



An Evaluation of the EFL Pre-service Training Program at Tlemcen University of Algeria

Messaoudi Youcef * University of Tlemcen, Algeria.

E -mail address: usfmessa@gmail.com

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Abstract

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The present investigation is a needs analysis which is meant to determine EFL students' perceptions and needs in terms of teaching pre-service training. This research tests whether the EFL students at Tlemcen University were adequately-prepared to become competent teachers, and whether the lectures they received were well-designed to achieve this purpose. Data were collected through the adoption of a triangular approach based on a survey addressed to 159 EFL students, and on a specialists' forum gathering university professors and school EFL inspectors. The study follows a statistical analysis taking into account the mean, the standard deviation, frequencies and Chi-square tests to deal with the survey, and a qualitative method to analyze the EFL specialists' forum. This study reveals a number of EFL facets that are completely dismissed in the current pre-service program such as: course design, assessment and teaching practice. Also, it sheds light on other aspects which are ineffectively dealt with and consequently need to be totally reconsidered like: the awareness about learners' individual factors and the introduction of EFL textbooks. Finally, it was unveiled that the majority of the target student-teachers were dissatisfied about the preparation they received before the immersion in the EFL profession world.

* Corresponding autor

1. Introduction

Starting from the recurrent claims for sharp necessity of well-qualified and competent EFL teachers to improve the level of achievement among Algerian learners in English, in a previous study (Messaoudi, 2012), the researcher shed light on the pre-service (PS for short) training students used to receive at the University of Tlemcen: what did it cover, and what did it lack to assure the preparation of qualified EFL teachers. The former research dealt with students who followed a curriculum of formation of four (04) years, in what is known as the “Classical System”. The results surprisingly illuminate the fact that this curriculum was not covering lot of crucial theoretical areas about the language itself, the teaching of the language, and several other variables that are to be taken into consideration to shape each competent teacher’s identity. Worse still, this program did not constitute any practical side of EFL teaching save for very few sessions of peer-teaching inside the University. We confirmed that this problematic situation did affect the newly recruited teachers’ professional quality which would *de facto* influence the EFL teaching process.

The current research inspires its area of concern from the former results; however, taking into account another important variable which is the new reforms seen by the Algerian University under the umbrella of the LMD System (Licence, Master, and Doctorate). This new approach introduces the teaching of English and the preparation of EFL teachers with some new subject-matters than the known ones, and with different teaching hours-volume, during different number of academic years.

Including all these new variables, the central concern of the current research is to see whether these reforms will fix the problems yielded by the previous higher education system. In other words, will the LMD System reforms succeed in producing what is recommended as a comprehensive training program of adequate EFL teacher education? In addition, as stated before, the lack of a sound teaching practice program at the level of university was a main result which required further attention devoted. This fact pushed the researcher to investigate also novice teachers’ school-based initial teaching training supervised by EFL inspectors.

2. Research Questions and Hypotheses

Intending to examine all the complex variables of EFL teachers’ professional development at the University of Tlemcen, be it theoretical or practical, the study attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1) What type of university-based pre-service training and school-based initial teaching training EFL student-teachers receive?
- 2) What are the EFL student-teachers’ needs in terms of professional quality in both phases of training, and what is to be fostered to enhance this quality?
- 3) Is there any relationship or collaboration between these two phases of preparation to cover all the areas of novice EFL teacher education?

Consequently, we infer that this study covers three main independent variables: The EFL Institution at the University (the Department of English), The Institution of Work (school), and EFL Student-teachers. From these three research questions, three hypotheses were generated:

- H1. In their tertiary studies, EFL student-teachers receive a training program based rather on theory. In addition, it mainly focuses on knowledge about the language itself, with few clear teaching preparation objectives. However, at the level of schools, they are directly introduced with official teaching material in real world EFL classrooms.
- H2. There is a need for more attention to be devoted EFL teaching practice and technical knowledge about teaching the language not only about the language itself.
- H3. There is no relationship between what is introduced to EFL student-teachers at university and what is done in the field of the EFL profession.

3. Literature Review

The review of literature below covers crucial aspects related to EFL pre-service training.

3.1. The Need for EFL Pre-service Training

Teachers are burdened with a very loaded, but noble, responsibility which is to ensure learners’ intellectual growth and to provide society with new generation apt to encounter future challenges in all life domains such as teaching, nursing, building ... (Saha and Dworkin, 2009). In parallel

with these duties, it is expected that teachers are favored by high salaries and comfortable work and life conditions, but this is not always the case worldwide – This is not our primary concern in the current study. Nevertheless, teachers have the right at least to be subject to an adequate training program to enrich their knowledge and skills in their prospective profession. It is to this end that teacher professional education has become a fundamental subject of investigation and sharp debate worldwide (Hunzicker, 2010). Contemporary society more increasingly requests more qualified teachers not least EFL teachers who have more complex and thorny mission (Downes *et al.*, 2001). The importance of teacher development for the EFL profession is said to be more crucial regarding the specificity of teaching a language for speakers of other languages. Research in this case prove that there is a significant positive correlation between teacher evaluation and students' scores mainly in literacy (Téllez and Waxman, 2005).

Exploration studies on EFL novice teachers' beliefs and feelings throughout time (Clarke and Peterson, 1986; Bennett and Carré, 2002) has documented how a new teacher feels school as a 'strange land' regarding its novel sociological atmosphere which makes these newly-recruited teachers always frustrated and anxious about their self-image. These investigations showed that novice EFL teachers are more frustrated by problems of managing classroom, maintaining discipline and proving their own competence in comparison with their more experienced counterparts. Accordingly, the prominence of EFL PS training lies in diminishing all the above mentioned variables that threaten the teacher professional identity (Britten, 1988). A well-designed EFL PS training program prepares teachers to face school pressure and its diverse pupils' socio-economic backgrounds and changing needs (Saha and Dworkin, 2009). In the same train of thoughts, Loughran and Russel (1997: 68-69) clarify the importance of PS training programs as follows:

Pre-service teacher education programs are the first place of contact between beginning teachers and their prospective profession. If they are to value the pedagogical knowledge that is continually being developed, refined and articulated within their profession, if they are to understand the complex nature of teaching and

learning, and if they are to be 'teachers' not 'tellers', 'trainers' or 'programmers', then this first contact through pre-service programs is crucial.

3.2. Challenges Facing Non-native EFL Teachers

According to Britten (1988: 163) who claims that "EFL teacher-trainees for whom English is a foreign language are learning to do something very harder than native-speaking trainees", the mission of non-native EFL teachers is more challenging than that of their native counterparts for three main reasons. Firstly, to guarantee maximum exposure to the target language (TL), non-native EFL teachers have to communicate in English with pupils/learners who share with them the same mother-tongue, and to convince those pupils/learners to shift to English. Such a dilemma is labelled by Harmer (2001: 131) as the "Please Speak English" issue. Secondly, non-native EFL teachers should apply a set of ELT theories about linguistics and second language learning; otherwise, their practice in classrooms will be no more than carbonic reproductions of the teaching they experienced themselves as EFL pupils. Thirdly, non-native EFL teachers have to master specific skills to enhance their qualifications in ELT profession as time and place entail.

It is worth to highlight a significant study conducted by Fareh (2010) to trace the hurdles facing EFL teachers in Arab countries. This study pinpointed a number of issues in the teaching/learning process:

- Ineffective implementation of EFL teaching methodology in a different range of cases is primarily due to the inadequacy of teachers' training. Fareh (2010:3602) argues: "... although many of these teachers are BA degree holders, most of them have no teaching certificates that qualify them for teaching".
- EFL teaching is not learner-centered; it is rather based on a teacher-centered approach: a fact that systematically will lead to neglect many factors among learners which may inhibit good learning.
- Learners' aptitude, commitment and motivation are other barriers facing EFL teachers in the Arab world. In this study, not few teachers claim that students are uneducable, impolite, unable to think, and incapacitated or not willing to learn.

- English is taught as isolated skills (grammar alone; reading and writing, the same) rather than as integrated skills representing a system of systems (for example, grammar in reading). Fareh (2010) calls this issue *Compartmentalization vs. Whole language approach*.
- Teaching English to Arab pupils, most of the time, lacks emphasis on developing skills. The best example is EFL assessment and evaluation processes are often based on rote learning without letting any room for learners' creativity such as critical thinking and problem solving.
- A lot of criticism is always raised against the teaching material in use, mainly textbooks: on the first of hand, it is claimed that EFL textbooks are very large to be covered in one year, while their levels are advanced than the learners' level of achievement. Also, many books are said to be culturally inappropriate, with many irrelevant topics, which may influence learners' motivation.
- As an implication of many ineffective teaching practices, assessment is not appropriate since two crucial linguistic skills are not tested in most of the official exams in the Arab world, i.e. speaking and listening.
- Learners do not profit from ample exposure to English since the interference of Arabic is a frequent phenomenon in classes. Moreover, teachers' speaking time is always superior to students' speaking time.

3.3. Theory of EFL Pre-service Training

It is common knowledge that the theoretical component is a fundamental pillar in the development of professional quality in EFL teachers, and therefore it has to be handled carefully when designing any EFL PS training program. However, the question which remains is: What kind of theory should be mastered by EFL teachers? As an answer to this inquiry, Krashen (qtd. in Alatis *et al.* 1983: 261) claims: "The theory must be a theory of second language acquisition not a theory of grammatical structure, and it must be consistent with all known research, not merely armchair speculation".

However, Widdowson (1990) does not share the same opinion. He argues (1990: 34): "But it becomes clear that Krashen is not thinking in theory in general, that is to say a theoretical perspective on pedagogy in general". Therefore, it can be supposed that Widdowson is calling for an overall ELT theory and a comprehensive perspective on pedagogy in general. He maintains that there is no theory free of speculation. In other words, the theory that is to be focused on when preparing EFL future teachers should provide them with a total coverage of pedagogy and its issues, not least ELT methodology to arm teachers with flexibility to be accustomed easily with new situations.

The following headlines of this review will deal with what is agreed on among specialists to be crucial knowledge about language and its teaching, i.e. knowledge which helps EFL teachers to develop effective ways of teaching. Theory in EFL teaching profession is frequently referred to as "Knowledge about language" (KAL for short) (Bartels, 2005). According to Thornbury (1997, qtd. in Andrews and McNeill 2005: 160), KAL is "the knowledge that teachers have of the underlying systems of language that enables them to teach effectively". In the same vein, Popko (2005) describes KAL as an umbrella term that includes all language aspects that EFL teachers should cover: linguistic, applied linguistic and metalinguistic aspects (Linguistics, Applied Linguistics, Assessment, Second Language Acquisition, and EFL Methodology).

3.3.1 Linguistics

Following what is stated before; linguistics is a major component in preparing future EFL teachers (Bennet and Carré, 2002; Borman *et al.*, 2009). Linguistic knowledge including phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics is primary and crucial in EFL PS training (Andrews and McNeill, 2005). In addition, Attardo and Brown (2005: 91) find out that novice EFL teachers "... will need to have some idea about issues of prescriptive and descriptive grammars, language use and variation, language structure and the history of English."

3.3.2 Applied Linguistics

Applied linguistics enables EFL teachers to base their practice on sound theoretical beliefs not mere speculations. It is said that future teachers will improve their teaching by the transfer of their knowledge about applied linguistics in their

teaching (Attardo and Brown, 2005; Bartels, 2005; Popko, 2005). Explaining the importance of applied linguistics in EFL PS training, Bartels (2005: 405) argues that "... courses in applied linguistics do seem to have the potential to be successful in changing novice teachers' conceptions about language and language teaching". Applied linguistics is an interdisciplinary field including all subjects related to real world problems of EFL teaching. It includes psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, language acquisition and language testing.

3.3.3 Assessment

Assessment of EFL classroom is a complex process of collection, analysis and interpretation of the teaching/learning process outcomes. It is considered as evidence of learners' achievement, and at the same time, it is a database for reflection and change in one's teaching (Remesal, 2011). This is why assessment is seen by most EFL teachers as a very difficult task. It is to this end that many linguists and applied linguists insist on the importance of including assessment in EFL teacher education, especially in PS training, as being an essential facet of a qualified teacher. For instance, Wiggins and Mc Tighe (1998: 159) point out that: "Good teaching is dependent upon good design, and a good teacher needs to think like an assessor prior to designing lessons". Strictly speaking, the quality of well-designing, using, and interpreting assessment is as crucial as lesson planning and design. This implies that teacher-educators, or the responsible of teacher education design, should give assessment its share in PS training, and in-service (IS) programs as well (Rhodes *et al.*, 1997).

3.3.4 Second Language Acquisition

Many a linguist insists on the creditability of the knowledge about L2 acquisition (SLA) process in qualifying EFL teachers. Following Lo's (2005: 135) words: "Second language acquisition (SLA) is one of the required core courses in the majority, if not all, of Masters' programs for teachers of English as a second language (MA TESOL) in the United States". This is why she urges EFL trainees to make research-based and experiment-oriented readings about L2 acquisition process. Also, Freeman and Johnson (1988, qtd. in Lo 2005) do not neglect the necessity to address SLA theory in PS training. They claim that future training contexts should be

taken into account for fear that trainees might consider SLA irrelevant in ELT.

3.3.5 EFL Methodology

In its turn, EFL methodology is a pillar in developing KAL that every EFL teacher should cover. Its main concern is the approaches, methods, techniques followed in TEFL. Many specialists in the field of teacher education devote large spaces in their works to the subject of EFL methodology and its effect in qualifying EFL teachers especially in earlier stages (PS training) (Shulman, 1987; Allwright, 1988; Freeman, 1991). Larsen-Freeman (2000) discourse is overtly addressed to teacher educators, enhancing their awareness about the usefulness of teaching EFL methodology to PS trainees; usefulness lies in five areas:

- Knowledge about EFL methodology is the basic ground that every EFL teacher should rely on when reflecting on his/her actions; otherwise, novice teachers will build their teaching identity on their EFL experience as learners, or on mere speculations.
- Likewise, EFL teachers become able to distinguish between several methods of teaching; and therefore, they will have plenty of choices to adopt depending on the contexts they encounter. In other words, learning EFL teaching methodology arms the novice teachers with a 'repertoire' of methods and techniques useful in different circumstances in EFL classrooms.
- As a result of the above two gains of EFL methodology teaching to EFL trainees, novice teachers are not only to practice every piece of information related to their profession they perceive (in literature or textbooks), but they can also shape their own professional identity by professional dialogue among their professional community.
- Furthermore, it is systematic that interaction with other teachers among the same professional community will challenge their conceptions about EFL methodology; consequently, this will push them to reflect on their beliefs to switch from routinized to updated teaching.
- Finally, by covering such knowledge, EFL teachers will acquire a comprehensive set

of best practices that enables them to tackle numerous and diverse “unique qualities and idiosyncrasies” among EFL students.

4. Methodology

The present research is a needs analysis; needs analyses are procedures followed to accumulate information about students’ needs in terms of their learning. In this study, the researcher attempts to obtain a general idea about what EFL students need to meet at the university level to be professionally qualified teachers. The purpose of the needs analysis conducted in this research is to identify the possible gap between what EFL students in the research site are able to do and what they need to be able to do in future professional sites. It is to this end that it could be said that at many times learners’ long-term needs are decided for them, not by them. Richards (2001: 53) comments that “needs analysis [...] includes the study of perceived and present needs as well as potential and unrecognized needs”.

As to the procedures for making needs analysis, many choices are available to the researchers in the field (questionnaires, self-ratings, interviews, meetings, observations, learners’ language samples, and case studies) (Rhodes et al., 1997; Remesal, 2011). However, none of these tools is without drawbacks; this fact compelled the researcher to follow a “triangular approach” to maximize the accuracy of the research. Triangulation is in fact the major means of validating any research, especially in social sciences. Considering the issue of triangulation, the researcher used two different instruments to look for EFL students’ needs in terms of PS training which are: questionnaires and a group interview.

As to the sample population, it differed in size according to the tool employed in data collection. The subjects considered through questionnaires were Master students enrolled in the Department of English at Tlemcen University. Respondents of the questionnaire were 159. As to the group interview (forum), it was relied on to approach EFL experts from both Education and Higher Education sectors. There were four interviewees: the president of the scientific committee of the Department of English, the head of the Department of English, an experienced EFL practitioner, and an EFL inspector who is a certified teacher trainer. The axis of the

inspectors’ mission is to observe and qualify novice EFL teachers and sometimes to organize IS training programs for practicing teachers.

- Figure model (if it exists): (included in the article in image form, dressing in front of the text, regrouping the composite schemas)

5. Results

This part of the article is devoted to set forth and discuss the findings of the two research tools (students’ questionnaire and experts’ group interview) separately:

4.1. The Student-teachers’ Questionnaire

Part I: Demographic Information

Briefly speaking, the demographic corpus of the Department is female-dominated, while the general and main orientation of the Department is towards Linguistic Studies which aim at the preparation of EFL teachers.

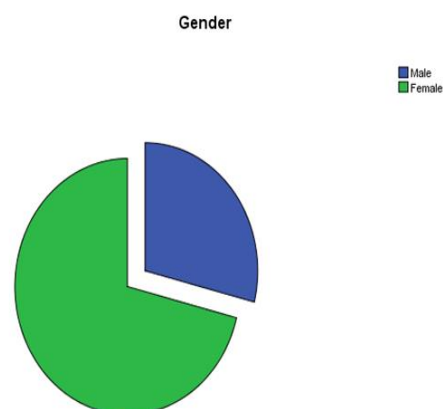


Figure 1: Information about Students’ Gender

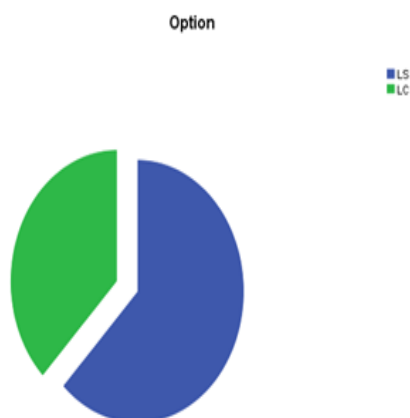


Figure 2: Information about Students' Option

Part II: Category A: Theoretical Acquisition

Rubric 1: The English Language

Table 5.1: Frequencies of the Nature of Language and Basic Concepts of Language Systems

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	very low	4	2,5	2,5
	low	13	8,2	8,2
	moderate	93	58,5	58,5
	high	45	28,3	28,3
	very high	4	2,5	2,5
	Total	159	100,0	100,0

In the beginning of this research, it was hypothesized that the current PS training program needs more interest to be given to its practical side. As shown in the analyzed data of item 1.1 (*The Nature of the English Language and Basic Concepts of Language System*), in table 5.1, future EFL teachers think that they have generally a moderate level in the language systems (phonology, morpho-syntax and semantics) though they have to present linguistic models for their future learners. Being a linguistic model is one of the requirements of a competent EFL teacher which is lacking, to a certain extent, in the current program outcomes.

Table 5.2: Frequencies of Functions of Language Register in English

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	very low	2	1,3	1,3
	low	10	6,3	6,3
	moderate	73	45,9	45,9
	high	61	38,4	38,4
	very high	13	8,2	8,2
	Total	159	100,0	100,0

As to the *Functions of Language Register in English*, the mean of students' answers about their knowledge about register in English indicates that the majority of them know this area to a 'good' extent. According to these respondents, as shown in table 5.2, the theoretical courses offered to them in this aspect were sufficient to make them know and understand register functions in language and language teaching, which is in its turn an important area in any EFL PS training.

Table 5.3: Frequencies of the Interrelatedness of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	very low	1	0,6	0,6
	low	14	8,8	8,8
	moderate	72	45,3	45,3
	high	62	39,0	39,0
	very high	10	6,3	6,3
	Total	159	100,0	100,0

Similarly, through the results analyzed previously, it can be argued that the current program introduces a moderate-to-high preparation in the four language skills and their interrelatedness in language use (table 5.3).

Table 5.4: Frequencies of the Structure of the English Language and Conventions of Written and Spoken English

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	very low	2	1,3	1,3
	low	15	9,4	9,4
	moderate	84	52,8	52,8
	high	54	34,0	34,0
	very high	4	2,5	2,5
	Total	159	100,0	100,0

Table 5.5: Frequencies of Models and Examples of Written and Oral Discourse

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
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Valid	very low	2	1,3	1,3	1,3
	low	32	20,1	20,1	20,1
	moderate	71	44,7	44,7	44,7
	high	45	28,3	28,3	28,3
	very high	9	5,7	5,7	5,7
	Total	159	100,0	100,0	100,0

However, the findings related to items 1.4 and 1.5, in tables 5.4 and 5.5 respectively, showed that more work is needed in the area of ‘*The Structure of the English Language and Conventions of Written and Spoken English*’ as well as in what concerns ‘*Models and Examples of Written and Oral Discourse*’. These two EFL facets can be also determined to be other deficiencies in the current PS training program.

Rubric 2: EFL Education

Table 5.6: Frequencies of the Historical, Theoretical and Policy Foundations of EFL Education in Algeria

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very low	17	10,7	10,7	10,7
	low	58	36,5	36,5	47,2
	moderate	69	43,4	43,4	90,6
	high	14	8,8	8,8	99,4
	very high	1	0,6	0,6	100,0
	Total	159	100,0	100,0	

The data analysis process illustrated that all the areas related to training in EFL education programs, either the common universal ones or the ones meant for the Algerian context, are not well mastered by the respondents. Future EFL teachers, from the University of Tlemcen, except few, did not deny that their level in this area is ‘low’, or ‘moderate’ in best cases. Apparently, this crucial facet of EFL teacher training needs to be fostered or reconsidered in terms of syllabus design or the way of teaching. It can be believed that this area is dealt with without any tie to the Algerian context, in which these student-teachers will practice their future profession. This fact was pointed to in Hypotheses H1 and H2.

Rubric 3: L1 and FL Acquisition Processes

Table 5.7: Frequencies of the Interrelatedness of L1 and L2 Acquisition

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very low	4	2,5	2,5	2,5
	low	29	18,2	18,2	20,8
	moderate	73	45,9	45,9	66,7
	high	44	27,7	27,7	94,4
	very high	9	5,7	5,7	100,0
	Total	159	100,0	100,0	

Knowledge about processes of L1 and foreign languages acquisition and their interrelatedness in TEFL is a must area to be dealt with when preparing future teachers. According to the respondents, the courses offered to the Department students enabled them to develop a level in the area that can be assessed to be ‘moderate’ to ‘high’. Due to this fact, as a good sign, one may say that this area does have its share in the current PS program; however, there is nothing that confirms that this EFL aspect is approached in a practical dimension. This point is to be tackled in further steps of this investigation and when crosschecking results of other research instruments.

Rubric 4: EFL Teaching Methods

Since this rubric has large diverse items, its results are discussed item by item.

Item 4.1: Factors and Procedures in Planning EFL Instruction

Table 5.8: Frequencies of Factors and Procedures in Planning EFL Instruction

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	very low	11	6,9	6,9
	low	65	40,9	40,9
	moderate	58	36,5	36,5
	high	23	14,5	14,5
	very high	2	1,3	1,3
	Total	159	100,0	100,0

Regarding student-teachers’ knowledge about EFL planning and design, following the results illustrated in table 5.8, it can be argued that this component of PS training is almost neglected in the present offered courses. As far as teaching design is concerned, it can be claimed that lack of adequate training in this area is one of the shortcomings of the current PS program to form competent EFL teachers. There is no room to neglect instruction design, or at least mistreat it, in an adequate and well-oriented PS training program.

Item 4.2: A Variety of Methods and Techniques Appropriate for Instruction in the EFL Classroom

Table 5.9: Frequencies of a Variety of Methods and Techniques Appropriate for EFL Instruction

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very low	2	1,3	1,3	1,3
	low	36	22,6	22,6	23,9
	moderate	69	43,4	43,4	67,5
	high	44	27,7	27,7	95,2
	very high	8	5,0	5,0	100,0
	Total	159	100,0	100,0	

Following the data analysis outcomes (table 5.9), there is no clear idea if the lectures of EFL methodology students received were sufficient to develop an acceptable level in the area or not. This fact can be explained by the obvious disagreement among respondents about their level in this aspect. This very crucial aspect of PS training is still open for more discussion and further investigation in other research instruments to decide whether the future teachers are well-prepared in the area, or it is essential to reconsider the way it is introduced to students.

Item 4.3: Strategies for Fostering EFL Students' Communicative Competence

Table 5.10: Frequencies of Strategies for Fostering EFL Students' Communicative Competence

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very low	4	2,5	2,5	2,5
	low	46	28,9	28,9	31,4
	moderate	62	39,0	39,0	70,4
	high	38	23,9	23,9	94,3
	very high	9	5,7	5,7	100,0
	Total	159	100,0	100,0	

The researcher, in the beginning of this study, claimed in his hypotheses that the PS training program under investigation is theory-oriented, while practicum is almost abandoned in the majority of central areas. This claim can be projected on the present aspect of communicative competence, in which the majority of the respondents asserted to have a low-to-moderate level. As each time, the current study revealed that when it comes to aspects that need to be seen in real situations, not only to be taught theoretically, students show their weakness in the area, or at

least show disagreement and uncertainty about their capacities in the aspect in question.

Item 4.4: The Use of Technological Tools and Resources to Facilitate and Enhance EFL Instruction

Table 5.11: Frequencies about the Use of Technological Tools and Resources to Facilitate and Enhance EFL Instruction

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	very low	12	7,5	7,5
	low	25	15,7	15,7
	moderate	46	28,9	28,9
	high	48	30,2	30,2
	very high	28	17,6	17,6
	Total	159	100,0	100,0

The use of technological tools and resources in instruction is considered vital in preparing future teachers, not least EFL teachers. Unexpectedly, the questionnaire respondents affirmed a significant mastery of the use of ICT's in teaching, since the majority of them claimed to have a level determined in a moderate-very high interval. However, the question which remains aroused here: is ICT taught in specific lectures, or just grasped from the Department teachers' practices? Or ICT's are a common area for the actual generation of students who are everyday exposed to all kinds of technologies? The researcher will investigate all these inquiries in advanced stages of this research. Nevertheless, it is smart to invest the student-teachers' abilities in ICT in forming them for adequate and up-to-date instruction.

Item 4.5: Classroom Management Strategies for a Variety of EFL Environments and Situations

Table 5.12: Frequencies of Classroom Management Strategies for a Variety of EFL Environments and Situations

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	very low	6	3,8	3,8
	low	36	22,6	22,6
	moderate	69	43,4	43,4
	high	37	23,3	23,3
	very high	11	6,9	6,9
	Total	159	100,0	100,0

Data analyzed previously unveiled that EFL student-teachers at the University of Tlemcen had not acquired sufficient knowledge about the nature of the classroom and how to manage it. The spread of students' opinions about their level in

this component, which is a *sin qua non* for any EFL teacher, left no room to deny that classroom management represents another need for the competency of these student-teachers.

Item 4.6: Sharp Awareness of the Teaching Methods Currently in Practice in Algeria

Table 5.13: Frequencies of Sharp Awareness of Teaching Methods Currently in Practice in Algeria

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	very low	7	4,4	4,4
	low	55	34,6	34,6
	moderate	63	39,6	39,6
	high	27	17,0	17,0
	very high	7	4,4	4,4
	Total	159	100,0	100,0

If a group of 55 respondents and another of 63 respondents, like already pointed to in the analysis, as shown in the previous table, asserted to have respectively a 'low' and a 'moderate' knowledge about EFL methods used in the Algerian school, there is one and unique explanation which is that the way EFL teaching methodology is introduced in the Department is totally dismissing the Algerian EFL context. It is to be again considered as a disadvantage if EFL methodologies are taught without the slightest accordance to the real context where student-teachers will practice their competencies and see the relevance of their knowledge.

Rubric 5: EFL Learners' Individual Factors and Variables

Table 5.14: Frequencies of Factors that may Affect EFL Students' Learning of Academic Content, Language and Culture

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	very low	4	2,5	2,5
	low	21	13,2	13,2
	moderate	61	38,4	38,4
	high	58	36,5	36,5
	very high	15	9,4	9,4
	Total	159	100,0	100,0

All the results gathered, which are related to the student-teachers' awareness about EFL learners' individual factors, illuminated the fact that student-teachers were able to accumulate an acceptable knowledge about how academic content, in terms of both language and culture, may affect EFL learning, and especially what are the affective factors and differences among EFL

learners like styles and strategies of learning... These claims were deduced due to the fact that the majority of answers about the area were between 'moderate' and 'high'. Then, regarding specialists' claims about the importance of this PS area, it can be said that this is one facet which is assured to a certain significant extent in the current PS program, at least in terms of theory.

Rubric 6: EFL Assessment and Evaluation

Table 5.15: Frequencies of Basic Concepts, Issues and Practices Related to Test Design, Development and Interpretation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	very low	7	4,4	4,4
	low	62	39,0	39,0
	moderate	65	40,9	40,9
	high	24	15,1	15,1
	very high	1	0,6	0,6
	Total	159	100,0	100,0

The last rubric in theoretical courses offerings was devoted to test whether assessment in EFL instruction is well acquired by student-teachers, since there is no specialist who tackles the issue of EFL PS training without dealing with assessment and evaluation. Strictly speaking, assessment is one of the sound fundamental roles of any competent EFL teachers. The latter facts enabled the investigator to judge the current program, regarding to the results in table 5.15, as inadequate since the largest majority of respondents could not veil their 'low' level, or 'moderate' in best cases, in designing and interpreting different types of assessments and evaluations, and their ignorance about common standardized tests like TOFEL, IELTS ... The culture of assessment seemed to be dismissed, to a high extent, by the Department course designers, and consequently totally discounted by student-teachers. Assessment is another PS training facet that needs to be reconsidered.

4.2. EFL Experts' Forum

The participants of the group interview tackled the issue of EFL students' needs to achieve professional competence in many occasions. However, before referring to specific needs in names, they insisted on the approach how to deal with these needs since target needs are completely ignored, as claimed by one of present experts: In fact, if we can speak about learners' needs, we have got to target two types of needs: learning needs and target situation needs ... what is

targeted in fact in our project is only learning needs ... the target situation needs are completely ignored

Another respondent shed light on the fact that society is no more static, and the groups of student-teachers are always heterogeneous in terms of abilities and needs. This fact requires to give a share to both perceived and felt needs and adopt a phenomenology of education approach which based on an official curriculum while always giving room to real needs in the context of training. In his words, he claims:

I would like to add something else: when we talk about the students' needs, well which needs? It is very confusing. Why? Because according to experts in the sphere of education, when they talk about the needs: perceived needs and felt needs ... I have the official program, delivered by the ministry, when I asked them what you expect from this two-week training, all they said had nothing to do with the official documents stemming from the ministry.

In the same vein, another interviewee claimed that students as they have needs or lacks, they also have wants. All the participants agreed on the point that the final summative certificate or diploma means nothing in the real world of the EFL training profession if future teachers are not equipped to cope with emerging and unexpected needs and a life-long learning approach.

During this discussion, many needs were sparking here and there where the participants mentioned the different modules and areas which are necessary to establish the corner-stone of a sound teacher development program. Starting from the linguistic competence, moving to EFL methodology, educational psychology and assessment ... no respondent denied the paramount importance of these EFL facets; however, they all claimed about the way they are introduced to the students. They all summoned for a more practical approach to these modules. Putting the student-teachers in real problem situation, not only theories will enable them to be competent in other dimensions of EFL teaching like classroom management, education and behavior problems which became spread in our schools, learning styles and strategies...

because university students who are preparing their master now, and who are going to teach tomorrow kids in the middle school and the secondary school are going to face a different

generation with new views, with strange behavior and so on and so forth; so, if he is not prepared beforehand to how to face how to cope with such behaviors, he will find difficulties to teach even if his proficiency level in language is excellent..., even he masters all the methods and approaches of teaching the languages... if he does not know how to cope with adolescents ... if he don't know how to manage large classes mixed ability classes and so on and so forth, he will have problems how to cope with his teaching situations, and of course we have got learning styles learning strategies... This practical approach should start at university and make a bridge to schools. Creating such a continuous practical learning cannot be established without the collaboration of the two ministries of Education and Higher Education. Finally, one of the experts went to a broader horizon of students' needs, claiming that it is high time that our institution should take into account the factor of globalization. Nowadays, Algerian students, as their counterparts everywhere, look for opportunities to post-graduate and even work abroad. Therefore, it is necessary to create a recognized position in the universal level by insuring reaching quality that is approved worldwide.

5. Discussion and Recommendations

The processes of data collection and analysis lead to a precise determination of students' needs in terms of EFL professional quality. Therefore, the current PS training program cannot be said adequate only if it is adapted to meet all the lacks and wants as already mentioned by the participants. In fact, these needs can be categorized into needs in terms of theory and needs related to practice as pointed to in hypothesis H2.

Concerning the students' needs in the theoretical facet, though it was confirmed by all the population included in the study that the current university-based PS program relies on a number of modules that are dealt with mainly theoretically, the results unveil that it is necessary to foster many areas. Firstly, results showed that many students still encounter lot of hurdles and gaps in using the English language. Future teachers showed a lack of confidence in

pronunciation, grammar and writing; they expressed their dissatisfaction with the way these linguistic levels were introduced. This is why the participant students highly recommended the provision of linguistic environments where they can practice their TL either in real or virtual situations. It was claimed also that with no linguistic environment provided by the university, it is very difficult to practice English in a country like Algeria, where English is considered as a second foreign language after French. Also, it was noticed that novice teachers get to schools with very meagre knowledge in Educational Psychology and Didactics. EFL experts taking part of this research claim that this issue lies in the fact that these modules are dealt with mainly theoretically where students are required to learn by heart a significant number of definitions and concepts for testing purposes, while ignoring many critical areas that cannot be acquired only if they are observed or practiced in real classrooms. This pushed the experts to summon for an approach in training which takes into account the nature of each standard in EFL teaching, be it practical, theoretical or a hybrid, in designing the courses. Modules such as Psycho-pedagogy and TEFL should be coupled with practical sessions where the trainees can see the relevance of the courses they received in realistic situations. Worst still, the findings highlighted two crucial areas that are totally dismissed in the current training namely L2 Acquisition process and Assessment. It was highly recommended to reconsider these two critical subjects without which the program cannot be said adequate to yield competent EFL teachers, as it is recommended to all certified PS programs.

As far as teaching practice is concerned, the present study ascertains that the situation of teaching practice is highly critical since there is a total split between the two ministries of Education and Higher Education: a fact that confirms the third hypothesis. Therefore, it is high time to find an exit from the existing situation through a sound and partial collaboration between the two sectors. Partnership between the university and schools will facilitate the adoption of a comprehensive, intensive and extensive teaching practice program. Effective design of such practicum should take into account first the students' beliefs and past learning experiences. It is widely believed that student-teachers come to real classroom with already established implicit beliefs and knowledge

about EFL teaching and learning; therefore, an effective PS program should be designed in a way that makes the trainees more aware of the accuracy of their knowledge and its link and impact in the EFL classroom. Most of the time, new EFL trainees experience lack of confidence in different range of areas such as: vocabulary gaps, partial command of grammar and fear of using English as the means of communication with pupils in ordinary situations. Likewise, being aware of such crucial details, mentors and trainers may address each individual trainee's need for better training. All these criteria cannot be assured only if training content stems from both school and university linkage. In this vein, all the requirements that are considered as vital characteristics of an adequate teaching practice program in PS training can be summarized as follows:

- Strong partnership between program designers, universities and schools.
- Firm and transparent process of new teachers' selection and recruitment.
- Strong supervision and mentoring.
- Adequate and strong curriculum of training which should be always relevant to EFL classrooms and teaching methods in use in schools.
- Sufficient and effective assurance of practice chances that provides ample time for integration in schools before full-time teaching.

However, one of the findings of this study pinpoints that ensuring the integration all these aspects in a PS training program is not necessarily sufficient due to frequently emerging demands and needs amongst trainees. Indeed, many unexpected data originated from cross-checking the results of the questionnaires and the expert's forum. For this sake, the researcher provided an open space for respondents to mention any individual need or problem – taking into account that each individual student has his/her own needs and problems. It is worth recapitulating what the respondents call for to be further fostered in a PS training program:

- Linguistic competence
- Communicative competence
- Theoretical side in EFL teaching methodology
- Practical side in EFL teaching methodology

- Psychological side
- Extensive readings

Because every subject in a group of trainees could have his own area of weakness, a well-designed PS training program should not be totally based on prescribed courses and activities. Rather, a potential margin should be left to deal with any possible emerging individual need. Likewise, the focus of the PS EFL training program should be the student/trainee rather than the curriculum. In other words, trainers should not follow a PS EFL training program slavishly, but they have to consider the actual needs of each individual student.

6. Conclusion

Highlighted above are the findings the researcher achieved throughout this investigation of the PS training program at the Department of English at Tlemcen University. However, it cannot be denied that it was not possible to control some variables during the data collection process. First, the number of EFL inspectors participating in the group interview was limited in comparison to the total number of inspectors available in the state of Tlemcen (1 out of 4), because it was not feasible to gather all of them in one meeting. These details may open inquiries about the generalizability of the results attained concerning teaching practice inside schools. However, the questionnaire addressed to students at the University of Tlemcen, which could address introspection among respondents, covered the majority of the enrolled students (159 out of 201).

Findings of this study raise two questions to be addressed by future research. The first of these questions pertains to designing an effective curriculum which includes and organizes all the necessary elements in PS training. Furthermore, further research can tackle useful ways of collaboration between institutions of Higher Education and pre-university schools to develop teaching practice programs. Such collaboration is expected to effectively prepare future EFL teachers for what they will exactly meet in their prospective profession.

7. References

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