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Spotlight on ELT and University Reading in Algeria

تعليمية اللغة الانجليزية والقراءة في الجامعة الجزائرية

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Abstract

This paper attempts to provide a systematic description of the educational context in Algeria with general reference to the teaching/learning of EFL reading at the University level. Reading is our focus of interest in this work due to its invaluable benefits in language learning and its importance in our lives. As for our choice of 1st year University level; because it is the first year where students have Reading Comprehension (RC) as a separated module to be taught differently from Secondary school. A thorough picture of the various variables and characteristics of the learning situation of the group of subjects selected for the study is presented. University teachers' profile is defined and the methodology they use is discussed. Furthermore, EFL students profile is emphasized and their needs are analyzed. The status of reading in the department of English (University of Chlef) is detailed in this work with explicit clarification of the stated objectives and the adopted methodology in teaching this invaluable skill. In this way we would aim hopefully to pave the way towards improvement in our reading classrooms.

ملخص

الكلمات المفتاحية:

تقدم هذه الورقة وصف منهجي للسياق التعليمي في الجزائر مع التركيز على تعليم و تعلم مهارة قراءة اللغة الإنجليزية الأجنبية على مستوى الجامعة. تعتبر القراءة محور اهتمامنا في هذا العمل نظرا لأهميتها و فوائدها التي لا تعد و لا تحصى. أما تركيزنا على طلبة السنة الأولى جامعي فسيببه هو أنها السنة الأولى التي يدرس فيها طلبة الإنجليزية الفهم القرائي كمقياس منفصل وبطريقة مختلفة عن ما تلقاه الطلبة في الثانوية. نتناول في هذا الشأن تقديم صورة شاملة للمتغيرات والخصائص المختلفة لعينة البحث و في مقدمتها الملف التعريفي بأساتذة المقياس والمنهجية المعتمدة من قبلهم في تدريسه وكذا الملف التعريفي للطلبة وتحليل إحتياجاتهم بالنسبة لنفس المقياس بالإضافة إلى واقع و مكانة مقياس الفهم القرائي في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية مع توضيح الأهداف المسطرة و المنهجية المعتمدة في تدريسه. و بهذا الطرح نأمل في تحسين مكانة مقياس الفهم القرائي في أقسام اللغة الإنجليزية.

تعليمية اللغة
الإنجليزية
- الجامعة
- القراءة
- الجزائر
- قسم اللغة
الإنجليزية الأجنبية.

1. introduction

English Language Teaching (ELT) at the University level has always been the main concern of contemporary research in many educational settings. The teaching/learning of English Foreign Language (EFL) reading in particular has also gained major interest in recent years being the skill needed most by students during and after their educational career. In this concern, the theoretical work at hands presents a descriptive analysis of ELT and EFL reading at the Algerian University level with reference to Hassiba Ben Bouali University of Chlef. It seeks to give a thorough analysis of the place of reading in the English curriculum with a special focus on the teaching objectives and the adopted methodology. It, in short, aims to answer the following questions: *What is the status of ELT in Algeria? What is the place of reading in the Department of English? What is EFL Reading Comprehension teachers' profile? What are 1st year EFL students' profile and needs analysis? What are the objectives of teaching EFL reading and what is the methodology used to achieve them?*

2. ELT Situation in Algeria

The English language has occupied a large space of interest in recent years. Confidently, everyone is speaking of English in ways that stimulate curiosity and ignite enthusiasm to learn it for various purposes. Being accepted as a lingua-franca: “a language adopted for communication between speakers whose languages are different from each other's and where one or both speakers are using it as a second language” (Harmer, 2001, p.01), English has dominated all spheres of progress (science and technology) giving the new generation of its speakers a ‘visa’ for international citizenship. In this way the English language has successfully imposed its hegemony over many other languages mainly French, German and Spanish. It is nowadays pronounced as the unique means of global and international communication among nations. In addition, to its supremacy as a sine-qua-non condition for excellence in education.

Algeria, like many other countries is well aware of the new status of English within the world's

current multicultural perspectives. Heywood (2000) distinguishes between two forms of multiculturalism, ‘the term ‘multiculturalism’ has been used in a variety of ways, both descriptive and normative (Heywood, 2000, p.227). As a descriptive term, it has been taken to refer:

To cultural diversity ... As a normative term, multiculturalism implies a positive endorsement, even celebration, of communal diversity, typically based on either the right of different groups to respect and recognition, or to the alleged benefits to the larger society of moral and cultural diversity”

(Bloor, 2010, p.272).

It, unquestionably, strives hard to provide its population in light of the globalization process enough support and serious opportunities to achieve the qualification of International Citizens. This qualification is only possible through the reinforcement of the teaching and learning of English at all levels of education.

The Algerian authorities took hopefully sincere decisions for the reconsideration of ELT in various settings including Higher Education. In this respect new reforms have been adopted and at a large scale: as from September 2003; English in Algeria is taught for seven years from Middle School (4 years) for students aged twelve to Secondary School (3 years) for students aged eighteen, instead of five years, two in Middle School and three in Secondary School as it was the case before 2003. In other words and within the new innovatory reforms at Middle and Secondary schools and as far as ELT is concerned, the 2003 implementations gave a different picture to English in the curriculum. Middle school comprises actually four years (1AM to 4 AM) instead of three years (7AF to 9AF) during which students study English for three years with different time allotment and different coefficient in respect to their streams (the Scientific stream for example the coefficient of English is 2 and time allotment is 3 hours per week, however for literary stream the coefficient of English is 3 and time allotment is 4 hours per week). All in all students will accumulate a learning experience of 7 years of English before the university.

Reforms include also the introduction of the Competency-Based Approach; henceforth CBA or task-based learning in order to stimulate students active engagement in their achievements by enabling them to take more responsibilities in the classroom and become 'centred' in their learning. 'The Competency Based Approach' does not represent a complete change from the communicative approach. Such approach involves the students in a process of 'learning how to learn', i.e, it aids and encourages the students to use, develop and demonstrate the competencies required in the performance of their learning.

It in short, provides students with real opportunities to rely on themselves rather than on the teacher. The students, thus, become more autonomous in their progress because the approach advocates a shift from memory-based to problem-solving situations. It also guides them to become effective language users in real-life situations outside the classroom and to overcome obstacles and problems they encounter through language use. In so doing the approach guides them to shift from knowledge acquisition to knowledge use. The competency- based approach is characterized by the following:

- It is action-oriented in that it guides language learning to the acquisition of some skills and functions, allowing the learner to become an effective language user.
- It is problem-solving approach in that it engages learners' obstacles and solves problems through language use.
- It is social-constructivist in that it regards learning as occurring through social interaction with other people, and not only within the pages of the copybook or the walls of the classroom.

At the Crossroads (Teacher's Book, 2005, p.17-18)

At the University level, a set of reforms were also included in different institutes and departments. We list in priority the LMD system adopted in September 2004. This system is believed to open new horizons for students and teachers to explore in the field of knowledge and research. Unlike the classical system, the LMD provides students with ample opportunities

for post-graduation (Master/Doctorate). It also equips them with the necessary criterion for their professional careers.

The LMD system (*Licence-Master-Doctorate*) is a new organizational framework for university courses which is currently being implemented in all European countries including France, Italy, Germany and Great Britain. It has been introduced in Algeria in September 2004 and it is made of: **Licence (3 years)**: 180 credits-for 30 credits a semester (2 semesters a year). **Master (2 years)**: 120 credits-for 30 credits a semester (2 semesters a year) and Doctorate: 3 years of research.

3. EFL Teaching/Learning at the University Level

The main objectives for EFL teaching/learning at the level of Hassiba-Ben Bouali University of Chlef (academic year 2013-2014) are approximately the ones cited for English teaching policy in all other universities across the country. These objectives are to a great extent similar to the predominated seven classes of objectives stated for the teaching of foreign languages:

- a. To develop the students' intellectual powers through the study of another language;
- b. To increase the students' personal culture through the study of the great literature and philosophy to which the new language is the key;
- c. To increase the students' understanding of how language functions and to bring them, through the study of another language, to greater awareness of the functioning of their own language.
- d. To teach students to read another language with comprehension so that they may keep abreast of modern writing, research and information;
- e. To give students the experience of expressing themselves within another framework, linguistically, kinesically and culturally;
- f. To bring students to greater understanding of people across national barriers, by giving them a sympathetic insight into the ways of life and ways of thinking of the people who speak the language they are learning;
- g. To provide students with the skills that will enable them to communicate orally, and to some degree in

writing, in personal or career context, with speakers of another language and with people of other nationalities who have also learned this language.

(Rivers, 1981, p.08).

The department of English at Hassiba Ben Bouali University of Chlef represents one major pedagogical pillar, among others, that works hard to provide supportive conditions for the achievement of the already stated objectives. Students in the department of English study EFL for four years (classical system) and three years (LMD system) recently implemented in the department (2009) to respond to the needs of the technological age.

In the classical system, the 'Licence' (which is in Algeria the equivalent to the English or American 'Bachelor of Arts' or BA) includes four years of instruction based on the main skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing which take generally the form of intensive courses where the teacher is the chief actor. Language skills constitute basically the 1st year curriculum in addition to linguistics, grammar and phonetics. The three other years in students' graduation include primarily lectures in literature (American, British and African), Civilization (American, British and African), Psychology (General Psychology/Psycho-pedagogy), Sociolinguistics, Psycholinguistics and TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language). Students at the fourth year have to choose between micro-teaching (pre-service training at the university under the supervision of experienced inspectors) or a dissertation (an extended essay or a memoir submitted at the end of the year).

For the new LMD promotion, things are a bit different. Students' preparation for the licence lasts three years instead of four years during which other modules in addition to the already stated modules are studied such as ICT (Information and Communication Technologies), ESP (English for Specific Purposes) and the study of another foreign language Spanish or German is also included. The Licence degree is to be fulfilled in six semesters validated by 180 credits:

- An Academic Licence: allows the preparation for the Master.

- Professional Licence: for more acknowledged specialities in the professional life and which enables implication of the students in the active life of work.

(Herzallah and Baddari, 2007, pp. 21-22).

Actually, holders of the LMD licence have the opportunity to prepare their Master being professional (to join the world of work) or research Master (to carry on their Doctorate). It should be noted at this level that the last promotion in the classical system in the department of English (Chlef University) will be the one of the academic year (2013-2014).

Because the teaching/learning of English at the university is challenging and rewarding, certain parameters related to the two poles namely teachers and students have to be considered at a primarily concern: teachers' profile and methodology and students' profile and needs analysis.

3.1. Teachers' Profile and Methodology

University teachers hold either 'Magister' or 'Doctorate' in the English foreign language. In the department of English at Hassiba Ben Bouali University the majority of full time teachers hold Magister degree either in literature, civilization or applied linguistics and TEFL, some of them are preparing their Doctorate research works. Those teachers have varying teaching experiences, ranging from 5 to 12 years of EFL teaching either at Middle or Secondary Schools. Most teachers in the department are females aged between 28 and 45 years old, a small number of them represents males. Due to the deficit in the teaching staff the department gives yearly opportunities to some part-time teachers who are in most cases Magister students or Secondary school teachers to teach some modules such as listening, oral expression, reading comprehension and written expression. Certain criteria for part-time teachers are required to join the department, mainly experience and acquaintance with the subject to be taught.

It is constantly apparent in the department of English that teaching is more '*teacher centred*' despite the much acknowledged fact that education at the university is '*learner-centred*'. The teacher's methodology is thus crucial to define his/her responsibilities as an agent

of change in the classroom and to emphasize roles of students in the learning process. The prevailing situation in the department is that teachers are eclectic in their teaching methodology. They try to:

Absorb the best techniques of all well-known language teaching methods into their classroom procedures, using them for the purpose for which they are most appropriate.... They adapt their methods to the changing objectives of the day and to the types of students who pass through their classes.

(Rivers, 1981, p. 55).

According to Palmer (1964, p. 108) who labels eclecticism 'the Multiple Line Approach', eclecticism is "... a judicious and reasoned selection of all the diverse factors, the sum of which may constitute a complete and homogeneous system of presentation". Mackey (1965) also defines the true eclectic teacher as the one who "... seeks the balanced development of all four skills at all stages, while retaining the emphasis on an oral presentation first..." (Mackey, 1965, pp.21-22).

Being eclectic in their teaching, teachers work hard to overcome some of the negative impacts of the "one absolutely invariable method" (Sweet, 1899, p.82). They do their best to be "imaginative, energetic, and willing to experiment. With so much to draw from, no eclecticist needs lack for ideas for keeping lessons varied and interesting" (ibid). As EFL teachers we are indeed required to:

Use each and every method, process, exercise, drill, or device which may further us in our immediate purpose and bring us nearer to our ultimate goal; we adopt every good idea and leave the door open for all future developments; we reject nothing except useless and harmful forms of work. The multiple line of approach embodies the eclectic principle..., for it enjoins us to select judiciously and without pre-judice all that is likely to help in our work.

Palmer (1921, p.141).

If teachers' profile and methodology are primordial to decide on the status of any foreign language within a specific context, students' profile and needs analysis are merely of equal importance. The following part

will focus on 1st year EFL students' profile and needs analysis at Hassiba Ben Bouali University.

3.2. Students' Profile and Needs Analysis

Knowing about students' attitudes, age, interest, expectations, motivation and needs is a prerequisite in education. This is so considering the student himself as a central partner in the teaching/learning process and a major participant in his own success or failure. Numerous researches in this respect have given major attention to the student and his role in any language classroom (Second/Foreign). Researchers claim that teachers are interested in a number of things about their students:

1. Who are they? What is their background? What are their career interests? Their scholastic preferences? Their leisure-time occupations? Their ethnic heritage? Their experiences with people from different background?
2. What are their attitudes toward learning another language? Why are they learning this language at this particular time? What are their attitudes toward people who speak other languages? Toward people who speak this language?
3. What do they want to get from the study of this particular language at this time? Are they merely fulfilling a requirement of some kind? Are they fulfilling a requirement but hoping to get something further from the effort expended? Are they most interested in being able to communicate orally with speakers of the language? In reading newspapers and magazines; novels, plays, or poetry; or specialized material of some kind? In understanding films or television and radio programmes? In being able to sing in the language? In understanding how people who speak the language feel about things and do things? In some other use of the language?
4. How do they prefer to learn another language? Orally or through written material? Through explanation or practice? On their own or with other students in small or large groups? Intensively or over a longer period? With carefully structured materials and regular correction or through attempts at immediate use with little explanation or correction? With or without

technological aids (Cassettes, computer programmes, slides)?

(Rivers (1976) and in NEC (1979); Reinert (1970), and Jakobovits in NEC (1970), Cited in Rivers, 1981, p.11-12).

First year EFL students at Hassiba Ben Bouali University of Chlef are assessed to have an intermediate level in EFL. As argued by Harmer (2001): “The intermediate level itself is often sub-divided into lower intermediate and upper-intermediate and even mid-intermediate” (Harmer, 2001, p.44). For him: “What one school or education system calls advanced may be more like intermediate to some other teachers” (ibid). This is the case in Chlef University where 1st year EFL students are judged to be more mid-intermediate to upper-intermediate.

They are aged between 18 and 23 years old and they come from different Secondary schools, various streams (Scientific, Languages, Literary...) and have different socio-economic background. What is shared between them is that they succeeded to get the Baccalaureate examination which is a decisive examination student's pass at the end of Secondary Education before they join Higher Education (University). Roughly equivalent to ‘O level’. Those students have been studying EFL for about five years but for some of them English is still viewed as a difficult subject to study due to their previous failure: “Failure may produce negative attitudes which may help breed further failure” (Littlewood, 1989, p. 56). 1st year EFL students also differ from other students, mainly beginners, in the way they evaluate themselves and in the way they see progress:

While learners at beginner level find it easy to see progress in their abilities from one week to the next, the same is not so easy for students at higher levels, particularly at intermediate levels, where progress is more subtle, and students do not always find it easy to see where they are going.

(Harmer, 2001, p.44).

Moreover, 1st year EFL students differ in many other aspects such as motivation (some of them are very motivated to learn EFL and others are very lazy and

reluctant) and attitudes (some of them feel happy to study the EFL while others study it because they have to). In this view of things, they need more support and guidance in their learning. They indeed need:

- ▶ Practice of EFL which is generally restricted to the four walls of the classroom.
- ▶ Willingness to learn EFL effectively
- ▶ Real and continuous assessment of their efforts to learn EFL
- ▶ Autonomy and confidence in their own progress
- ▶ To be more analytical in their learning
- ▶ Improve their skills and strategies in speaking, reading and writing the language appropriately.

Undoubtedly, students are different and a ‘bad learner’ is just a myth, all learners are in fact willing to learn and do not like to fail (Prodromou, 1982). Some students are fortunately very responsible of their English studies and are qualified to be ‘good learners’. In short and after we have highlighted students’ profile and analyzed their needs and after we have found out their feelings toward language learning “we are in a much better position to decide appropriate objectives in a particular teaching situation, select a methodology, and design courses which provide what our students are seeking” (Rivers, 1981, p.12). In this context and among the different courses that attract students and teachers attention we mention the Reading Comprehension course. Knowing about this interesting course means answering a set of questions such as: *what is the status of Reading Comprehension in the department of English? What are its objectives? What about the methodology used to teach it?* All these questions represent the main concern of the subsequent section.

4. The Reading Comprehension Module and its Status in the Department of English

Teaching EFL to 1st year university students is based on instruction in the four skills of speaking, listening reading and writing. Reading Comprehension is taught for two years in the LMD system, precisely in the first and in the second year instead of one year as it was in the classical system (in the first year only).

The status of this module has indeed received a great deal of reinforcement since the implementation of the LMD in the department.

It should be noted at this level that the time allotment, the coefficient and the credit for Reading Comprehension module in the LMD system varies from one department to another and from one university to another according to the different variables of the speciality opted for in the department and emphasized in the 'LMD Project'. Introducing the LMD system lies particularly on a project '*offre de formation*' that teachers are supposed to elaborate. The project should be detailed in terms of the chosen speciality, the distribution of the modules within the six semesters, the coefficients, the credits and the units' divisions. Any proposed project must pass through evaluation done at the level by the department scientific committee then the one of the faculty in order to check its validity to test its credibility and its appropriateness to the existing teaching and learning conditions in the given university. Briefly speaking, teaching reading comprehension to 1st year EFL students is not done at random; teachers have a set of objectives to achieve and a methodology to follow.

4.1. Objectives

The teacher's objectives in teaching EFL in general and Reading Comprehension in particular are major factors that aid him better control his students and well manage his input. In addition:

Goals and objective setting are important tasks in most educational contexts, because they provide a rational for selecting and integrating pedagogical tasks, as well providing a point of reference for the decision making process .

(Nunan and Lamb,1996, p.27).

In the department of English and despite divergence in opinions concerning the way of teaching Reading Comprehension to 1st year EFL students and of dealing with the different texts and to deal with the selected texts, Reading Comprehension teachers in the department all agree that the reading course

should aim at:

a) Developing in each learner skills in:

- Recognizing many words at sight.
- Gaining the meaning of unknown words or expressions quickly by using one or a combination of the following :
 - Analysis of structure.
 - Configuration of the graphic symbols.
 - Contextual analysis.
 - The dictionary
- Comprehending and interpreting the meaning of words, phrases and sentences.
- Reading silently at speeds appropriate to the content and purpose.
- Skimming, scanning and guessing strategies.
- Reading orally with fluency, suitable speed, expression, correct pronunciation, and attention to comprehension.
- Evaluating the content of what is read.
- Using books efficiently (locating information, using the library, etc).
- Reading simplified and authentic versions with thorough comprehension.

b) Equipping students with the necessary reading strategies and sub-skills needed for autonomy in reading.

Though Reading Comprehension teachers strongly argue the importance of the already stated objectives, they still continue to:

Conduct their classes as they always conducted them, unaware of the fact that objectives in language teaching may be changing around them and that their teaching may become anachronistic and irrelevant to the young people who pass through their classes. With the passing of time, new situations arise for a nation and its people, or for a district and its schools, and these establish priorities of objectives for the teachers of other languages who must be continually aware of such changes if their teaching is to be appropriate to

the generation of students before them

(Rivers, 1981, pp.07-08).

EFL teachers are then challenged to think deeply about their objectives keeping in mind the new reforms at the level of Higher Education and the needs of the internet generation of students they teach. Other crucial objectives can in this respect be added to the already mentioned ones; particularly:

- a) Encouraging students to practise reading in and out of the classroom
- b) Making of reading both for information and pleasure an enjoyable every day activity in the lives of our students.
- c) Acquainting students with necessary knowledge for their post-graduation research and why not to prepare them for their professional careers.

These objectives cannot however be achieved adequately if the adopted methodology is ambiguous and not applied appropriately.

4.2. Methodology

Reading Comprehension at the university level is different from the reading student get at Middle and Secondary school. At the University level it is widely believed that:

Teachers have a different combination and priority of objectives in mind. They have...Widely differing techniques for achieving these objectives even when these objectives seemed to coincide ...it is the teacher's objectives that determine the way the language lesson is organized

(ibid, p.07).

It is therefore the teachers' mission to adjust their teaching methodology to the objectives of teaching subject A or B. In the department of English EFL teachers vary greatly in their teaching methodology. Most of them judge reading to be the easiest skill to teach. They think, teaching reading requires them to take a text (any text) they see appropriate to the students they teach, prepare some relate activities and ask students to read and do the activities. Most activities are grammar, content or vocabulary based. More priority is given to grammar and content in

expense to the reading act which is the core of any successful reading course: "...The point of the reading course should be reading not reinforcement of oral skills, not grammatical or discourse analysis and not the acquisition of new vocabulary" (Eskey, 1983, p.130).

The prevailing situation is that teachers focus more on grammar and content in teaching reading giving students no chance to develop the reading competence required for effective reading. Usually in such reading courses students do not read at all, they are always in rush to finish their reading assignments. Consequently they are left ill equipped with the necessary strategies that allow them to learn how to read and how to learn from their reading.

Moreover, the reading course is taught by some teachers who have not been well trained in teaching this fruitful skill. The great majority of them are part-time teachers who ignore the nature of the reading process and the many benefits it may yield if well taught. Those teachers being part-time or full-time teaching have not to ignore the fact that: "As teachers we are ideally placed to provide comprehensible input since we know the students in front of us and can react appropriately to them"(Harmer, 2001, p.66). Nevertheless, our understanding of how students learn determines our philosophy of education, our teaching style, approach, method and classroom techniques (Brown, 1994).

The Reading Comprehension teacher should be made aware that his first responsibility in the reading course is to teach reading itself; to instruct students in the different reading strategies and skills they need to interact with any text because: "teaching students how to read text A or text B is not teaching them how to read" (Nuttal, 1982, p.22). What is also obvious in most of our Reading Comprehension classes is that the one where teacher is an absolute authority, students' participation in the selection of the reading materials (texts) or the specific content of the reading course is very rare. Texts' selection, activities and content are decided by teachers who themselves:

From time to time add new techniques that they have seen demonstrated at a meeting, or of which they

have read, but their approach remains fundamentally unchanged. Their students may not find the lesson particularly interesting or exiting, but if they pass the examinations set by the department, their teachers are satisfied.

(Rivers, 1981, p.07).

The teachers' authority in this way may impede learning in general and reading in particular. The reading course where students' styles, skills, strategies and expectations are ignored is undoubtedly a failure. If students do not participate in developing their reading competence, they will not feel comfortable in practising this skill a fact which will automatically lower their motivation and desire to read. As reading teachers we must bear in mind that:

A theory of teaching, in harmony with your integrated understanding of the learner and of the subject matter to be learned, will point the way the successful procedures on a given day for given learners under the various constraints of the particular context of learning.

(Brown, 1994, p.08).

It is worth mentioning at this level that current changes in foreign language teaching/learning methods emphasize the mere participation of the student in his learning. Students are no more dependent on the teacher; they are instead required to play a central role in the reading course if their needs, preferences and interests are taken into consideration. Accordingly: "these changes strengthen teachers' roles making them more varied and more creative. Their status is no longer based on hierarchical authority, but on the quality and importance of their relationship with learners" (Oxford, 1990, p.11). On their part, teachers have to be conscious of the reality that: "the new generation of students in our schools is internationalist and inter-culturalist in its aspirations; it is also brutally direct in demanding the rationale of what we are doing and of what we are asking the members of that generation to do" (Rivers, 1981, p. 19).

Thus, helping students to build their autonomy in reading is increasingly becoming a priority in any Reading Comprehension classroom. Such autonomy,

however, cannot be maintained if love for reading and reading a lot is not reinforced. The reading skill must therefore be developed and "can only be developed, by means of extensive and continual practice. People learn to read and to read better by reading" (Eskey, 1986, p.21). Reading is the only way that can aid students to improve their reading and achieve the required level of proficiency in learning the EFL.

5. Conclusion

This paper has tried to describe the teaching and learning situation at the University level with particular focus on Reading Comprehension teaching/learning-in the EFL classroom at Hassiba Ben Bouali University of Chlef (Algeria). Parameters such as teachers' profile and methodology, students' profile and needs analysis, the status of reading in the department of English as well as the objectives behind teaching reading all have been emphasized as they represent important variables in any educational setting. Learners' needs analysis has shed light on students apparent need for instruction in reading, seen as an effective solution to their reading and vocabulary difficulties and their language weaknesses. The status of reading in the department of English has also shown the urgent need for reading to be practised in and out of the classroom both intensively and extensively.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares that he has no conflict of interest.

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