachers preparedness in terms of training and experiences to teach EFL reading efficiently trying to account for the important variable namely teachers' preparedness. Around half teachers have less than 5 years experience teaching EFL ushering for a need to involve more experienced teachers to teach first graders. A small number of teachers graduating from the Faculty of Education specializing in teaching EFL elementary level are recruited. Faculties of Education EFL program did not gain popularity among students. Universities should provide incentives for high achievers to join such programs. In this research only 26% received more than 100 contact hours of pre- service training, while in Walter and Davis (2002) more than 60% of the Eritrean EFL teachers received more than 100 contact hours of training. The Palestinian teachers' perception of their competence of their language skills, reading, writing and speaking were little more positive compared to the previous study subjects. Similarly, a similar number of teachers who had more than 5 years experience were teaching first graders. Also, first grade teachers need training on the reading theory as the research findings reveal that around 50% lack such training which is essential to teach children how to read. The research reveals that a significant proportion of teachers lack the proper training for the effective teaching of reading.

Recommendations:

Some recommendations can be drawn from this research;

1. The need to inculcate the suggested topics in any training program and in the B.A programs at the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Arts.
2. There is a need to train teachers who lack training in this area especially in the areas of capabilities of different age groups, age when children are ready to learn a foreign language and the need for a role model.
3. EFL educators in Palestine and the Ministry of Education are requested to provide an EFL Pedagogy framework especially for teaching reading.
4. The Ministry of Education is advised to delineate a pedagogical EFL training program for all novice teachers especially for those who graduate from Departments of English language and literature.
5. The recruitment test new teachers sit for should include the Components described above. For example, their language skills should be tested to verify whether they speak and write the English language efficiently as this constitutes an important venue for learners to acquire language.

Regarding reading readiness, Figure (11) data reveal that 70% reported receiving training while 30 % did not. In the area of reading process , only 52% reported familiarity with the concept while 48% did not. In the area of reading teaching methods, 74% reported familiarity while 26% did not.

One third of the subjects responded that they have not received any training on reading readiness and methods for teaching reading but one half reported not receiving training on the reading process which involves encoding and decoding.

Figure(12): General Degree of teachers' satisfaction of training on Reading readiness, reading process, & methods for teaching reading

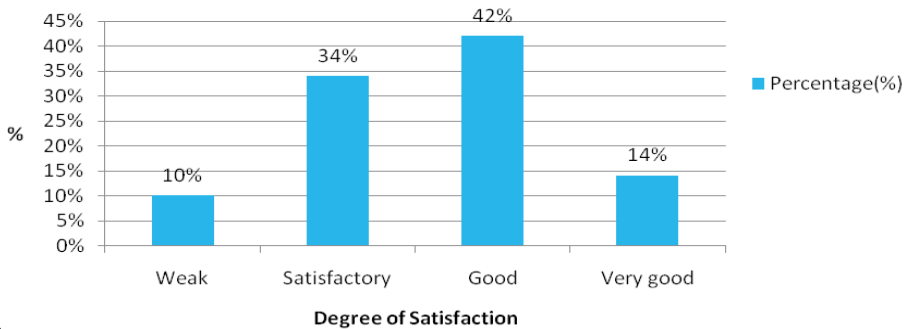


Figure (12) ,the data reveal that when the teachers were asked to evaluate their general satisfaction, around 44% of them reported satisfactory and weak rating indicating serious lack of training in this area. 42% reported a good rating and 14% reported a very good rating.

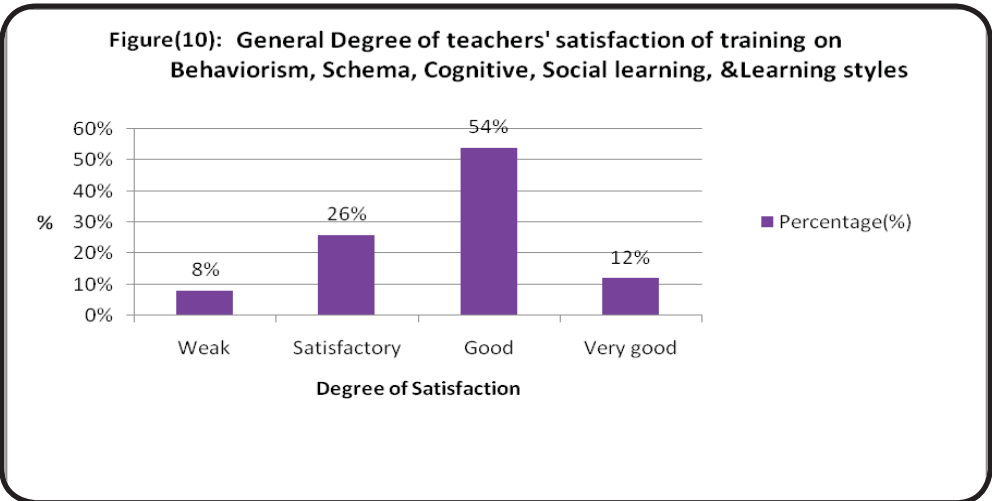
4. *Appraisal skills:*

The sample reported that they evaluate their training to appraise the

Figure(13): Degree of satisfaction with training on appraisal skills

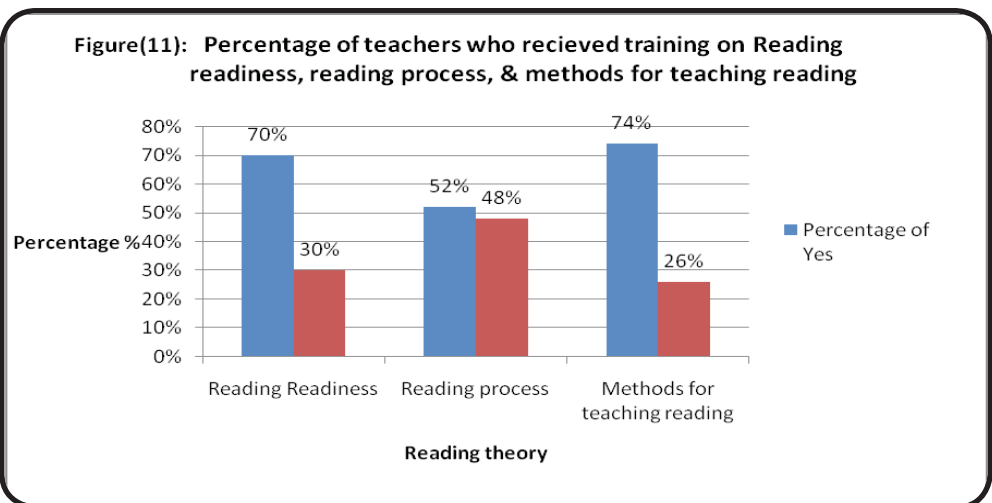


receiving training on it while 24 % did not. 10% are familiar with Schema while 90% are not familiar with it. 58% reported familiarity with Cognitive Learning while 42 were not. 76% reported familiarity with Social Learning while 24 were not. Finally, 84% reported familiarity with learning styles while 16 % were not.

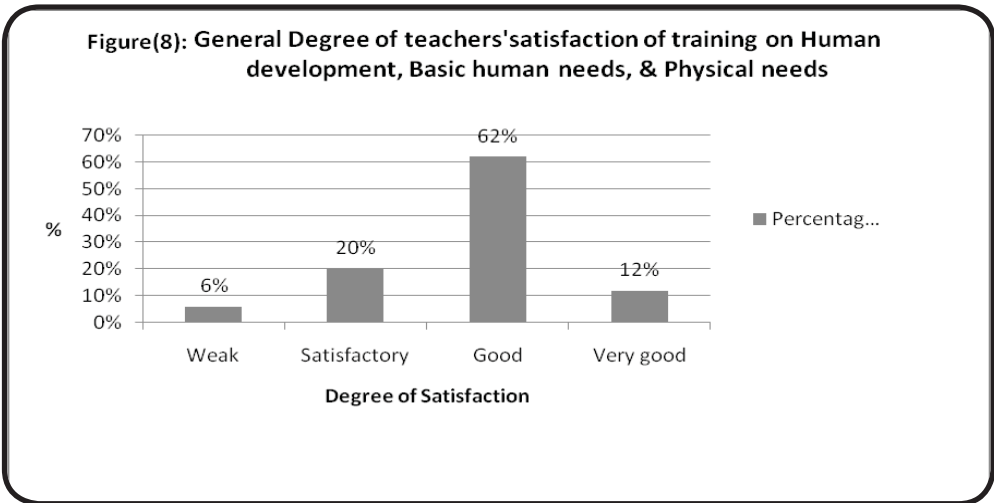


In figure (10) above, 8% rated their training in the above areas as weak, 26% of teachers rated it as satisfactory, while 54% rated theirs as good and 12% said that their training was very good.

3. *Reading Theory:*

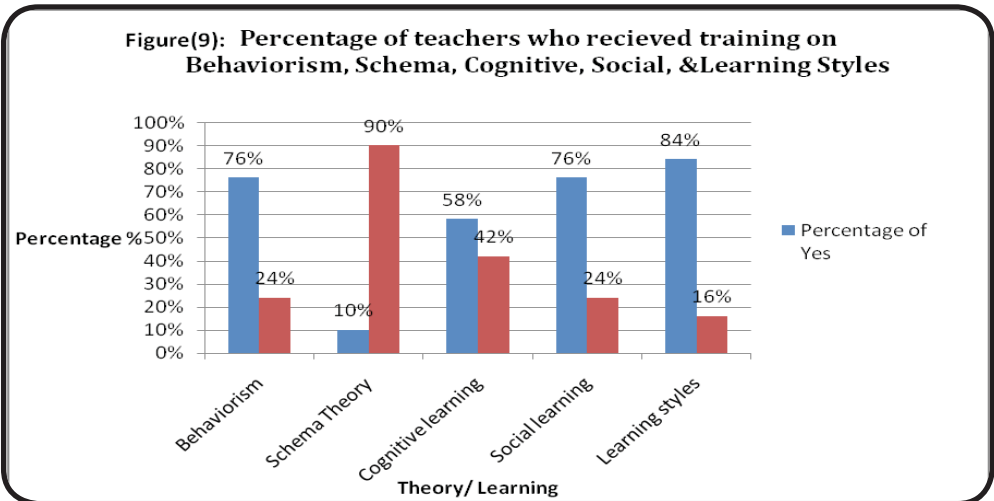


In the third component, Physical Needs, figure (7) reveals data which show that 78% reported receiving training while 22 % did not. Generally, the teachers are well aware of the affective factor of child development.



In figure (8) above ,in the area of Human Development, around one third of the teachers reported satisfactory to weak rating of their training compared to three quarters who reported good to very good. Correspondingly, one quarter reported their training in these areas as satisfactory and weak.

2. Learning theory:



In figure (9) , regarding behaviorism, 76 % of the sample reported

receiving training and 36 % did not) . Understanding Human Development of the child is an integral part of teachers' preparedness to teach first grade EFL learners. The results indicate a lack in the areas of capabilities of different age groups, age to learn a foreign language and physical and emotional development consecutively.

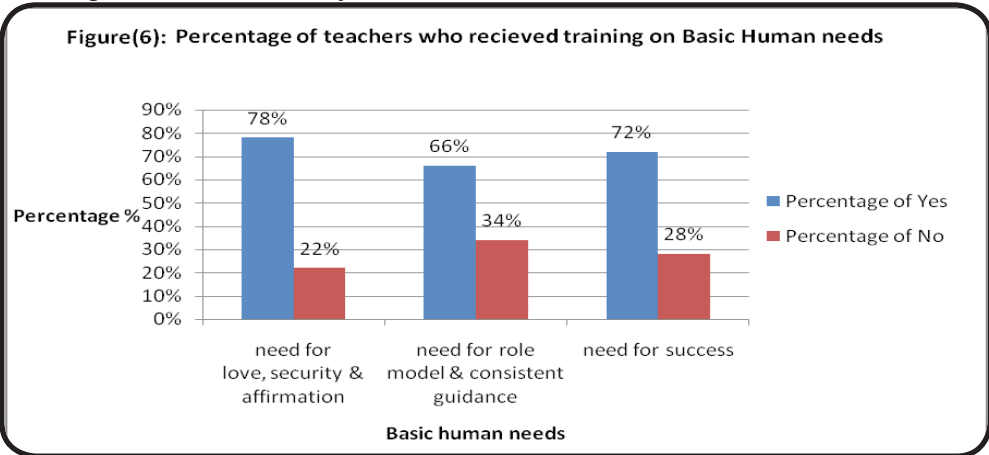
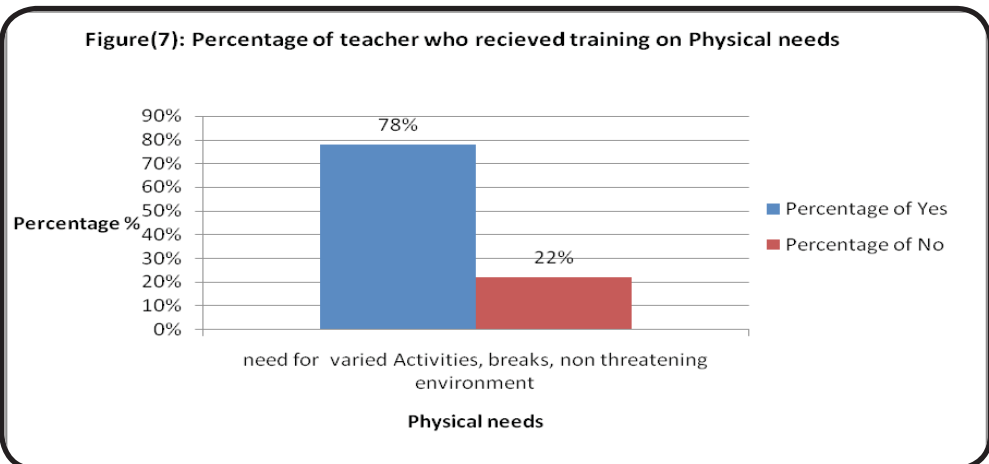


Figure (6) reveal data for the second component , Basic Human Needs, in the area of need for love , security and affirmation, 78% reported receiving training while 22 % said they did not training; in the area of need for role model and need for guidance, 66% reported receiving training while 34% did not; in the area of need for success, 72% reported receiving training while 28% did not. Another aspect of Human development pertains Need for love, security and affirmation, Need for role model and guidance and Need for Success form, with the other aspects, the basis for the EFL teacher role which was found to be missing for a serious proportion of the EFL teachers population.

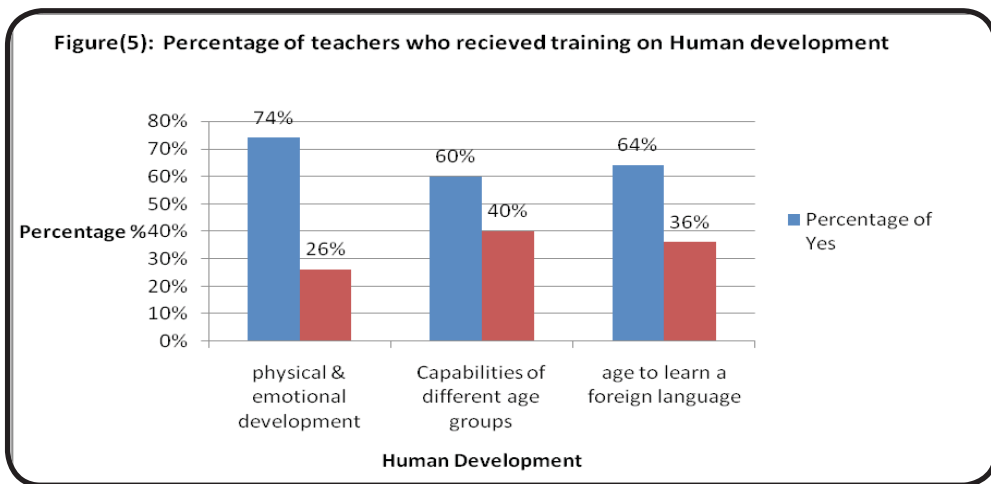


In figure (4) regarding the reading skill, the data reveal that 4% reported that their reading skill is satisfactory, 24% reported it to be good, while 72% reported to it to be very good. Regarding, the writing skill 10 % reported their writing skill to be satisfactory, 34% reported it to be good while 56% believed that their writing skill is very good. With regard to the speaking, 6% reported it to be satisfactory, 32 % reported it to be good while 62% believed it to be very good.

This aspect of the questionnaire was controversial since the beginning. The researcher knew that self reporting was going to be subjective as reporting on one's language skills is very much connected to one's self image. However, the researcher decided to include it in the questionnaire After all, the data reveal that little less than two thirds of teachers rated their English language skills as very good while around one third rated their language skills as good probably indicating some lack of confidence in their language skills namely in the areas of writing and speaking.

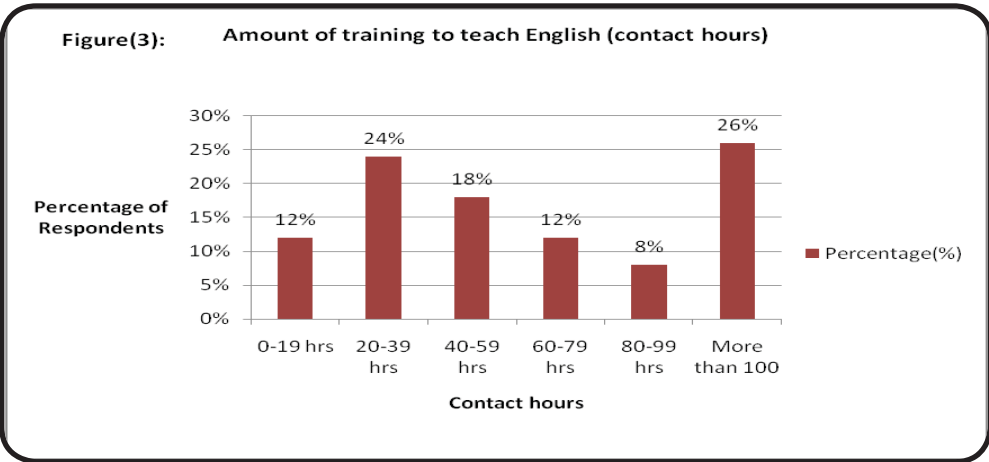
C. *Professional Development:*

1. *Child development:*



The data in figure (5) , under professional development, the training received in the area of child development namely Human Development (stages of physical and emotional development) , show that 74% reported receiving training while 26 said they did not receive any training; in the area of capabilities of different age groups, 60% reported receiving training while 40 did not, and in the area of age to learn a foreign language, 64 % reported

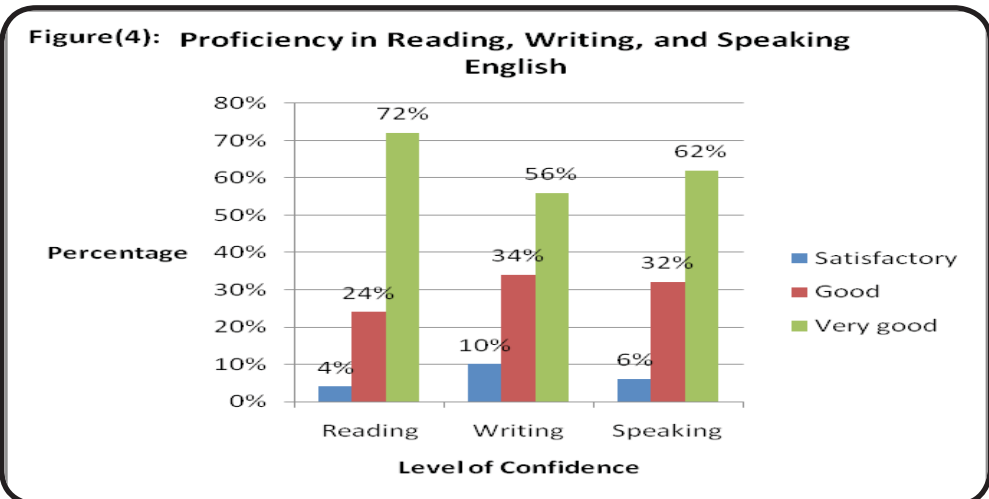
3. Amount of Training:



In figure (3) the data reveal that 12% of the sample reported receiving between 0- 19 hours of training, 24% received between 20- 39 hours, 18% reported receiving between 40- 59, 12% received between 60- 79, 8% received between 80- 99 and 26% received more than one hundred training hours.

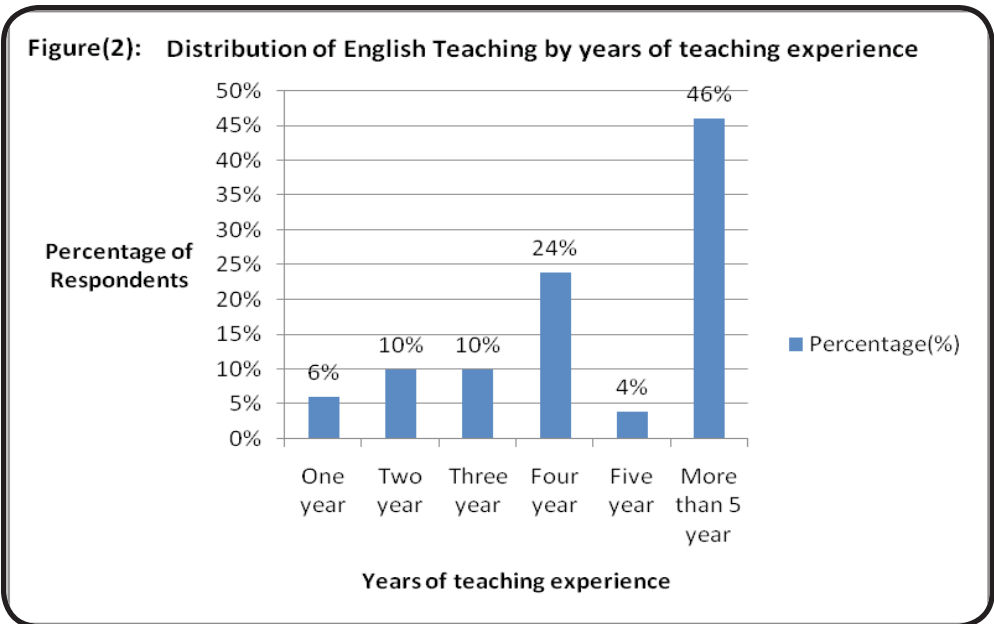
Around fifty percent of the sample received less than 50 contact hours in EFL training. From experience, this amount covers very little for English department graduates in terms of pedagogy. The researcher believes that this is a contributing factor to the weak success in teaching reading for first graders.

B. Subject Competence:



teachers) , have a Secondary School Certificate, 16 % have a Diploma in English language, 4 % a B.A in Primary Education graduating from faculty of education specializing in teaching English for the elementary level, 72% a B.A in English language and Literature and 6% have an M.A which means a large proportion of teachers are hired without receiving pre service training in EFL pedagogy. Therefore, a large proportion of teachers are recruited from departments which are affiliated with the faculty of Arts.

2. Years of teaching experience:



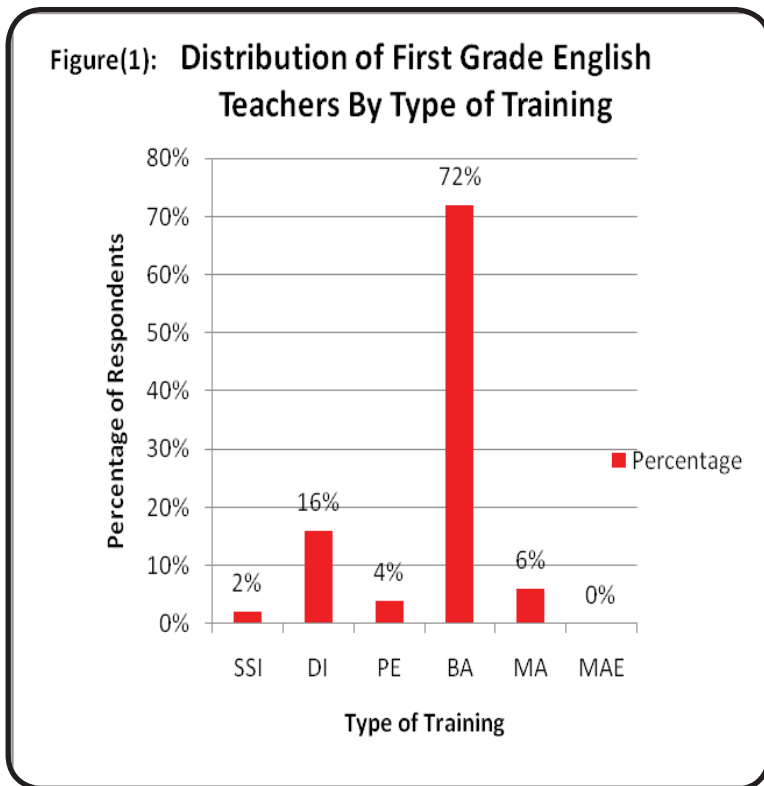
The data reveal in figure (2) that 6% of the sample (50 teachers) reported having one year experience in teaching EFL , 10 % have two years experience , 10 % have 3 years experience, 24% have 4 years experience, 4% have five years experience and 46% have more than 5 years experience. The data reveal that around fifty percent have less than five years experience in EFL teaching ushering towards exclusion of some experienced teachers from teaching first graders. The importance of this result intersects with the findings which reflects a small number of the teachers received in- service training in the area of EFL.

Results and Discussion:

A. General level of education:

1. Training to teach English:

SSC	Secondary School Certificate
DI	Diploma
PE	BA in Primary Education
BA	BA in English
MA	M.A in English
MAE	Masters in Education



The data obtained in figure (1) reveal that 2% of the sample, (out of 50

of fifty first grade school teachers chosen from the different Ministry of Education school districts namely Bethlehem, Jerusalem suburbs, Ramallah, and Hebron in the West bank.

Description of the Instrument:

The instrument is a questionnaire comprised of three major components. The first, the General Level of Education, investigates the degrees obtained by teachers, years of experience and the amount of training received pertinent to EFL, the Second part, Subject Competence, investigates the proficiency of the speaking, reading and writing skills of the teacher, The third, Professional Competence, explores the teacher's professional training received on (1) Child development in the areas of: a) Human development (stages of physical and emotional development, capabilities of different age groups, and age to learn a second language. b) Basic Human needs (needs for love, security and affirmation, need for role model and consistent guidance. C) Physical needs (needs for varied activities and nonthreatening environment. (2) Learning theory (behaviorism, schemata theory, cognitive learning, social learning and learning style). (3) Reading theory; reading readiness, reading process (decoding skills), reading approaches (phonics, sentence approach, whole language, and (4) Appraisal skills to be able to evaluate the material one word and.

Validity:

The questionnaire was randomly sent to the subjects. The questionnaire's validity and neutrality were also insured by the experts' evaluation. Teachers from rural and urban areas received it as described above.

Data analysis:

The questionnaire yielded quantitative data. The quantitative data were analyzed by means of descriptive statistics.

Limitations:

The study is limited to the sample on which the study instrument was used. The teachers of first grade at the Palestinian public school system were chosen from five directorates of the scholastic year 2010- 2011.

Significance of the study:

Teachers are agreed to be the most important variable in EFL success. The significance of the study lies in the fact that it investigates the holistic preparation of the EFL teacher at the different levels mentioned above. The study purports to identify teachers in- service training needs to be pursued by the Ministry of education.

Method:

As a first step towards understanding the gaps between teachers' current preparedness levels of the areas of study: general level of education and (child development, learning, reading methods, appraisal skills) and the levels the researcher sees necessary , the researcher focused on the teachers' perceived gaps by employing self assessment. Self assessment shows reasonably acceptable correlations with other objective measures, especially if the questionnaires are carefully constructed and administered among adults.

In this study self assessment was chosen to examine teachers' perceived preparedness with the issues in the study that the researcher believes is necessary for the EFL reading instructor to possess in order to be an efficient reading instructor.

This questionnaire is divided into two parts; The first explores the qualifications and experience of the first grade teachers and their English language subject competence, while the second part investigates the training received on child development, learning theory, reading theory and appraisal skills, believed to be necessary to prepare effective first grade EFL teachers. The questionnaire uses (4- point Likert) scale.

Procedure:

The researcher randomly distributed 100 questionnaires to first EFL teachers working in the public school system. Fifty of them filled the questionnaires and returned them in a two weeks period without indicating their identities on papers.

Population and Subjects:

There are around one thousand five hundred school teachers in the West bank involved in teaching first graders EFL. The subjects sample is comprised

design. For example, Janzen (2007, p. 714) mentions that “EFL educators believe that the faculty who uses certain material prescribed as part of the school curricula which ,for example, is oriented towards either end of the Phonics or whole language need to balance that focus with their own material and activities”. This seems to be attesting to the argument given by the researcher that teacher training in the area of appraisal skills constitutes a solution to certain types of problems arising in the classroom.

Statement of the problem:

The first grade EFL teachers at the public school system in Palestine are sent to class with little qualification, experience, training. This situation is a prescription for first grade EFL teaching to be seriously disrupted especially while teaching the reading skill which is indispensable to general success in EFL. This made it imperative to investigate the teachers’ qualification, experience and training to help understand how to rectify the low level of first grade reading proficiency as reported by (Humos, 2010) .

Objectives:

It aims at investigating first grade English language teachers’ experiences and qualifications at one level and the nature of training received to evaluate the teachers as a factor in achieving success when teaching the reading skill for first graders at another.

This research aimed at identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the EFL teachers’ qualifications, training and experiences that are needed to be effective first graders’ EFL reading instructors. It seeks to identify the training modules required for them once found that they lack them.

Research questions:

- What are the teachers’ level of education in terms of degrees obtained, years of teaching experience and amount of training?
- What is the level of teachers’ English Language skills proficiency as reported by teachers themselves?
- What is the level of teachers’ preparedness in the area of child development, reading theory, learning theory and appraisal skills issues as reported by teachers?

frustrated learning a foreign language. Some are reflective; therefore, they will exercise patience and not jump into conclusions. If learners bring field independence styles to learning, they will focus on the necessary and relevant details and not be distracted by surrounding irrelevant details. Learning styles must be thought of as cognitive, affective and physiological traits that are relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with and respond to the learning environment or more simple as a general predisposition, voluntary or not towards processing information in particular way .

2.5 Schema:

The reader's nonlinguistic background, Schema, is also regarded as an important element in understanding a text. Schema is an abstract structure representing concepts stored in memory. Applied linguistics literature substantiates the effect of the background knowledge on the learners' reading competence.

3. Reading theory:

3.1 Reading readiness:

It refers to training on sound –letter relationship in the English language especially when scripts are different from their L1 orthographic system.

3.2 Reading process:

The learner progresses from pre reading to decoding through fluency. Understanding the modalities associated with these three stages is essential for the EFL teacher to deliver on the reading skill.

3.3. Reading approaches:

It refers to the approaches for teaching initial reading in a foreign language such as phonics, whole word, whole sentence, or language experience.

4. Appraisal Skills:

It refers to teachers' skills to evaluate learning material. These skills are essential ones for the EFL teachers to tackle problems pertaining to material

B. Subject Competence: Teachers self assessment of their English language; Reading, Writing and Speaking skills

- **Part 2**

I. Child development

C. Professional development (child development, basic human needs, and physical needs)

2. Learning Theory:

2.1 Behaviorism:

According to behaviorism, language is a form of behavioral learning and a process of habit formation. A fundamental principle of behaviorism is that language items should be over learned. The theory emphasizes accuracy and intensive drilling means that a lot of time is spent practicing individual pieces of language and comparatively little creative kinds of practice. Learners produce responses to specific stimuli but not to engage in real life communication.

2.2 Learning and Cognition:

This theory emphasizes the cognitive basis of language learning and language use. Its basic argument, since learners can create and interpret sentences they never encountered before, is that language use must be based on a system of mental rules better than a set of behavioral habits. Learning a language is a matter of internalizing rules rather than imitating habits (p.28, Brown) .

2.3 Social learning:

Brown (2000, P.29) It emphasizes the functions of language in discourse. Learners learn about talking to others and about connected pieces of discourse, the interaction between hearer and speaker, conversational cues, and language communicative and pragmatic function.

2.4 Learning styles:

Brown (2000, p.113) Some learners bring their styles into language learning. Some are tolerant of ambiguity which will not make them easily

language and literature rather than teaching English as a foreign language”; the new teachers do not participate in pre service training prior to beginning their jobs. The in- service training is made available during their first year of work. This training for EFL teachers covers only educational issues.

When there are pre- service and in service training programs to prepare teachers, one would find little relationships between the training modules and the real needs of teachers’.

Murray (2010, p.3.) believes that to be an effective teacher requires a combination of professional knowledge and specialized skills as well as personal experiences and qualities. Cross (2002, p. 42) proposes three levels of qualifications required to produce effective EFL teachers: “First, teachers should have general level of education. A degree or a diploma should be obtained before entry to an institute of education. Second, teachers should have subject competence. They should have good language skills so that training can focus on the teaching of English and related issues, not hindered by language weakness. Third, they should have professional competence in terms of the teacher ‘s ability to execute and test current approaches, educational theory, cognitive psychology and classroom management”.

Walter and Davis (2003, p.439) suggested under professional development the need for teachers to receive training in child development in terms of Human development, basic human needs, and physical needs. Under the learning theory; they proposed that teachers of reading should be acquainted with Behaviorism, schema theory, cognitive learning, social learning and learning styles among others. They also proclaimed that reading teachers should have reading readiness preparations, the reading process (eye movement, phonics, and decoding skills) , how comprehension is achieved, methods for teaching reading, and for supplementary reading material among others.

The following research background will reflect on two parts of the research instrument namely the learning theory and the reading theory as they are thought to pose some ambiguity to some readers.

- ***Part 1***

- A. General level of Education (degrees obtained, years of teaching experience, and amount of training) .

Introduction:

In many countries of the world, there is a tendency to put untrained teachers into classroom (Butler, 2004, p.245). Appointment of untrained instructors is being done in both the lower elementary, upper elementary and secondary level. Some world countries require teachers to have a license or a certificate in teaching English; in Palestine, we solve this problem by in-service training to make up for the lack of education needed to be originally offered by departments of English and faculties of EFL education programs to prepare proficient EFL teachers. Even when there is some form of teacher preparation usually in- service, there may be little relationship between the program's nature and the real needs of the future EFL teacher. EFL Teachers face challenges teaching reading which is a complex skill but critical to EFL general achievement.

Many world countries fail to bring learners to grade level in reading or keep them at grade level once it is reached. In Palestine, there is enough evidence to claim that first graders at the Palestinian public schools do not learn the reading skill in English as a foreign language as they should (Humos, 2010, p. 48) . To rectify this situation, the educational system in Palestine should evaluate the curricula, instructional material, assessment practices and improvements in learning outcomes, and teacher efficiency. Since teachers are the most important factor, it is imperative to explore the teachers' qualifications and training relevant to the English reading skill instruction preparations.

By 2014, the Palestinian Ministry of Education will require teachers of English to have a higher diploma in education with a pedagogical component on teaching the language skills. However, it is feared that the challenges facing the elementary EFL public schools teachers while teaching reading would not be dealt with.

Review of Literature:

Scott (2004, p.12) Speakers of non- Romanized languages face special challenges in learning to read: a new alphabet, the left to right direction of English text and most significantly the letter sound correspondences.

Yamachi (2006, p. 861) states that “ most public school EFL teachers hired by the Palestinian Ministry of Education are graduates of English

Abstract:

The researcher investigated the Palestinian first grade EFL teachers' experience and training with respect to their general level of education, academic qualifications, years of teaching experience in addition to their competence in the English language study skills: reading, writing and speaking as well as their professional development regarding the child development theory, learning theory and appraisal skills. The aim of the current study is to understand the impact of the knowledge of the teachers on the Palestinian education system preparedness to teach first graders to read in English. Questionnaires were distributed to 50 public schools English language teachers of first graders in the public school system to practice self- assessment in the areas mentioned above. A significant number of teachers reported lack in training in the areas mentioned above. Generally, teachers rated their education in these areas as ***Good and Satisfactory***. The researcher concluded that this significant number who evaluated their training as satisfactory and weak need immediate training as this training is viewed indispensable to their efficiency in EFL in particular when teaching reading.

ملخص:

قام الباحث بدراسة بعنوان (تدريس القراءة في اللغة الانجليزية لطلبة الصف الأول في فلسطين) اعتمادا على المستوى التعليمي العام للمعلمين، وذلك بالنظر الى الدرجة الجامعية، وسنوات التدريس، وكفاياتهم في مهارات اللغة الانجليزية: القراءة، والكتابة، والمحادثة، والتطور المهني المبني على معرفة الخصائص النمائية للطفل، ونظرية التعلم، ونظرية القراءة ومهارات تقويم المادة التعليمية، وذلك بهدف بيان اثر هذه العوامل في استعداد النظام التربوي الفلسطيني لتدريس مهارة القراءة في اللغة الانجليزية لهؤلاء الطلبة، وقد تم استخدام استبانة وزعت على خمسن مدرسا حكوميا؛ بهدف الكشف عن هذه الجوانب المذكورة اعلاه؛ وقد تبين بعد تحليلها بأن هناك نسبة مهمة تتراوح بين الربع الى الثلث من المعلمين أو اكثر بقليل لم تتلق تدريبا كافيا في المجالات المذكورة، مما أظهر حاجة المعلمين لاثراء خبراتهم وتدريبهم في هذه المجالات؛ لذا يوصي الباحث بأن يتم تدريب المعلمين بشكل سريع لأهميه ذلك في إنجاح تعليم وتعلم القراءة باللغة الانجليزية لطلبة الصف الأول الإبتدائي في المدارس الحكومية.

Perspectives on Teaching Palestinian First Graders Reading in English: Teachers' Experiences and Training

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