

**PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA**  
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH  
MOHAMED KHIDER UNIVERSITY. BISKRA  
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

**TEACHERS' BELIEFS  
ABOUT THE IMPACT OF READING STRATEGIES  
ON LEARNERS'  
COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE**

A CASE STUDY OF FIRST-YEAR LMD TEACHERS OF ENGLISH AT  
MOHAMED KHIDER UNIVERSITY OF BISKRA

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE MAGISTER DEGREE IN LANGUAGE AND CIVILIZATION

Submitted by:  
Mr. Youcef LAALA

Supervised by:  
Prof. Ahmed MOUMENE

**Board of Examiners:**

Chairman: Dr. Nacif LABED. University Mentouri, Constantine

Supervisor: Prof. Ahmed MOUMENE. University Mentouri, Constantine

Examiner: Dr. Riad BELOUAHEM, University Mentouri, Constantine

2010/2011

## **Acknowledgments**

First of all, I would like to express all the expressions of gratitude to my Supervisor Professor Ahmed MOUMENE for his support, aid and objective guidance.

I am also very grateful to the teachers of English, all the staff of the English Department at Mohamed Kheider University for their collaboration to this research work.

Finally, particular thanks to Ms. Naima Boudiaf and Dr. Guettala for their help and guidance throughout this research work.

## **Abstract**

Previous research has revealed the influential role of teachers' beliefs in determining their professional behaviour. Teachers' beliefs affect not only their teaching, but also filter new input, suggesting significant implications for the implementation of educational innovations and teacher development. A common fact in our universities is the neglect of teaching learning strategies in general and reading strategies in particular. However, The aim of this research is to explore teachers' beliefs (awareness and knowledge) about teaching reading strategies to foreign language learners as a means to improve their communicative competence; however, the intention is to find out the teacher's beliefs about teaching reading strategies at the department of English of Mohamed Khider University and to examine the extent to which their beliefs are reflected in their reading classes / classroom practices. We hypothesize that if teachers' have knowledge and positive beliefs about reading strategies, they can contribute in enhancing students' communicative competence and if learners truly understand some effective reading strategies, they will be able to use them more effectively and apply them appropriately for their meaningful reading comprehension. To achieve that aim, the study was led through questionnaire to build up an expression of teachers' beliefs, awareness, knowledge and difficulties encountered in teaching reading strategies to foreign language learners. The results confirmed that teachers do not have much knowledge about reading strategies and how to teach them and that the reading skill is neglected in our classrooms. Finally, the study offers a few implications to raise teachers' knowledge and awareness about the importance of teaching reading strategies in all foreign language courses. We hope that this study will be beneficial for teachers of the foreign language in that it will provide them with a general sight on the importance of teachers' development, teachers' knowledge and teachers' knowledge in every subject they teach.

## **List of Abbreviations**

BA : Bachelor of Art

CLT : Communicative Language Teaching

DTLS : Descriptive Test of Language Skills

EAP : English for Academic Purposes

EFL : English as a Foreign language

ELT : English Language Teaching

ESL : English as a Second Language

ESP : English for Specific Purposes

FL : Foreign Language

IDEA : identify /describe/ expand/act

L1 : Mother Language

L2 : Second Language

LMD : Licence/Master/Doctorat

MA : Master of Art

MEPI : middle east partnership initiative

PDP : pre/during/post

PHD : Doctor of Philosophy

TEFL : Teaching English as a Foreign Language

T : teacher

SQ3R : Survey/Questions/Read/Recall/Review

NCLRC : National Capital Language Resource Centre

TD : Travaux Rédigés

## List of Tables

<b>Table</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Taxonomies of Reading.....	38-39
2. Block's Taxonomy of Reading Strategies.....	39
3. Srig's Taxonomy of Reading Strategies.....	40
4. Research on Reading Strategies.....	43-44
5. Teachers' Age.....	64
6. Length of English Teaching Experience.....	65
7. Teachers' Qualifications.....	65
8. Table 8. Teachers' MA specialty.....	66
9. Table 9. The Modules Taught to First Year Students.....	66-67
10. Table 10. Reading Strategies That Teachers Know.....	67-68
11. Table 11. Purposes Of Teaching Reading From Teachers' Perspective.....	68-69
12. Table 12. Reading Activities Needed For Students' Practice.....	69-70
13. Table 13. Principles Behind Teaching Reading From Teachers' Perspective.....	70
14. Table 14. Teachers' Perception Of Characteristics Of Good Readers.....	72
15. Table 15. Teachers' Definition Of Reading.....	73-74
16. Table 16. Skills Needed in Reading.....	75
17. Table 17. Skills Improved Through Reading Activities.....	76
18. Table 18. Teachers' Confidence in Teaching Reading Strategies.....	76-77
19. Table 19. Defining Ability To Read.....	77-78
20. Table 20. Sources Of Difficulty In Teaching Reading.....	78-79
21. Table 21. Ways To Improve Teaching Practice.....	81
22. Table 22. Teachers' Views About Best Module For Teaching Reading Strategies.....	83

23. Table 23. The Class Size.....	85
24. Table 24. Ways Used By Teachers To Help Students Learn <u>When</u> and <u>How</u> To Use Learning Strategies.....	85-86
25. Table 25. Reading Strategies enhance linguistic or pragmatic competence?.....	87
26. Table 26. Strategies That Help Students Read Quickly.....	87-88
27. Table 27. Teachers' Knowledge Of PDP.....	89
28. Table 28. Activities Used In PDP.....	90
29. Table 29. Teachers' Knowledge Of The SQ3R.....	90-91
30. Ranking Types of Reading Used in The Classroom.....	92
31. <i>Table 31. Types Of Students' Work In Reading Tasks</i> .....	93
32. <i>Table 32. Factors That Influence Teachers' Practice</i> .....	94
33. <i>Table 33. Reasons To Change Teachers' Beliefs</i> .....	95
34. <i>Table 34. Teachers' Change In The Approach Of Teaching Reading</i> .....	99
35. <i>Table 35. The Sources Of The Change Mentioned</i> .....	100

## List of Figures

<b>Figure</b>	<b>Page</b>
Fig.1. Kinds of Beliefs (Davis, 2003).....	10
Fig.2 Bottom up and Top Down Models of reading.....	31
Fig.3 Interactive Models of Reading.....	32
Fig.4 Schematic Representation of The Framework of Communicative Competence.....	59

## Table of Content

Acknowledgement.....	I
Abstract.....	II
List of Abbreviations.....	III
List of Tables.....	IV-V
List of Figures.....	VI

### GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1. The Aim of The Study.....	1
2. The Statement of the Problem.....	1
3. Research Question.....	3
4. Hypothesis.....	4
5. Research Design.....	4

### CHAPTER ONE: TEACHERS' BELIEFS

Introduction.....	6
<b>1.1.</b> The Notion Of Beliefs.....	6
<b>1.2.</b> Understanding Teachers' Beliefs .....	8
<b>1.3.</b> Kinds Of Beliefs.....	10
<b>1.3.1.</b> Teachers' Beliefs About Schooling, Epistemology, Learning, and Teaching.....	10
<b>1.3.2.</b> Teachers' Beliefs About Academic Content, Student Populations, And Themselves.....	11
<b>1.4.</b> Sources Of Beliefs.....	13
<b>1.5.</b> The Role Of Teachers' Beliefs In Teaching And Learning.....	13
<b>1.6.</b> Research On Teachers' Beliefs.....	14
<b>1.7.</b> Research Into Teachers' Beliefs About Teaching Reading Strategies.....	18
<b>1.8.</b> How Teachers' Beliefs Change.....	21
Conclusion .....	22



## **CHAPTER TWO: THE READING SKILL**

Introduction.....	24
<b>2.1.</b> Definition Of Reading.....	24
<b>2.2.</b> Reading Purposes.....	25
<b>2.3.</b> Reading Theories.....	26
<b>2.3.1.</b> The Traditional View.....	27
<b>2.3.2.</b> The Cognitive View.....	27
<b>2.3.3.</b> The Metacognitive View .....	28
<b>2.4.</b> Reading Models.....	28
<b>2.4.1.</b> The Bottom-Up Model .....	29
<b>2.4.2.</b> The Top-down Model.....	30
<b>2.4.3.</b> The Interactive Model.....	31
<b>2.5.</b> Types of Reading.....	32
<b>2.5.1.</b> Intensive Reading.....	33
<b>2.5.2.</b> Extensive Reading.....	33
<b>2.6.</b> Characteristics Of An Effective Reader.....	33
<b>2.7.</b> The Role Of The Teacher In The Reading Class.....	34
<b>2.8.</b> Learning And Reading Strategies.....	35
<b>2.8.1.</b> Defining Learning Strategies.....	35
<b>2.8.2.</b> The Importance Of Strategies In The Learning Process.....	35
<b>2.8.3.</b> Definition of Reading Strategies.....	36
<b>2.8.4.</b> The Importance of Reading Strategies .....	37
<b>2.8.5.</b> Some Reading Strategies .....	38
<b>2.8.6.</b> Classification Of Reading Skills.....	39

2.8.7. Second Language Reading Strategy Research.....	42
Conclusion.....	45

### **CHAPTER THREE: COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE**

Introduction.....	46
3.1. The Concept Of Communication .....	46
3.2. Aims Of Communication.....	47
3.3. The Concept of Competence.....	49
3.4. The Notion Of Communicative Competence.....	51
3.5. Definition Of Communicative Competence.....	55
3.6. Components of Communicative Competence.....	56
3.5.1. Grammatical competence .....	56
3.5.2. Discourse competence .....	56
3.5.3. Sociolinguistic competence .....	56
3.5.4 .Strategic competence.....	56
3.7. Aims of Communicative Competence.....	57
3.8. Communicative Competence And Foreign Language Teaching.....	58
3.9. Framework of Communicative Competence Integrating The Four Skills.....	58
3.10.Communicative Competence and language teaching.....	59
3.11.Communication Strategies.....	60
3.11.1. Avoidance Strategies.....	60
3.11.2. Compensatory Strategies .....	61
Conclusion.....	62

## **CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE**

Introduction.....	63
4.1. The Department of English at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra.....	63
4.2. The Sample Of The Study.....	65
Teachers' questionnaire.....	65
4.2.1. The aim of the questionnaire.....	65
4.2.2. The description of the questionnaire.....	65
4.2.3. The analysis of the questionnaire.....	66
4.2.3.1. Section One: General Information About The Participants.....	66
4.2.3.2. Section two: Teachers' awareness and knowledge of reading and reading strategies.....	69
4.2.3.3. Section Three: Teachers' Practice of Reading Strategies in Language Classrooms.....	86
4.3. Results.....	105
Conclusion.....	106

## **CHAPTER FIVE: PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS**

Introduction.....	108
5.1. Implications about teachers' beliefs, awareness and knowledge.....	108
5.2. Implications about teaching reading and reading strategies.....	109
Conclusion .....	116
GENERAL CONCLUSION.....	116
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	118
APPENDIX .....	124

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

6. The Aim of The Study.....	1
7. The Statement of the Problem.....	1
8. Research Question.....	3
9. Hypothesis.....	4
10. Research Design.....	4

## CHAPTER ONE: TEACHERS' BELIEFS

Introduction.....	6
<b>1.</b> The Notion Of Beliefs.....	6
<b>2.</b> Understanding Teachers' Beliefs.....	8
<b>3.</b> Kinds Of Beliefs.....	10
3.1. Teachers' Beliefs About Schooling, Epistemology, Learning, and Teaching.....	10
3.2. Teachers' Beliefs About Academic Content, Student Populations, And Themselves.....	11
<b>4.</b> Sources Of Belief.....	13
<b>5.</b> The Role Of Teachers' Beliefs In Teaching And Learning.....	13
<b>6.</b> Research On Teachers' Beliefs.....	14
<b>7.</b> Research Into Teachers' Beliefs About Teaching Reading Strategies.....	18
<b>8.</b> How Teachers' Beliefs Change.....	21
Conclusion .....	22

## CHAPTER TWO: THE READING SKILL

Introduction.....	24
1. Definition Of Reading.....	24
2. Reading Purposes.....	25
3. Reading Theories.....	26
3.1. The Traditional View.....	27
3.2. The Cognitive View.....	27
3.3. The Metacognitive View .....	27
4. Reading Models.....	28
4.1. The Bottom-Up Model .....	29
4.2. The Top-down Model.....	30
4.3. The Interactive Model.....	31
5. Types of Reading.....	32
5.1. Intensive Reading.....	33
5.2. Extensive Reading.....	33

<b>6. Characteristics Of An Effective Reader.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>7. The Role Of The Teacher In The Reading Class.....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>8. Learning And Reading Strategies.....</b>	<b>35</b>
8.1. Defining Learning Strategies.....	35
8.2. The Importance Of Strategies In The Learning Process.....	35
8.3. Definition of Reading Strategies.....	35
8.4. The Importance of Reading Strategies .....	37
8.5. Some Reading Strategies .....	38
8.6. Classification Of Reading Skills.....	39
8.7. Second Language Reading Strategy Research.....	42
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>45</b>

## CHAPTER THREE: COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

Introduction.....	46
<b>1.</b> The Concept Of Communication .....	46
<b>2.</b> Aims Of Communication.....	47
<b>3.</b> The Concept of Competence.....	49
<b>4.</b> The Notion Of Communicative Competence.....	51
<b>5.</b> Definition Of Communicative Competence.....	55
<b>6.</b> Components of Communicative Competence.....	56
6.1. Grammatical competence .....	56
6.2. Discourse competence .....	56
6.3. Sociolinguistic competence .....	56
6.4. Strategic competence .....	56
<b>7.</b> Aims of Communicative Competence.....	57
<b>8.</b> Communicative Competence And Foreign Language Teaching.....	58
<b>9.</b> Framework of Communicative Competence Integrating The Four Skills.....	58
<b>10.</b> Communicative Competence and language teaching.....	59
<b>11.</b> Communication Strategies.....	60
11.1. Avoidance Strategies.....	60
11.2. Compensatory Strategies .....	61
Conclusion.....	62



## **CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE**

Introduction.....	63
<b>1.</b> The Department of English at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra.....	63
<b>2.</b> The Sample Of The Study.....	65
<b>3.</b> Teachers' questionnaire.....	65
3.1.    The aim of the questionnaire.....	65
3.2.    The description of the questionnaire.....	65
3.3.    The analysis of the questionnaire.....	66
<b>3.3.1.</b> Section One: General Information About The Participants.....	66
<b>3.3.2.</b> Section two: Teachers' awareness and knowledge of reading and reading strategies.....	69
<b>3.3.3.</b> Section Three: Teachers' Practice of Reading Strategies in Language Classroom.....	86
<b>4.</b> Results.....	105
Conclusion.....	106

## **CHAPTER FIVE: PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS**

Introduction.....	108
1. Implications about teachers' beliefs, awareness and knowledge.....	108
2. Implications about teaching reading and reading strategies.....	109
Conclusion .....	116

## **General Introduction**

### **1. The Aim of the Study**

The aim of this research is to explore teachers' beliefs (awareness and knowledge) about teaching reading strategies to foreign language learners as a means to improve their communicative competence. The intention in this study is to find out the teacher's beliefs about teaching reading strategies at the department of English of Mohamed Kheider University, to examine the extent to which their beliefs are reflected in their reading classes / classroom practices and finally to give recommendations to raise teachers' awareness and knowledge about teaching reading strategies so as to improve students' ability of reading in English as well as their communicative competence.

### **2. The Statement of the Problem**

The ever – growing need for good communication skills in English has created a huge demand for English teaching around the world. Millions of people today want to improve their command of English. Opportunities to learn English are provided in many different ways such as through formal instruction, travel, study abroad, as well as the media and the internet. The worldwide demand for English has created an enormous demand for quality language teaching and language teaching materials. Learners set themselves demanding goals in which they want to be able to master English to a high level of accuracy and fluency. Employers too insist that their employees have good English language skills and fluency in English as a prerequisite for success and advancement in many fields of employment in today's world. So, the demand for teachers development, appropriate teaching methodology as well as quality, is therefore as strong as ever. As a part of teachers' development and effective teaching, the main are teachers' beliefs and attitudes, knowledge and awareness.

Research confirmed that Teachers' beliefs, practices and attitudes are important for understanding and improving educational processes. They are closely linked to teachers' strategies for coping with challenges in their daily professional life and to their general well-being, and they shape students' learning environment and influence student motivation and achievement. Furthermore they can be expected to mediate the effects of job-related policies – such as changes in curricula for teachers' initial education or professional development – on student learning. In fact, the way teachers think about, understand, and value instruction influences their practice. Because teachers are the critical

factor in the implementation of an appropriate approach; their values, attitudes, and beliefs about classroom practices are important.

Classroom practices are based on a logical system of beliefs. Yet past research on teacher practice has focused little attention on the thoughts and beliefs teachers have about their practice. Because teachers' beliefs are central to the instructional strategies they implement, beliefs become one of the foremost important factors in driving their actions in class and contributing to the effectiveness of teaching and learning. According to Johnson (1994: 439), research on teachers' beliefs consists of three basic assumptions: (1) Teachers' beliefs influence their perception and judgment; (2) Teachers' beliefs play a role in how information on teaching is translated into classroom practices; (3) Understanding teachers' beliefs is essential to improving teaching practices and teacher education programs. It is important, therefore, to have an understanding of teachers' belief systems, in order to begin to identify and understand the variables that mediate the difference between teachers' thinking and practices.

Although neglected, reading is an essential skill for English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL). For many, reading is the most important skill to master. With strengthened reading skills, ESL/ EFL readers will make greater progress and attain greater development in all academic areas. In Algeria, English is taught and learned in a non – native environment so reading is not only an important means to gain knowledge but also a means by which further study takes place. According to Carrell (1984:1), "for many students, reading is by far the most important of the four macro skills, particularly in English as a second or a foreign language." This is also true to the students at our department since the reading skill offers them a wide range of interesting information as well as a variety of language expressions and structures which are of great usefulness for developing other language skills.

When dealing with a reading lesson, students often experience the lack of reading strategies which are essential for them to overcome the challenges in the classroom. Research into reading has found that effective readers are aware of the strategies they use and that they use strategies flexibly and efficiently. Researchers believed that these strategies could be taught to ineffective language learners so that they can become more successful in language learning. As Oxford (1990:1) states, language learning strategies "... are especially important for language learning because they are tools for active, self-directed movement, which is essential for developing communicative competence." Therefore, teachers should consider teaching students effective reading strategies,

especially showing them how to utilize the skills and knowledge that they bring from their first language in order to cope with reading in the second language.

Besides developing reading proficiency for students, teachers who train students to use reading strategies can also help them become autonomous language learners. As a result, teaching students learning strategies is an important duty of the language teachers since learning strategies can help students monitor and take charge of their own learning. Helping students understand good language learning strategies and training them to develop and use such good language learning strategies can be considered to be the appreciated characteristics of a good language teacher (Lessard, 1997: 3).

Research into teachers' beliefs generally show that teachers have their own beliefs / cognitions / theories about teaching and learning which might have been influenced by their training, work experience and so on. Teachers are not passive recipients of theories but do construct their own theories. The relationship between teachers' beliefs and their classroom practice is that the teachers' actions can cause students to learn. Teacher beliefs are related to students' learning through something that the teacher does in the classroom.

For all of these reasons, it would be necessary to have an investigation into teachers' beliefs about teaching reading strategies and their classroom practice. By doing so, we could recognize the relationship between teacher beliefs and practice and student learning. Moreover, teachers' beliefs are related to student learning through some event or sequences of events, mediated by the teachers that happen in the classroom. These events might be said to "cause" student learning in the sense that the events in the classroom lead, in the case of effective teaching, to student learning.

### **3. Research Questions**

This study aims to answer the following questions:

- What is involved in the reading as a process?
- What are the main reading strategies students should learn?
- What is the nature of teachers' beliefs and their influence on teaching practice?
- What are teachers' beliefs about teaching reading strategies?
- What should teachers do to raise their awareness and knowledge about quality teaching, teacher development in general and teaching reading strategies in particular?
-

## 4. Hypotheses

On one hand, we believe that reading is essential to learn a foreign language and students learn better reading if they are taught reading strategies explicitly. On the other, teachers' beliefs, awareness and knowledge play a great role in their practice, change and development. In this sense, we hypothesize:

If teachers' beliefs about teaching reading strategies are positive, their practice will be effective

If teachers teach reading strategies to foreign language learners, they will improve their language skill as well as their communicative abilities.

## 5. Research Design

In my research, I will discuss the theoretical framework about the nature of the reading skill and teachers' beliefs, their practice and the influence of the former on the latter. Then I will introduce the history of the concept of communicative competence and the shift of emphasis from traditional methodology to new trends in teaching. The second step will be the analysis of data obtained from the teachers' questionnaire and finally, a few suggestions and implications to raise teachers' awareness about teaching reading strategies to enhance communicative competence. I will proceed in the following way:

**Chapter One** introduces a few studies about teachers' beliefs, knowledge and their impact on instruction, teaching quality and learning outcomes.

**Chapter Two** discusses the nature of the reading skill, i.e. reading as a process, models of reading, reading strategies and the role of reading in a few teaching approaches and methods

**Chapter Three** describes the concept of communicative competence, discussing the shift of emphasis from traditional view (mainly Chomsky's) to the new ones studies by Hymes, Savington, Canale and Swain and Bachman. Further, in this chapter, we will speak about components of communicative competence and communication strategies.

**Chapter Four** is devoted to the analysis of the teachers' questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed to gather data about teachers' personal information, teachers' beliefs and knowledge about reading and reading strategies and their classroom practice.

**Chapter Five** offers a few suggestions and implications to teachers. However, these implications are classified into two: about teacher's beliefs and about teaching reading strategies. First about teachers' awareness and knowledge (what teachers need to know about language, about teaching) and what should they do to assure teaching quality. Second,

about teaching reading and reading strategies (what is involved in reading, principles behind teaching reading, what reading strategies teachers should focus on, characteristics of good readers and what a reading sequence look like).

# Chapter One: Teachers' Beliefs

## Introduction

Teachers' beliefs are one of the main pillars of teaching methodology because their practice is influenced by their awareness, knowledge and their beliefs about the subject matter as well as the teaching methodology. However, nowadays, an exploration of teachers' beliefs is necessary to change and improve our practice. This chapter is devoted to discuss the concept of beliefs, i.e. definition, the nature of beliefs, knowledge and beliefs and finally the influence of beliefs on practice.

## 9. The Notion of Beliefs

Dilts (1999) defines beliefs as judgments and evaluations that people make about themselves, about others and about the world around them. However, despite this seemingly simple definition, and despite the fact that they are considered “the most valuable psychological construct to teacher education” (Pintrich 1990 in Zacharias 2003), beliefs are in fact difficult to conceptualize. Pajares (1992: 309) suggests that one of the reasons for such a difficulty is the fact that beliefs are a “messy construct” and are often referred to by means of such different terms as:

attitudes, values, judgments, axioms, opinions, ideology, perceptions, conceptions, conceptual systems, preconceptions, dispositions, implicit theories, explicit theories, personal theories, internal mental processes, action strategies, rules of practice, practical principles, perspectives, repertories of understanding, and social strategy, to name but a few that can be found in the literature.

Another source of confusion about the concept of beliefs is the distinction between beliefs and knowledge. Several researchers have found that beliefs are not so much different from knowledge since beliefs constitute a form of knowledge. By contrast, according to Nespor (1987) beliefs and knowledge are different in the following ways:

- Beliefs come into play when teachers attempt to define goals and tasks which they have no direct experience. On the contrary, teachers use knowledge when “the goals and paths to their attainment are well defined” (Nespor 1987:310).



- Beliefs can be said to relate much more heavily on affective and evaluative components than knowledge (Nespor 1987) since beliefs are “an acceptance proposition for which there is no conventional knowledge, one that is not demonstrable and for which there is accepted disagreement” (Woods 1996: 195). In other words, beliefs tend to have a higher degree of subjectivity than knowledge. On a continuum of doubt, there is less doubt about knowledge than about beliefs. The more complex a situation gets, the likelier it is for people to have diverse perspectives. This is when people turn to their beliefs. A belief, thus, represents a person’s choice rather than the one true fact agreed upon by everyone.

- Beliefs are often static whereas knowledge often changes.
- Knowledge can be evaluated or judged whereas beliefs are relatively difficult to evaluate or judge because of the lack of agreement of how they should be assessed.

One important factor that can be drawn from Nespor’s distinction of beliefs and knowledge is that beliefs are ‘the bible’ or “personal pedagogies or theories” (Nespor 1987) which teachers rely on when they do not have sufficient knowledge and understanding about a given task. Nespor (1987: 324) suggests that teachers tend to rely more on their beliefs than on research-based theory:

Teachers’ beliefs play a major role in defining teaching tasks and organizing the knowledge and information relevant to those tasks. But why should this be so? Why wouldn’t research-based knowledge or academic theory serve this purpose just as well? The answer suggested here is that the contexts and environments within which teachers work, and many of the problems they encounter, are ill-defined and deeply entangled, and that beliefs are peculiarly suited for making sense of such contexts.

Pajares (1992) suggests the following synthesis of beliefs drawn from his review of the literature on the topic:

- Beliefs are formed early. In fact, the earlier a belief is incorporated into the belief structure, the more difficult it is to alter. Newly acquired beliefs are most vulnerable to change.

- Beliefs appear to be self-perpetuated and resistant to change. They tend to be preserved even against contradiction caused by reason, time, schooling, or experience. In addition, individuals tend to hold on to beliefs based on incorrect or incomplete knowledge even after scientifically correct explanations are presented to them. This is the reason why

beliefs appear to be static, resistant to change and are generally not affected by reading and applying the findings of Educational research.

- People develop a belief system that houses all the beliefs acquired through the process of cultural transmission.

- Beliefs are prioritized according to their connections or relationship to other beliefs. In fact, Woods (1996) speculates that the more teachers' beliefs are interconnected with other beliefs they are more difficult to change.

- Beliefs strongly influence perception and behavior although they are unreliable guides to the nature of reality.

- Beliefs play a key role in defining tasks and selecting the cognitive tools with which to interpret, plan, and make decisions regarding such tasks. Therefore they play a critical role in defining behaviour and organizing knowledge and information.

Now that the notion of 'belief' has been defined, the focus will be narrowed down to the role that teacher's beliefs play in actual classroom practice.

## **10. Understanding Teachers' Beliefs**

Teachers come to the classroom with their own system of beliefs and, to some extent, these determine many of the choices they make in relation to what and how they teach. Murphy (2000: 4) establishes a definition of teachers' beliefs based on Pajares' synthesis of the notion of beliefs. She defines teachers' beliefs as:

The representation of a complex and inter-related system of personal and professional knowledge that serves as implicit theories and cognitive maps for experiencing and responding to reality. Beliefs rely on cognitive and affective components and are often tacitly held.

Richards defines teachers' belief as "the information, attitudes, values, expectations, theories, and assumptions about teaching and learning that teachers build up over time and bring with them to the classroom" (Richards 1998:66). It is for this reason that an investigation of teachers' beliefs is necessary in order to gain a better understanding of what goes on in the classroom (Borg 2001).

One of the difficulties in examining teachers' beliefs is that they are not directly observable. Therefore they can only be inferred from teachers' behaviors in the

classroom. Aspects of classroom practice which reflect teachers' beliefs are as mentioned by Zacharias (2003):

- Teaching approaches (e.g. teacher-centered or learner-centered, monolingual or bilingual, focus on fluency or focus on accuracy, etc)
- Types of materials (e.g. locally produced, authentic materials, students-generated texts, multimedia, etc)
- Types of activities (e.g. presentation, discussion, pair work, group work, games, role play, etc)

A number of studies have attempted to investigate the extent to which teachers' beliefs influence their classroom practice. In the sample of the teachers she studied, Johnson (1992), indicated three different methodological beliefs adopted by teachers: a skills-based approach, a rules-based approach and a function-based approach<sup>1</sup>. She found that when teachers representing each theoretical orientation were observed, the majority of their lessons were found to be consistent with their theoretical orientation. (Jonson in Richards 1998: 69)

Woods (1991), another scholar who explored the relationship between teachers' beliefs and classroom practices, conducted a longitudinal study of two teachers with different theoretical beliefs. The two teachers taught the same ESL course in a Canadian university. One of the teachers had a "curriculum-based" orientation while the other "a student-based" orientation<sup>2</sup>. Woods' findings showed that the teacher who adopted a "curriculum-based" approach tended to evaluate her teaching in terms of how successfully she had accomplished what she had preplanned according to the curriculum, while the teacher who had a "student-based" approach organized her teaching based on students' responses.

Smith (1996) is another scholar who studied the beliefs of ESL teachers in postsecondary ESL classes in Canada. His research indicated that teachers' instructional decisions were highly consistent with their expressed beliefs and that personal beliefs system influenced how teachers ranked their institution's explicit course objectives for the courses they were assigned to teach. Teachers with a structured grammar-view of language chose different goals from teachers holding a functional view of language.

All the studies cited so far indicate a positive correlation between the teachers' beliefs and the classroom practice. This could be due to the fact that in all of these cases, the teachers were relatively free to put their beliefs into practice in the classroom.

However, these findings may not be reproducible in all contexts. Indeed, there are cases where there is no significant correlation between teachers' beliefs and their classroom practice

## 11.Kinds of Beliefs

Basically, teachers' beliefs shape their professional practice. However, the study of teachers' beliefs has been tricky because of the multi-dimensionality of beliefs and the traditional boundaries drawn in educational psychology and teacher education about which beliefs constitute a relevant subset. For example, though teachers' beliefs as parents or as members of a religious group matter, much of the literature has focused on the beliefs most directly related to classroom practice. These beliefs can be organized into categories, each of which operates on a different level ranging from societal to personal. Figure (1) By Davis (2003) presents these categories as an inverted pyramid with the most global beliefs located at the top and filtering down toward to the most local beliefs teachers have about who they are. Placing teachers' beliefs about themselves as the most local should not, however, suggest they are of lesser importance or that they do not impact other beliefs. In fact, change in teachers' beliefs, at any level, can create a ripple effect throughout the teachers' entire system of beliefs.

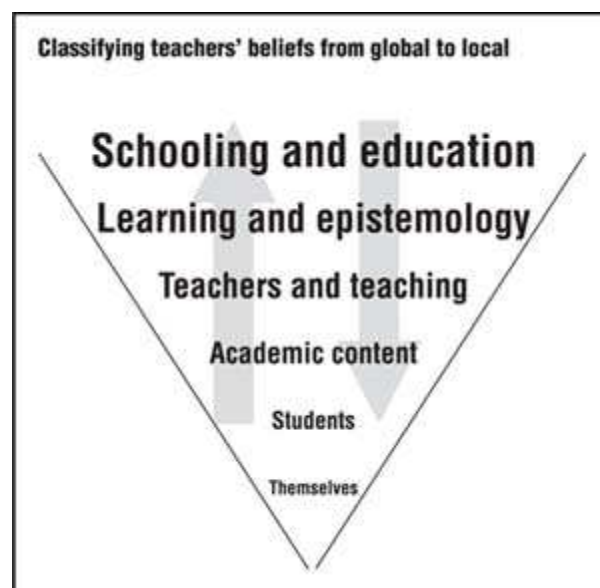


Figure (1) Kinds of beliefs (Davis H, 2003)

## 11.1. Teachers' Beliefs about Schooling, Epistemology, Learning, and Teaching

At the most global level, teachers hold beliefs about the purpose of schooling. For some teachers, these beliefs are rooted in a holistic perspective where in the purpose of education is to help all children reach their full potential in every facet of their lives. Other teachers' beliefs, however, are rooted in more essentialist models that position schools as places in which students acquire knowledge critical to becoming productive members of society. Still others believe schooling should envision a new society, help students become lifelong learners, or enhance the students' individuality. Beliefs about the role of education can filter down and impact teachers' epistemological beliefs. These include beliefs about the nature of knowledge and the processes of knowing. They include beliefs about what criteria should be used to determine the validity and value of different types of knowledge.

Just as these epistemological beliefs are shaped by beliefs about the role of schooling, teachers' beliefs about learning are influenced by their epistemological beliefs. Beliefs about learning include those related to how people learn and what it means to have learned (Hofer & Pintrich, 1997 in Nashiaa). For example, teachers who have essentialist views of education are likely to believe that only certain kinds of knowledge are valid. They, therefore, are likely to focus their efforts on having students learn those kinds knowledge. Similarly, epistemological beliefs impact teachers' understandings of what it means to teach and how teaching is best accomplished. For example, teachers who believe authority figures (e.g., teachers, doctors, scientists) are the only real sources of knowledge may adopt a more behaviorist perspective about learning. They are also likely to enact transmissionist instructional techniques, such as direct instruction, founded on the notions that teachers know and students learn when teachers give them knowledge. Alternatively, teachers who believe the self can be a valid source of knowing are likely to structure their classrooms in ways that emphasize students' contribution to the learning process. Furthermore, these teachers tend to believe that teachers and students know and learn together and that learning happens best through dialogue and shared interaction. Discussion and discovery learning pedagogies were founded in the belief that individuals and groups can create meaningful understandings.

## **11.2. Teachers' Beliefs about Academic Content, Student Populations, and Themselves**

Global beliefs have local impact on teachers' beliefs about the content they teach, their students, and themselves as teachers. Stodolsky and colleagues argue teachers' beliefs about academic content, particularly with regard to status, stability, sequence, and scope, shape their practice. These beliefs inform the concepts teachers emphasize, the way they order and organize material, the student understandings and misunderstandings they anticipate, and their instructional and assessment decisions.

Even more local than beliefs about content are teachers' beliefs about their students. These beliefs include what it means to be a student, how students should relate to teachers, and the impact of student differences on classroom practice and culture. Scholars such as Ryan, Deci, and Reeve assert that in order for students to assume responsibility for their own learning they must feel autonomous, competent, and connected to their classmates and teachers. Underlying their theories is the assumption that in order to be self-determined, students must have these fundamental needs met. However, their research suggests teachers' beliefs about their own need to be in control may be in conflict with students' needs.

Likewise, teachers' beliefs about whether their students need relationships with them may be in conflict with what the literature says students actually need. Pianta argues that all students need to experience close relationships with their teachers. However, the literature suggests that teachers may regard this need as varying with students' development or social group. When teachers believe the source of behavior problems is a lack of competence as opposed to an attempt to usurp control in the class, they tend to respond with more caring and are more likely to help those students achieve competence. Other researchers have explored the causes of behavior understood by teachers to be disruptive.

At the most local level, teachers hold beliefs about themselves, who they are in relation to curriculum, colleagues, and students; perceived strengths and weaknesses; values; self-efficacy; and matters about which they feel responsible. These beliefs may be domain specific; teachers may hold beliefs about who they are as instructors that are different from their beliefs about themselves as classroom managers or content experts.

These beliefs may be hierarchically organized such that a teacher may believe they are experts in their fields, they are strong instructors, but they struggle with classroom management. Because teachers may weigh these domains differently (i.e., placing the most value on being a strong instructor), when asked if they are good teachers, they may respond based on a global perception that they are. Finally, beliefs may not necessarily be calibrated with actual behaviors.

## 12. Sources of Beliefs

Another point that needs to be elaborated on is the ways in which teachers actually develop their beliefs. Kindsvatter, Willen, and Ishler (1988) suggest the following sources of teachers' beliefs:

- **Teachers' experience as language learners.** All teachers have undergone a phase in which they were learners and reflections about how they were taught contribute to forming their beliefs about teaching.
- **Experience from teaching.** Teaching experience can be the primary source of teachers' beliefs. By witnessing how a method works for a particular group of students might lead to the beliefs about such a method.
- **Teachers' own personality.** Some teachers have a preference for a particular teaching method or activity simply because it matches their personality.
- **Expectation from the school, parents, the government and the local society.** Within a school, an institution or a community, certain teaching styles or methods may be preferred. Furthermore, a method or an approach rooted in a community or a school system for quite some time might be taken for granted as the most effective.
- **Education-based or research-based principles.** Teachers might derive their belief system from learning principles of second language acquisition (SLA) research, education or even other schools of thoughts such as psychology. (Willen and Ishler in Zacharias 2003: 13)

Without understanding the different sources of teachers' beliefs even we try to solve a few teaching /learning problems or change teachers' beliefs about that we cannot.

## 13.The Role of Teachers' Beliefs in Teaching and Learning

In fact, the way teachers think about, understand, and value instruction influences their practice. According to Johnson (1994), research on teachers' beliefs consists of three basic assumptions: (1) teachers' beliefs influence their perception and judgment, (2) teachers' beliefs play a role in how information on teaching is translated into classroom practices and (3) understanding teachers' beliefs is essential to improving teaching practices and teacher education programs (Johnson 1994: 439). Because teachers are the critical factor in the implementation of an appropriate approach; their values, attitudes, and beliefs about classroom practices are important. Classroom practices are based on a logical system of beliefs. Yet past research on teacher practice has focused little attention on the thoughts and beliefs teachers have about their practice. Because teachers' beliefs are central to the instructional strategies they implement, beliefs become one of the most important factors in driving their actions in class and contributing to the effectiveness of teaching and learning. It is important, therefore, to have an understanding of teachers' belief systems, in order to begin to identify and understand the variables that mediate the difference between teachers' thinking and practices.

The relationship between teachers' beliefs and their classroom practice is that the teachers' actions can cause students to learn. Teacher beliefs are related to students' learning through something that the teacher does in the classroom. According to Borg (1999), teachers' decisions in teaching are influenced by a set of complex and conflicting cognitions about language, learning in general, L2 learning and students. Borg provides a graph which presents the relationship between teachers' beliefs and other factors involved. Nga (2009) made a schematic conceptualization of teaching within which teacher cognition plays an essential role. Teacher cognition includes their beliefs, knowledge, theories, attitudes, images and has a close relationship with teacher cognition, teacher learning (both schooling and professional education), and classroom practice. The research also shows that teacher cognition and practice are mutually informing with contextual factors playing an important role in determining the extent to which teachers are able to implement instruction congruent with their cognition.



## **14. Research on Teachers' Beliefs**

While much can be gained from research on teacher beliefs in mainstream education, it is necessary to establish a similar research base that is unique to L2 education. Such explorations are necessary not only to understand how L2 teachers' thinking, decisions and planning affect their classroom practices, but are also essential, as Johnson (1994) notes, if L2 teacher education programmes are to integrate information about the cognitive dimension of L2 teaching into the content of teacher education programmes.

It has been only relatively recently that L2 education researchers began to recognize the importance of exploring the cognitive dimensions of teachers' thoughts, attitudes and decisions, and how they may affect the nature of instruction. Research on L2 teacher cognition started to appear in the 1990s, the number of studies increasing towards the end of the decade, and continuing to do so in the new millennium. In his review of research on language teacher cognition, Borg (2003) notes that between 1976 and 2002, 64 studies have been published in this field. Most of the research does not examine teacher cognition in relation to a specific curricular area, but focuses on more general processes such as knowledge growth and change or planning and decision making.

In terms of research design, data collection methods and the number of teachers involved, the studies are diverse. Many (e.g. Johnson 1996; Borg 1998) provide detailed case studies of individual teachers while others (e.g. Richards, Tung et al. 1992; Peacock 2001) report on large scale surveys of teachers' beliefs. Methods of data collection utilized in these studies include questionnaires (e.g. MacDonald, Badger et al. 2001), teachers' retrospective commentaries on their instructional decisions (e.g. Farrell 1999), repertory grid data (e.g. Sendan and Roberts 1998), video based stimulated recall (e.g. Woods, 1996), interviews (e.g. Borg 2001) and classroom observations of teacher's practices (e.g. Borg 1999). (See also Kostopoulou 2005).

Teachers' beliefs in relation to classroom practice are by far the most researched theme in L2 teacher cognition research. A particular focus of this theme has been on teachers' decision making. Gatbonton's (1999) study, relating to the patterns of pedagogical knowledge of seven experienced ESL teachers in the USA, revealed that teachers' thoughts and decisions related largely to language concerns (such as explaining new vocabulary and creating contexts for meaningful language use). In contrast, Nunan's (1992) study of the interactive decisions of nine ESL teachers in Australia found that

teachers' decisions related little to language concerns. Issues of classroom management such as the pacing and timing of lessons, the amount of teacher talk and the quality of their instructions and explanations to the students appeared to be more of a concern for the teachers in this study. The difference between the results of the two studies – perhaps explained by the difference in teaching context – draws attention to the varied nature of teachers' instructional decisions and the extent to which teachers can differ in making such decisions.

Several studies have highlighted the impact of social, psychological and environmental factors such as school requirements, society's expectations, state policies, mandated curriculum, the practice of peers, workload and the availability of resources that have affected teachers' practice in the classroom. Such external factors were seen to play a key role in teachers' decisions, planning and instructional content for the six ESL teachers of beginning adult migrants in Burns' (1996) study. Focusing on the relationships between the classroom practice of three novice ESL teachers in Canada and the pedagogical knowledge they obtained during teacher education, Spada and Massey (1992) found that such contextual factors may have been responsible for the differences between teachers' principles and practices. Crookes & Arakaki (1999) discovered that difficult conditions and heavy workloads had a powerful impact on the pedagogical decisions that teachers made. Teachers in their study who worked approximately 50 hours a week were seen to opt for instructional practices that were suitable for the context, even if this was at the expense of conflicting with the teachers' beliefs. Johnson (1996) also reports on a preservice teacher on a practicum who struggled with contextual demands that were incompatible with her own beliefs about teaching. Richards and Pennington (1998) describe how a group of first year teachers in Hong Kong attempted – without success – to implement communicative principles by fighting against peer pressure to conform, large classes, unmotivated students, examination pressures and resistance to new ways of learning (Zacharias 2003).

The relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices has been highlighted in several studies. Woods (1996), identified 'hotspots' in the data from the eight case studies of teachers in Canada, which eventually came to be resolved through experience and expertise, indicating the evolving nature of teachers' beliefs assumptions and knowledge over time. Woods claims:

That each teacher has an individual system of interwoven beliefs, assumptions and knowledge, a system which has evolved in an individual and organic fashion when aspects of that teacher's

BAK have interacted with experience, especially experiences that resulted in a conflict with the BAK's current state.

A study by Breen et al (2001) also illuminates the complex relationship between beliefs and practice. This study involved observations and elicitation procedures, at both an individual and group level, between the practices and principles of eighteen teachers in Australia. They found that although at an individual level teachers have unique configurations of practices and principles, at a group level, several pedagogical principles were identified as common to all teachers. For example, while all teachers believed in the need to cater to individual differences in students, the way in which the teachers applied this principle was different, with some teachers providing different levels of worksheets while others provided both oral and visual input and still assessed students individually when they were ready.

In a more recent study, Basturkmen, Loewen, and Ellis (2004) found evidence of incongruence between L2 teachers' stated beliefs and their classroom practices related to form-focused instruction. These inconsistencies related mainly to when it was appropriate to focus on form during a meaning-focused lesson and the type of error correction techniques to be employed. Basturkmen et al indicate that it may be better to view the stated beliefs of teachers to be "potentially conflictual rather than inherently inconsistent" (Basturkmen in Zacharia 2003), suggesting that the differences between beliefs and practices are challenges that teachers need to resolve. This follows from several reports of incongruence between teachers' stated beliefs and observed (or reported) practices in mainstream education (see Fang 1996). As Fang notes, such inconsistencies are not unexpected due to the demands and complexities of classroom life which constrain teachers' abilities to provide instruction that aligns perfectly with their beliefs.

Borg's (Borg 1998; Borg 1998; Borg 1999; Borg 1999; Borg 1999; Borg 2001) in-depth case studies of EFL teachers in private language schools in Malta provide key insights into how teachers' beliefs about grammar affect their practices. Differences were highlighted between teachers' beliefs and practices. For example, teachers were seen to provide explicit grammar instruction even when they did not believe that it would be successful or effective in promoting learning (Borg 1998). Teachers were seen to be eclectic in their choice of teaching approach, and an individual teacher may adopt principles of contradictory approaches in her teaching (Borg 1999). This reflects the findings from mainstream educational research where teachers were found to use both behaviourist and

constructivist teaching approaches. Borg (1999) also explored the role of teachers' knowledge of grammatical terminology or metalanguage in shaping their instructional decisions. Teachers' confidence of their own knowledge appeared to be a key factor. He describes how a teacher who was confident of his own knowledge of metalanguage was willing to do unplanned impromptu grammar lessons, based on students' questions for clarification. A less confident teacher was seen to rarely conduct grammar work, and in fact never did so, unless he was fully prepared.

This review of the research has highlighted the complex cognitive dimension of teachers' beliefs and has shed light on the intricate relationship between beliefs and practice. Such an understanding helps us to see teachers not as simply implementers of a curriculum, but as practitioners whose knowledge, thoughts, beliefs and behaviour interact in complex ways.

The existing research on L2 teacher beliefs has been limited in several ways. In terms of context, much of the research has been conducted in Western or developed countries with mainly native speaking teachers of the target language teaching small groups of motivated adult learners in either private language schools or at university level. As English is taught by far more non-native speakers than their native speaking counterparts, and as there are more EFL learners than ESL learners, the existing research is not fully representative of the large majority of language teaching settings across the world. Due to such contextual gaps in the literature, Borg (2003) asserts there is an imperative need for research into the beliefs of teachers in other less developed, non-Western contexts, who are non-native speakers of the target language. He also notes that little has been researched about the beliefs of teachers who teach a prescribed curriculum to students in state school settings in large classes of mixed ability learners who are not necessarily learning the language out of choice.

The studies that examined teacher change as a result of training focused mainly on pre-service teachers enrolled in initial teacher training courses such as the British Post Graduate Certificate of Education. A few studies involved in-service teacher education, but these were limited to practicing teachers following a university master's degree course. Another form of in-service teacher development is school-based in-house professional development, which is especially common in less developed, non-Western contexts. A search of the literature revealed that no studies in the L2 education field have investigated

the cognitive and behavioural changes that arise as a result of such less formal professional development activities.

Furthermore, much of the research on beliefs has focused only on self reported beliefs through questionnaires and interviews, with only a few studies investigating whether these beliefs are put into practice in the classroom. Similarly, analyses of belief change have focused on mainly cognitive change, measured through questionnaires and interviews. Self report instruments on their own cannot always be expected to provide a realistic picture of what teachers really believe and how they truly behave in their teaching situations. If change is to be adequately measured, it is essential, as Borg (2003) notes, that behavioural as well as cognitive change is investigated as one kind of change does not guarantee changes in the other. It also needs to be noted that while teacher cognition research describes the cognitive aspects of teachers, the implications of its findings for teacher training and development have been often neglected (Borg, 2003). Consideration needs to be given to how the findings of such studies can be utilised in teacher education programmes, so as to make the best use of the research.

## **15. Research into Teachers' Beliefs about Teaching Reading Strategies**

Diverse studies on teachers beliefs were found in the literature but only a few of them express the relationship between teachers' beliefs and the reading skill in particular. Among this studies : Foertsch (1998), Liang et al (1998), Richardson et al (1991), Anderson (1999), Zacharia (2003), Kostopoulou (2005) and recently Nga (2009) ; this section is devoted to speak about the main studies done about teachers' beliefs and teaching reading.

The impact of teacher cognition in terms of reading strategies has been recognized significantly by many educational researchers. Foertsch (1998) collected the qualitative data from a local evaluative study about teachers' beliefs about reading and reading instruction. The participants in this study were teachers from primary school to middle school level. He found out some concerns of elementary teachers. These elementary teachers in his study believed that they should emphasize decoding within the context of a story. In middle school level, the teachers believed that good readers had many different strategies and were able to monitor their own comprehension, and no single approach works for everyone so students should be able to respond personally and critically and make connections with a variety of texts.

Liang et al (1998) carried out a study into reading problems and strategies from teacher's perspective. Their study aimed to find out what one experienced teacher thought were the main reading problems among her primary school pupils and how she helped them cope with their reading problems. It was an initial study to find out whether the in-service teacher was aware of the types of reading strategies she could use to resolve her pupils' reading problems and the reasons why she employed certain approaches and strategies to tackle the problems she had identified. Liang et al also said that there appeared to be a link between one's background (both academic and social) and the strategies employed to teach and handle reading in the classroom. The study was based on one case study and it was far-fetched to make any generalizations about reading problems and associated strategies for other teachers. Nevertheless the initial findings might still be useful for both teacher trainers and curriculum designers in order to provide the potential of teacher training for ELT in teacher training institutions.

Richardson et al (1991) studied the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices in reading comprehension instruction. The study, dealing with teachers from grade 4, 5 and 6, used a beliefs interview technique borrowed from anthropology. Predictions about teaching practices were made from the belief interview of 39 teachers and were related to practices observed in their classrooms. The study demonstrated that in most cases, the beliefs of teachers in this sample related to their classroom practices in the teaching of reading comprehension. However, there are some exceptions. Their study explored a situation in which the teachers' beliefs did not relate to her practices. They also suggested that the teacher was in the process of changing beliefs and practices, but that the changes in beliefs were preceding changes in practices.

Anderson (1999) told anecdotes of personal life experiences that had influenced his thinking about teaching, learning and reading in a second language. In his book, his teacher-colleagues and their students explained their experiences, attitudes and beliefs about teaching reading to learners in academic focus programs. He also provided us the opportunities to explore our own beliefs through reflecting, experimenting and learners' responses to the teaching strategies offered. He outlined the theoretical underpinnings of the teaching strategy and its importance in a reading program for second language learners. To this he added a treasure trove of teaching suggestions and activities for each of the recommended strategies. These were detailed guidelines for teaching sequences that

scaffold learners' development of effective reading skills and strategies for academic purposes. The teaching strategies instructed learners quite explicitly on the purpose and value of the reading strategy or skill, supported learners as they applied it, and helped them to evaluate its effectiveness for themselves. Anderson's teacher—colleagues commented candidly on the effectiveness of these teaching strategies for their own learners.

Overall, there have been a number of studies into teachers' beliefs about reading strategies. However, there has been little research into teachers' beliefs about teaching reading strategies. This is the gap that the current thesis study tries to bridge. By using O'Malley and Chamot's scheme to investigate teachers' beliefs about teaching reading strategies and their classroom practices, this study hopes to add further evidence to the small but growing body of research on this topic.

The aims of studies vary as well as the results to some extent, but all of them carry out one main belief which is: teachers who are willing to explore their beliefs, and how their beliefs relate to practice and the professional knowledge base, can capitalize on the beliefs they hold to promote students' intellectual growth, autonomy and reciprocity, and equity in their classrooms. Moreover, they create spaces for their own growth as they identify and revise beliefs that do not serve them, their students, or their schools. However, the next chapter is devoted to shed a light on changing teachers' beliefs.

## **16.How Teachers' Beliefs Change**

Whitney (in Nashiaa2006: V) says:

Change has a considerable psychological impact on the human mind. To the fearful it is threatening because it means that things may get worse. To the hopeful it is encouraging because things may get better. To the confident it is inspiring because the challenge exists to make things better

This quotation is the best way to explain the importance of change. There is an inherent tension in the field of teacher beliefs between the call for teachers to habitually confront and revise their beliefs and the need for teachers to identify and preserve beliefs that serve them well. On the one hand, at some point teachers inevitably have some maladaptive beliefs because the nature of childhood, the demands of society, and the

curriculum change. On the other hand, there is an assumption in the literature, particularly with regard to beliefs about diverse students and best practice, that teachers' beliefs are bad and need to be changed. The danger of this thinking is that in order to protect their sense of self as good persons and as effective and altruistic teachers, teachers may defensively hold on to beliefs that do not serve their students. What appears to be a dichotomy here need not be. What teachers need to be encouraged to do is honestly face their beliefs in their entirety, evaluating which beliefs serve them, their content, and their students and which do not.

The question is what teachers should do when they confront beliefs that do not work anymore. The malleability, or persistence, of beliefs and ways to bring about belief change are highly debated issues. In general, the more beliefs are tied to a teacher's sense of self, the more they will resist change. Literature in the field of teacher education often suggests that the ideal conditions for belief change include: 1) bringing pre-existing beliefs to consciousness, 2) creating conditions in which pre-existing beliefs break down, 3) helping teachers to judge the conflict as challenging rather than threatening, and 4) providing teachers with the necessary time to reflect on their beliefs and reconcile them with the field and their current teaching context (Davis, 2003).

Mere awareness of beliefs may not be motivating enough to create change. Nearly all theories of conceptual change would argue that there needs to be some cognitive dissonance by which teachers see their beliefs do not work given serving a specific student population, teaching a specific concept, or enacting desired outcomes. Dissonance challenges teachers by forcing them to face failures, however small. When studying adaptive teaching Lyn Corno and colleagues describe how adaptive teachers face dissonance and learn from it. Corno contends adaptive teaching involves monitoring which students are struggling and identifying the sources of the struggle. She argues that failures can have meaning and can transform teaching. In some cases, student failure can point to beliefs teachers have that are holding students back. Can teachers reframe failure to help themselves grow professionally? By thinking of students' struggles as "functional failures" (teachers can modify what they are doing to help their students learn and, in doing so, help themselves to work more effectively with all students and their subject matter. What makes this so hard, according to Michelle Gregoire Gill, is helping teachers learn to interpret failure (or educational reform) as a challenge and an opportunity for growth rather than as a threat. (Davis, 2003)



Perhaps the most challenging parts for administrators and teacher educators are building in the time and providing teachers with the tools necessary to engage in productive reflection. Elizabeth Davis describes the ways reflection on beliefs can go awry and makes three recommendations. First, teachers should be encouraged to move beyond describing what they see and experience and to analyzing what is happening in their classrooms. Second, teachers should be encouraged to think about problems from an alternate perspective, particularly their students. Third, to put an end to dichotomous thinking, teachers should be encouraged to integrate what may feel like competing tensions and create space for new solutions. Fundamentally, doing so entails a shift from either-or to both-and thinking. In other words, instead of teachers feeling like they have to choose between following their beliefs or participating in reform, when reform is important, teachers should seek ways to align their beliefs with the reform. (Davis, 2003)

## **Conclusion**

This section was an attempt to organize the theoretical framework of the research as well as to answer the following question: Do teachers use a theoretical framework in their approach to teaching in general and teaching reading strategies in particular? Having reviewed the literature about teachers' beliefs, it can be argued that the extent to which teachers adopt new instructional practices in their classroom relates closely to the degree of alignment between their personal beliefs and the assumptions underlying innovative teaching programmes or methods. On this basis, understanding teachers' beliefs is important in understanding teachers' current classroom practices. This is what led us to decide to conduct a descriptive study to explore teachers' beliefs about their day to day practice in foreign language teaching.

## **Chapter Two: The Reading Skill**

### **Introduction**

Nowadays, people within academic environment are debating the essential role of improving Receptive Skills considering them to be the most important elements of developing and mastering communicative competence in learning language either in the classroom or in everyday life, reading among these high valued skills is being considered as major key activity to learn easily target language. This chapter aims at discussing Reading from a general view including, definition, the reading process, reading theories, models of reading and finally reading Strategies.

### **1. Definition of Reading**

Reading has been subject to a huge debate. Every aspect pertaining to its meaning, development, importance in language learning and teaching, has been thoroughly scrutinized through decades of research. For instance, providing an accurate agreed on definition of the word READING has always been a source of controversy. Though, many researchers define it in a single sentence definition as “the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret this information appropriately.” (Grabe and Stoller, 2002: 9); others, claim that it is quite difficult to offer one precise and standard definition for the concept.

Smith (1985), an outstanding figure in reading theories, asserts that giving a specific definition to the term is merely not possible in fear of an “oversimplification” of such a complex process as reading. Instead, he is inclined towards looking for a description and an analysis of the word because it has a “multiplicity of meanings” depending on the situation in which the reading event occurs. By “reading situation”, Smith intends three elements: what is being read (material), by whom (reader) and especially why or what for (purpose).

Nuttall (1982), another specialist in the field, is in concord with Smith. She maintains that assigning reading a unique definition is not an easy task because there may be as many interpretations as there are people. Nevertheless, she categorizes the definitions usually yielded to the term in three groups:

- Reading signifies sounding out or vocalizing letters and words.
- Reading means identifying or recognizing words and their meanings.
- Reading involves interpreting or making sense of print (Nuttall 1982:2)

Pang et al (2003) have defined reading as a “complex activity that involves both perception and thought” (Pang et al 2003: 6). Furthermore, reading is seen as a complex process of problem solving, which involves working to build up a sense from a text, and not just a sense from the words and sentences written on the page, but it goes to ideas, memories and knowledge evoked by those words and sentences (Schoenbach et al 1999). So arriving at one final common definition is impossible because reading is investigated from different perspectives and views as stated by Urquhart and Weir (1998: 13):

We all know what reading is. And many of us have suffered, at some time or the other, from the type of bore who stops any argument or discussion with 'Ah, it depends on what you mean by.... So it is with some reluctance that we begin this part with an attempt to define reading, to say what we mean by the term. Our excuse is that people do use the term in different ways, and that while this may be permissible when everybody is conscious of the differences, on occasions it can cause real confusion and difficulty.

Thus a specific definition of reading needs to examine reading within two perspectives: reading as a process and reading as a product. It can be noticed that each definition above deals with one aspect or another of the reading process. However, there is a ‘spongy’ description that absorbs the good out of them all. It is a dynamic process in which the reader interacts with the text to construct meaning. Inherent in constructing meaning is the reader’s ability to activate prior knowledge, use reading strategies and adapt to the reading situation.

## 2. Reading Purposes

Traditionally, the purpose of learning to read in a language has been to have access to the literature written in that language. In language instruction, reading materials have traditionally been chosen from literary texts that represent "higher" forms of culture. This approach assumes that students learn to read a language by studying its vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure, not by actually reading it. In this approach, lower level learners read only sentences and paragraphs generated by textbook writers and instructors. The reading of authentic materials is limited to the works of great authors and reserved for upper level students who have developed the language skills needed to read them.

The communicative approach to language teaching has given instructors a different understanding of the role of reading in the language classroom and the types of texts that can be used in instruction. When the goal of instruction is communicative competence, everyday materials such as train schedules, newspaper articles, and travel and tourism Web sites become appropriate classroom materials, because reading them is one way communicative competence is developed. Instruction in reading and reading practice thus become essential parts of language teaching at every level. Reading is an activity with a purpose. A person may read in order to gain information or verify existing knowledge, or in order to critique a writer's ideas or writing style. A person may also read for enjoyment, or to enhance knowledge of the language being read. The purpose(s) for reading guide the reader's selection of texts as well as the appropriate strategies.

Wallace (1992: 6) specifies three general reading purposes as: reading for survival, reading for learning and reading for pleasure whereas Grabe and Stoller (2002: 13) emphasized seven purposes related only to learning and acquisition; these purposes according to them are: reading to search for simple information, reading to skim quickly, reading to learn from texts, reading to integrate information, reading to write (or search for information needed for writing), reading to critique texts and reading for general comprehension. Whatever the purpose of reading is, understanding the purpose of reading is the only solution to have good selection of strategies and materials as well.

The purpose for reading also determines the appropriate approach to reading comprehension. A person who needs to know whether she can afford to eat at a particular restaurant needs to comprehend the pricing information provided on the menu, but does not need to recognize the name of every appetizer listed. A person reading poetry for enjoyment

needs to recognize the words the poet uses and the ways they are put together, but does not need to identify main idea and supporting details. (See also Harmer 2001, Harmer 2007)

### **3. Reading Theories**

Just like teaching methodology, reading theories have had their shifts and transitions. Starting from the traditional view which focused on the printed form of a text and moving to the cognitive view that enhanced the role of background knowledge in addition to what appeared on the printed page; they ultimately culminated in the metacognitive view which is now in vogue. It is based on the control and manipulation that a reader can have on the act of comprehending a text. Vaezi (2006) in an article entitled 'theories of reading' discussed them as three categories: the traditional view, the cognitive view and the metacognitive view.

#### **3.1. The Traditional View**

According to Dole et al. (1991), in the traditional view of reading, novice readers acquire a set of hierarchically ordered sub-skills that sequentially build toward comprehension ability. Having mastered these skills, readers are viewed as experts who comprehend what they read. Readers are passive recipients of information in the text. Meaning resides in the text and the reader has to reproduce meaning (Dole in Vaezi, 2006). According to Nunan (1991), reading in this view is basically a matter of decoding a series of written symbols into their aural equivalents in the quest for making sense of the text. He referred to this process as the '*bottom-up*' view of reading (Nunan in Vaezi, 2006). McCarthy (1999) has called this view '*outside-in*' processing; referring to the idea that meaning exists in the printed page and is interpreted by the reader then taken in. This model of reading has almost always been under attack as being insufficient and defective for the main reason that it relies on the formal features of the language, mainly words and structure. Although it is possible to accept this rejection for the fact that there is over-reliance on structure in this view, it must be confessed that knowledge of linguistic features is also necessary for comprehension to take place. To counteract over-reliance on form in the traditional view of reading, the cognitive view was introduced (McCarthy in Vaezi, 2006).

### 3.2. The Cognitive View

The '*top-down*' model is in direct opposition to the '*bottom-up*' model. According to Nunan (1991) and Dubin and Bycina (1991), the psycholinguistic model of reading and the top-down model are in exact concordance. Goodman presented reading as a psycholinguistic guessing game, a process in which readers sample the text, make hypotheses, confirm or reject them, make new hypotheses, and so forth. Here, the reader rather than the text is at the heart of the reading process. The schema theory of reading also fits within the cognitively based view of reading. Rumelhart (1977) has described schemata as "*building blocks of cognition*" which are used in the process of interpreting sensory data, in retrieving information from memory, in organising goals and subgoals, in allocating resources, and in guiding the flow of the processing system. Rumelhart (1977) has also stated that if our schemata are incomplete and do not provide an understanding of the incoming data from the text we will have problems processing and understanding the text. Cognitively based views of reading comprehension emphasize the interactive nature of reading and the constructive nature of comprehension. Dole et al. (1991) have stated that, besides knowledge brought to bear on the reading process, a set of flexible, adaptable strategies are used to make sense of a text and to monitor ongoing understanding. (Vaezi, 2006)

### 3.3. The Metacognitive View

According to Block (1992), there is now no more debate on "*whether reading is a bottom-up, language-based process or a top-down, knowledge-based process.*" It is also no more problematic to accept the influence of background knowledge on both L1 and L2 readers. Research has gone even further to define the control readers execute on their ability to understand a text. This control, Block (1992) has referred to as metacognition. Metacognition involves thinking about what one is doing while reading. Klein et al. (1991) stated that strategic readers attempt the following while reading:

- Identifying the purpose of the reading before reading
- Identifying the form or type of the text before reading

- Thinking about the general character and features of the form or type of the text. For instance, they try to locate a topic sentence and follow supporting details toward a conclusion
- Projecting the author's purpose for writing the text (while reading it), Choosing, scanning, or reading in detail (Klein et al in Vaezi 2006)

Making continuous predictions about what will occur next, based on information obtained earlier, prior knowledge, and conclusions obtained within the previous stages. Moreover, they attempt to form a summary of what was read. Carrying out the previous steps requires the reader to be able to classify sequence, establish whole-part relationships, compare and contrast, determine cause-effect, summarise, hypothesise and predict, infer, and conclude.

## **4. Reading Models**

Reading models were mainly set to describe the way a reader uses to construct meaning from printed texts; i.e. these models aim to find out how readers translate prints into meanings. This issue has led to the raise of three main models of reading process: Bottom-up model, top-down model and Interactive model.

### **4.1. The Bottom-Up Model**

It is a view, which assumes that a reader first decodes graphic symbols into sounds in order to build up a meaning, and a sense of texts. Furthermore, this model refers to the view that reading is a process of building letters into words, words into sentences, phrases and then proceeds to the overall meaning. Some researchers in psychology claim, that this model is described as being “data driven” and these data refer to letters and words, which are written on the page. Among those who stress on this model is Gough (1985) who claims, that the bottom up processing involves a series of steps the reader has to go through i.e, a series that involve moving from a step to another one, departing from recognising the key features of every letter and then words, sentences until reaching the meaning of the text. Dechant (1991) in his words sees that The bottom up models are those models which operate on the principle that the written text is hierarchically organized (i.e., on the grapho- phonic, phonemic, syllabic, morphemic, word and sentence levels) and that the reader first

processes the smallest linguistic unit, gradually compiling the smaller units to decipher and comprehend the higher units (e.g. sentence syntax).

Clearly, in the view of this driven model, the reader seems to play a relatively passive role because the basis of bottom – up processing is the linguistic knowledge of the reader. Samuel and Kamil (1988: 31) pointed out the shortcomings of these models as follows: “Because of the lack of feedback loops in the early bottom – up models, it was difficult to account for sentence – context effects and the role of prior knowledge of text topic as facilitating variables in word recognition and comprehension.” Thus, due to this limitation, the bottom – up view of reading fell into disfavor

In sum, according to the bottom-up models of reading, the information flow is processed in a series of discrete stages, in which every stage transforms the input and then passes the recorded information on to the next higher stage for additional transformation and recoding. The reading process can be represented as: Eye looks, Words recognized, Words allocated to grammatical class and sentence structure, Sentences give meaning and Meaning leads to thinking (Davies, 1995: 58). A major drawback of these models, however, is lack of feedback, that is they provide no mechanism to allow later processing stages in the system to influence earlier ones (Samuels and Kamil, 1988). In addition, because the model emphasizes the priority of text as input, textual information tends to be seen as the sole factor which influences reading. Thus, various readers, accepting the author as authority, are expected to come up with identical interpretations of a given text. The reader is simply seen as a passive decoder of sequential graphic-phonetic-syntactic and semantic systems in that order.

## **4.2. The Top-down Model**

Unlike bottom-up model, the top-down model is a view, which assumes that a reader uses a prior knowledge and experience, as well as expectations in relation to the writer’s message during reading, in order to process information. Top-down models are described to be “concept driven”. That is to say, ideas or concepts in the mind of a reader trigger information processing during reading. As in Smith’s words, “The more you already know, the less you need to find out” (Smith, 1985, p. 15). In other words, the more readers know in advance about the topic and the text to be read, the less they need to use graphic information on the page. This kind of processing is used to interpret assumptions and draw inferences. Readers make conscious use of it when they try to see the overall purpose of the



text, or get a rough idea of the pattern of the writer's argument, in order to make a reasoned guess at the next step Nuttall (1982).

In sum, one way to differentiate between top-down and bottom-up models is that in the former, the readers start with making hypotheses and predictions and attempt to verify them by working down the printed stimuli; whereas, in the latter, the readers start with the printed stimuli and work their way up to the higher-level stages. Unlike the bottom-up approach, the top-down approach sees the reader as active, planning, decision-making individual who brings to the task of reading a wide array of information and ideas, attitude and beliefs and who coordinates a number of skills and strategies to facilitate comprehension. The top-down model is illustrated as: i) Eyes look, ii) Thinking-prediction about meaning, iii) Sample sentence as a whole to check meaning. ,iv) To check further, look at words, v) If still uncertain, study letters and vi) Back to meaning prediction. (Davies, 1995: 58)

According to Ur (1996: 138), reading means reading and understanding and according to Anderson (1999: 1) —reading is not a passive process but an active fluent process which involves the reader and the reading material in building meaning||. What is more, meaning of the reading materials does not reside on the printed page, nor it is only in the head of the reader. A synergy occurs in reading which is the combination of the words on the printed page with the reader's background knowledge and experiences. Apparently, the strong points of top – down models outnumber those of the bottom – up as the reader – the center of the reading process – proves his active role. However, for some researchers, these models still reveal certain shortcomings. Eskey (1988: 93) believed that: in making the perfectly valid point that fluent reading is primarily a cognitive process; they tend to deemphasize the perceptual and decoding dimensions of that process. Due to limitations of both bottom – up and top – down models, a new and more insightful reading process has been proposed under the name of interactive model. Figure 1(Vecca et al , 2006: 26) illustrates the processing in both above types.

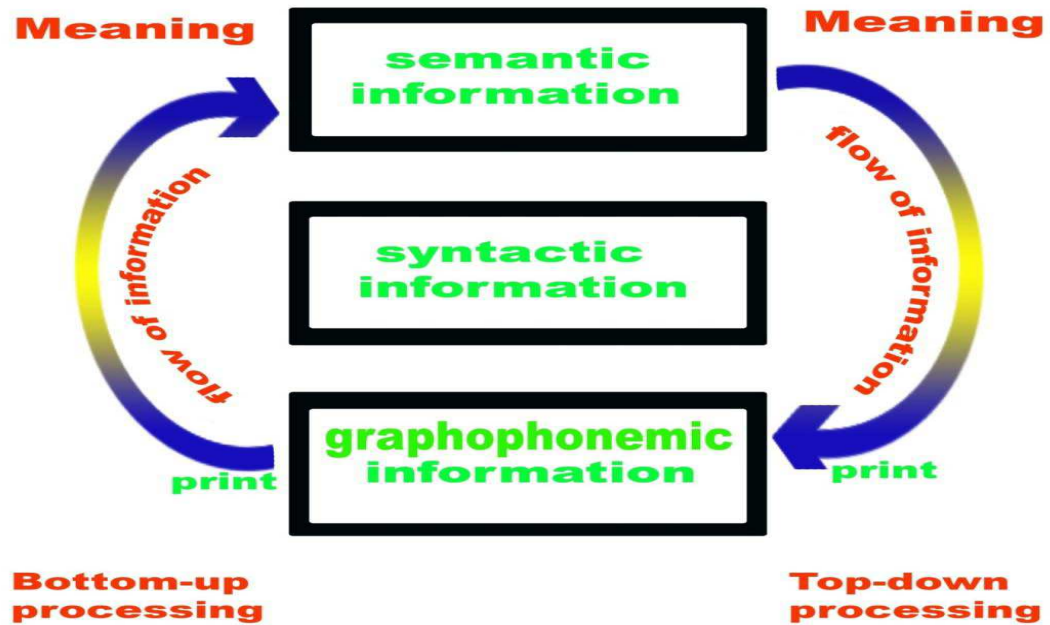


Figure 1: The Bottom-up and the Top-down Model Processing  
 Vacca (1996).

Figure2. Vacca 1996 in Vacca et al (2006: 26)

### 4.3. The Interactive Model

Interactive model, attempts to make the valid insights of bottom-up and top-down models work together. It seeks to account for both of bottom-up and top-down processing. This model suggests that reading process is initiated by formulating hypotheses about meaning and by decoding letters and words (see figure 3. Vacca, 1996 in Vacca et al, 2006: 26). According to Rumelhart (1977), reading is an interactive process, which includes both perceptual and cognitive process. In other words, this process consists of an interaction between a set of a variety of orthographic, syntactic lexical and semantic information, until the meaning is reached. In addition to that, Kamil and Pearson (1979) assert that readers during reading, result passive or active reading, depending on the strength of their hypotheses about the meaning of the reading texts, and topics ie ; if readers bring a great deal of knowledge to the text, their hypotheses will be strong, and that they will process the text actively. However, passive reading results when readers show a little experience and knowledge to the material. This occurs, because they depend much more on the print itself for information cues.

Many researchers agree that in interactive models, different processes are thought to be responsible for providing information that is shared with other processes. The

information obtained from each type of processing is combined to determine the most appropriate interpretation of the printed pages. To sum up, the arrival and popularity of interactive models show that interactive models can maximize the strengths and minimize the weaknesses of both bottom – up and top –down models. In addition to these metaphorical models of reading, Grabe and Stoller (2002) discuss other types of models calling them ‘specific models of reading’, including: psycholinguistic guessing model, interactive compensatory model, word recognition models and finally simple view of reading model

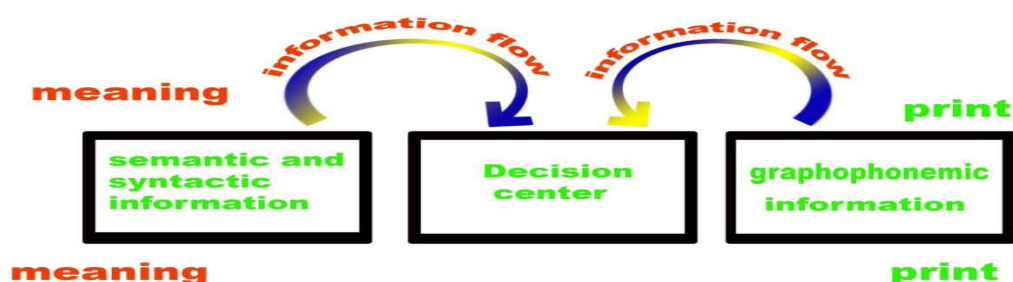


Figure 2: The Interactive Model Processing  
Vacca (1996).

Figure 3. (Vecca, 1996 in Vecca et al, 2006: 26)

## 5. Types of Reading

The literature is rich of studies about types of reading; some classified it according to the reading purpose, other according to the reading process itself. Many researcher use the term type of reading and reading strategy as the same concept. In this section, we will discuss two important types of reading in terms of purpose in learning the L2.

## **5.1. Intensive Reading**

An early definition of intensive reading, states that its purpose is “ to take a text, study it line by line, referring at every moment to our dictionary and our grammar, comparing, analyzing, translating, and retaining every expression that it contains” (Palmer, 1921, in Day and Bamford, 1998: 5). Most classroom instructors would define intensive reading more broadly, as did Aebersold and Field (1997). They assume that intensive reading is reading carefully, and thoroughly for maximum comprehension in which teachers provide direction and help before, sometimes, during and after reading followed by some exercises that require student to work on various types of texts.

## **5.2. Extensive Reading**

Day (1993: 19) defined extensive reading in very basic terms: “the teaching of reading through reading. There is no overt focus on teaching reading. Rather, it is assumed that the best way for students to learn to read is by reading a great deal of comprehensible material”

Palmer (1964) described extensive reading as “rapidly reading book after book.” Also, he contrasted it explicitly with intensive reading or “to take a text and study it line by line” (Palmer, 1964, p.111, cited in Day & Bamford, 1998: 5). These definitions focus on quantity of materials read. Another important aspect of the extensive reading definition is connected to student choice and pleasure in reading. (West, 1931, cited in Day& Bamford 1998) saw that the purpose of extensive reading is to read in order to reach enjoyment. Finally, Aebersold & Field (1997) made a focus on reading for quantity and overall meaning with students’ choice and their role in raising the ability of improving their ability of reading.

## **6. Characteristics of an Effective Reader:**

Research has generally shown that an effective reader knows how to use reading strategies that work for him / her. According to Wassman and Rinsky (1993), an effective reader needs an understanding of the reading process and an understanding of how to go about reading different types of printed information. In this way, a second or foreign learner can practice techniques that will help to succeed in becoming an effective reader.

Besides, they also point out two necessary ingredients for an effective reader, i.e. the willingness to change reading habits that limit the learner's reading ability and the willingness to practice. Apart from this, there are other factors helping second or foreign language readers to become effective:

- Organize properly for reading and study: this requirement forces the reader to understand the importance of disciplined study so that they can appropriately time to devote to reading and study
- Improve the concentration: actually concentration is important to learning in general and learning in particular for the fact that readers need to comprehend the printed information.
- Maintain confidence: confident reading is chiefly the result of preparation. Without this, readers can't become effective readers (Wissman and Rinsky in Nga, 2009) (see also Schoenbach et al, 1999: 39)

## **7. The Role of the Teacher in the Reading Class**

Teachers now have many roles to play in foreign language classrooms; they are teachers, facilitators, motivators, evaluators, agent of socialization and importantly strategy trainers. However, besides teaching the content, teachers, should teach strategies, explain them and train students to use them. Also, as teachers of language, we should train our students to determine their goals, choose the appropriate strategy and the suitable reading material as well. Confirming that, Clarke and Silberstein (1977:135) say:

It becomes the responsibility of the teacher to train students to determine their own goals and strategies for a particular reading...to encourage students to take risk, to guess, to ignore their impulses to be always correct.(Clarke and Silberstein in Silberstein 1994:10)

Brindly (1994) in her chapter about teaching reading, adds: "English teachers ought not to have the sole responsibility for the development of reading. Nevertheless, English teachers do have a very important and particular role to play. They are responsible above all for the development of active and critical readers "(Brindly, 1994: 80).

## **8. Learning and Reading Strategies**

Before discussing reading strategies, let us make shed a light on learning strategies.

### **8.1. Defining Learning Strategies**

Learning strategies are defined as specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques such as seeking out conversation partners, or giving oneself encouragement to tackle a difficult language task - used by students to enhance their own learning (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992 in Oxford 2003: 2). In other words, they are mental a communicative procedure learners use in order to learn and use a language. When the learner consciously chooses strategies that fit his or her learning style and the L2 task at hand, these strategies become a useful toolkit for active, conscious, and purposeful self-regulation of learning. Language Learning Strategies have been classified by many scholars (Wenden and Rubin 1987; O'Malley et al. 1985; Oxford 1990; Stern 1992; Ellis 1994, etc.).

For example, Rubin (1987) classified language learning strategies as Learning Strategies, Communication Strategies and Social Strategies. Oxford (1990: 9) divides language learning strategies into two main classes, direct and indirect. The former consists of memory, cognitive and compensation strategies while the latter includes metacognitive, affective and social strategies. However, Oxford's classification of learning strategies is somewhat complicated and confusing as she treats compensation strategies as a direct type of learning strategies and memory strategies as separate ones from cognitive strategies.

According to Stern (1992:262-266), there are five main language learning strategies. These are Management and Planning Strategies, Cognitive Strategies, Communicative - Experiential Strategies, Interpersonal Strategies, Affective Strategies. The framework that has been most useful and generally accepted is O'Malley and Chamot (1990). In O'Malley and Chamot's framework, three major types of strategies named as metacognitive, cognitive and social/ affective are distinguished in accordance with the information processing model, on which their research is based. The subtypes of these strategies were identifies by O'Malley and Chamot on the basis of their several descriptive studies on learning strategies used by second language learners.

## **8.2. The Importance of Strategies in the Learning Process**

Knowledge of strategies is important because if one is conscious of the processes underlying the learning that s/he is involved in, then the learning will be more effective. The fact showed that learners who are taught learning strategies are more highly motivated than those who are not. However, not all learners automatically know which strategies work best for them. For this reason, explicit strategy training, coupled with thinking about how one goes about learning, and experimenting with different strategies, can lead to more effective learning. Oxford (1990: 1) argues that strategies are important for two reasons in the first place, strategies "...are tools for active, self – directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence. Secondly, learners who have developed appropriate learning strategies have greater self – confidence and learn more effectively. In her book, she identifies twelve key features of strategies. According to Oxford, language learning strategies:

- [1] contribute to the main goal, communicative competence
- [2] allow learners to become more self – directed
- [3] expand the role of teachers
- [4] support learning both directly and indirectly

## **8.3. Definition of Reading Strategies**

Various views in the area of FL and L2 reading strategies have defined reading strategies depending on different perspectives. Some base their views of identifying reading strategies on what the various groups of readers are using of reading strategies whereas, others claim to identify them according to what they find and result through empirical and theoretical research ie ; what strategies are required to be used and applied depending on the learners' needs. In the context of reading comprehension, strategies can be defined as deliberate actions that readers take to establish and enhance their comprehension Jimenez et al (1996).

Garner (1987) defines reading strategies as an action or series of actions employed in order to construct meaning (Garner in Heisat, A et al, 2009: 311). Oxford and Crookall (1989) define strategies as learning techniques behaviours, problem-solving or study skills which make learning more effective and efficient (Oxford and Crookall in Heisat, A et al, 2009: 311).

Cohen (1986) defined Reading Strategies as a mental process chosen by the reader consciously, in order to achieve certain reading tasks. In addition to that, Block (1986) believes that RS are a set of methods and techniques used by readers, so that they can achieve success in reading. According to (Mcnamara, 2007: 6), reading strategies refer to the different cognitive and behavioural actions readers use, under the purpose of achieving comprehension in reading. Mcnamara explains this when he says: “A reading comprehension strategy is a cognitive or behavioural action that is enacted under particular contextual conditions, with the goal of improving some aspect of comprehension. Consider a very simple-minded strategy for purposes of illustration.”

Researchers have suggested that EFL teachers have to be aware of the reading strategies and that they have to teach readers how to use different reading strategies Chamot et al (1999). In the next section, we will tackle the issue of reading strategies importance.

#### **8.4. The Importance of Reading Strategies**

Most EFL/ESL learners often show some troubles and difficulties in reading certain texts. They always struggle with some texts, and find it problematic issue to achieve comprehension, and understand the content. Many psychologists and researchers, assume that those who always struggle with their reading may lack the reading strategies that may help them to overcome their reading problems.

Many evidences have been shown the importance of reading strategies and their effective role in enhancing and developing reading comprehension. According to McNamara et al (2007), reading strategies instruction are indeed very effective for learners who show lack of knowledge in the domain of reading, as well as those with lower reading skill, and assume that they are strongly needed for these kinds of learners. To confirm that, McLaughlin and Allen (2002) say:

Good readers use comprehension strategies to facilitate the construction of meaning. These strategies include previewing, self-questioning, making connections, visualizing, knowing how words work, monitoring, summarizing, and evaluating. Researchers believe that using such strategies helps students become metacognitive readers



According to the perfection learning corporation reading strategies that research has proven to most effectively improve reading comprehension are: Previewing Text, Self-Questioning, Making Connections, Visualizing, Knowing How Words Work, Monitoring, Summarizing and Evaluating. Although, we cannot give priority to one strategy on the behalf of the other only if the purpose and the type of reading is specified. Thus, all strategies have the same value when they are used in the appropriate time to achieve a specific purpose of reading.

## **8.5. Some Reading Strategies**

Oxford (1990) has suggested six reading strategies from learning strategies. These strategies are very easy to be taught, very significant and useful ones, in order to make learners familiar with each of them. The suggested strategies are as follows: predicting, skimming, scanning, inferring, and guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words and self monitoring.

Reading comprehension strategies are seen as comprehension processes that enable readers to construct meaning from the printed page most effectively. In other words, those strategies show how readers tackle a reading task, how they interpret their reading and what they do when they do not comprehend. Many researchers have similarities in categorizing reading strategies. For example, Anderson (1999), Brantmeier (2002), Almasi (2003) and Sugirin (1999) emphasized the role of prior knowledge in reading. Brantmeier (2002) and Brown (1990) introduced skimming, scanning and guessing as effective strategies in reading. However, there are some differences in their classification. For instance, Brantmeier (2002: 1) summarizes reading strategies as follows: —The strategies may involve skimming, scanning, guessing, recognizing cognates and word families, reading for meaning, predicting, activating general knowledge, making inferences, following references, and separating main ideas from supporting ideas.

Furthermore, reading strategies can consist of evaluating content, such as agreeing or disagreeing, making an association with prior knowledge or experience, asking and answering questions, looking at the key words, using sentence structure analysis such as determining the subject, verb or object of the sentence, skipping and rereading (Almasi, 2003; Sugirin, 1999). Clearly, not all strategies are of equal effectiveness due to the different types of reading texts and tasks, and reading strategy use by each reader. Brown (1990: 3) provides strategies that can help students read more quickly and effectively:

- Previewing: reviewing titles, section headings and photo captions to get a sense of the structure and content of a reading selection.
- Predicting: using knowledge of the subject matter to make predictions about content and vocabulary and check comprehension, using knowledge of the text type and purpose to make predictions about discourse structure, using knowledge about the author to make predictions about writing style, vocabulary and content.
- Skimming and scanning: using a quick survey of the text to get the main idea, identify text structure, confirm or question predictions.
- Guessing from context: using prior knowledge of the subject and the ideas in the text as clues to the meanings of unknown words, instead of stopping to look them up.
- Paraphrasing: stopping at the end of a selection to check comprehension by restarting the information and ideas in the text

Anderson (1999: 4) introduces six strategies for consideration when teaching reading calling them ‘**ACTIVE**’ which means: **A** Activate prior knowledge **C** Cultivate vocabulary **T** Teach for comprehension **I** Increase reading rate **V** Verify reading strategies **E** Evaluate progress Effective language instructors show students how they can adjust their reading behavior to deal with a variety of situations, types of input, and reading purposes. They help students develop a set of reading strategies and match appropriate strategies to each reading situation. Finally, these strategies appear to be effective since they help language learners enhance the reading ability.

## 8.6. Classification of Reading Skills

A large number of skills taxonomies of native speaker readers exists, some based on empirical grounds and others on armchair speculations of researchers. There is little consensus in the terminology used to describe the skills, as well as the content of taxonomies. Urquhart and Weir (1998: 90) give a selection of typical taxonomies as summarized in table.1.

The Researcher	The List of Strategies
<b>Davies (1968)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identifying word meaning.</li> <li>▪ Drawing Inferences.</li> <li>▪ Identifying writer's techniques &amp; recognizing the mood of the passage.</li> <li>▪ Finding answers to questions.</li> </ul>
<b>Lunzer et al. (1979)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Word meaning.</li> <li>▪ Words in context.</li> <li>▪ Literal comprehension.</li> <li>▪ Drawing inferences from single strings.</li> <li>▪ Drawing inferences from multiple strings.</li> <li>▪ Interpretation of metaphor.</li> <li>▪ Finding salient or main ideas.</li> <li>▪ Forming judgments.</li> </ul>
<b>Munby (1987)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recognizing the script of a language.</li> <li>▪ Deducing the meaning and use of unfamiliar lexical items.</li>   <li>▪ Understanding explicitly stated information.</li> <li>▪ Understanding information when not explicitly stated.</li> <li>▪ Understanding conceptual meaning.</li> <li>▪ Understanding the communicative value of sentences.</li> <li>▪ Understanding relations within the sentence.</li> <li>▪ Understanding relations between parts of texts through lexical cohesion devices.</li> <li>▪ Interpreting text by going outside it.</li> <li>▪ Recognizing indicators in discourse.</li> <li>▪ Identifying the main point of information in discourse.</li> <li>▪ Distinguishing the main idea from detail.</li> <li>▪ Extracting salient points to summarize (the text, an idea).</li> <li>▪ Selective extraction of relevant points from text.</li> <li>▪ Basic inference skills.</li> <li>▪ Skimming.</li> <li>▪ Scanning to locate specifically located information.</li> <li>▪ Transcoding information in the diagrammatic display</li> </ul>
<b>Grabe (1991)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Automatic recognition skills.</li> <li>▪ Vocabulary and structural knowledge.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Formal discourse structure knowledge.</li> <li>▪ Content/world background knowledge.</li> <li>▪ Synthesis and evaluation.</li> <li>▪ Metacognitive knowledge and skills monitoring.</li> </ul>
--	---

Table.1. Taxonomies of reading strategies (Mebarki, 2008: 63 – 65)

The pedagogical value of all these lists of skills is that they could offer a means of devising test tasks and items, and of isolating reading skills to be tested. In addition, they make it possible to diagnose the reader's problems, with the view of identifying remediation (Alderson, 2000: 11). Based on the think aloud protocols of six ESL and three native-English speaking university-level students, Block (1986) categorizes their strategies as general (comprehension-gathering and comprehension-monitoring) and local (attempts to understand specific linguistic units); this strategies are summarized in table.2.

<b>General Strategies</b>	<b>Local strategies</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anticipate content.</li> <li>• Recognize structure.</li> <li>• Integrate information.</li> <li>• Question information in the text.</li> <li>• Interpret the text.</li> <li>• Use general knowledge and associations.</li> <li>• Comment on behaviour and processes.</li> <li>• Monitor comprehension.</li> <li>• Correct behaviour.</li> <li>• React to the text.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paraphrase.</li> <li>• Reread.</li> <li>• Question meaning of clause or sentence.</li> <li>• Question meaning of word</li> <li>• Solve vocabulary problems</li> </ul>

Table.2. (Block in Mebarki.Z, 2008: 75)

Sarig (1987) classifies her foreign learners' reading moves or strategies which she gathered from their think-aloud protocols into four types (all containing "comprehension promoting moves" and "comprehension deterring moves").

Technical-aid moves are generally useful for decoding at a local level	Clarification and simplification moves show the reader's intention to clarify and/or simplify text utterances	Coherence-detecting moves demonstrate the reader's intention to produce coherence from the text	Monitoring moves are those displaying active monitoring of these processing, whether metacognitively conscious or not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Skimming</li> <li>- Scanning</li> <li>- Skipping.</li> <li>- Written key elements in the text.</li> <li>- Marking parts of text for different purposes.</li> <li>- Summarizing paragraph in the margin.</li> <li>- Using glossary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Substitutions</li> <li>- Paraphrase.</li> <li>- Circumlocutions.</li> <li>- Synonyms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Effective use of content schemata and formal schemata to predict forthcoming text.</li> <li>- Identification of people in the text and their views or actions.</li> <li>- Cumulative decoding of text meaning.</li> <li>- Relying on summaries given in the text.</li> <li>- Identification of text focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conscious change of planning and carrying out the tasks.</li> <li>- Deserting a hopeless utterance ("I don't understand that, so I'll read on").</li> <li>- Flexibility of reading rate.</li> <li>- Mistake correction.</li> <li>- Ongoing self-evaluation.</li> </ul>

Table.3. (Sarig in Mebarki.Z, 2008:75-76)

Another inventory of strategies has been proposed by Olshavsky (1976-1977) who used think aloud protocols for L1 readers. She classifies strategies under three levels:

- (i) word-related strategies which include use of context to define a word, synonym substitution, and stated failure to understand a word,
- (ii) clause-related strategies which include re-reading, inference, addition of information, personal identification, hypothesis, and stated failure to understand a clause, and
- (iii) Story-related strategy which refers to the use of information about the story. (Olshavsky in Mebarki, 2008)

## Second Language Reading Strategy Research

L2 reading research began to focus on reading strategies in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Mebarki (2008), in a recent research divides researchers in this domain into two groups. The first group believes that reading ability in L2 largely depends on proficiency in that language ; whereas the second group believes that much of what L2 readers do is the same as when they read in their L1 and that strategies that are developed in L1 can be transferred to L2 . However, L2 reading could be slower and less successful than L1 due to many reasons such as the readers' L2 proficiency and their L1 literacy. Types of texts, unknown vocabulary and unfamiliar syntax may hinder the reader from using appropriate prior knowledge to comprehend the text. Several of these studies were exploratory and descriptive in nature, based on the think-aloud reports of a small number of individual learners. They aimed at identifying relationships between certain types of reading strategies and successful and unsuccessful second language reading.

In the table below (table 4), we are going to examine a number of selected studies discussed by Mebarki (2008) that have been cited for years. This review is by no means exhaustive, but rather the selected studies serve to illustrate the difficulty involved in comparing results across studies and making generalizations concerning the role of strategies in L2 reading process for the upper levels of instruction. Indeed, the difficulty stems from the wide variety of:

- (i) participants –who are of many ages and backgrounds;
- (ii) tasks –which may be executed at the sentence level as well as the connected discourse level;
- (iii) reading passages –that vary in content or topic familiarity, difficulty level, and text type and genre,
- (iv) and research method such as think-aloud verbal reports, interviews, questionnaires, observations, and written recalls.

<b>Author</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Aim of the study</b>	<b>Research method</b>	<b>Coding scheme</b>	<b>Results</b>
<b>Hosenfeld 1977</b>	Ninth grade students learning French; 20 successful and 20 unsuccessful readers	Type of strategy use by successful and unsuccessful readers	Think aloud report for each sentence they read	Two different codes: main meaning -line and word-solving strategies.	Successful readers kept meaning of passage while assigning meaning to sentences; whereas poor readers focused on solving unknown word or phrases
<b>Honenfield 1984</b>	Two 14 years old high school students (unsuccessful readers)	Relationship between strategies of successful and unsuccessful reading	Think aloud (based on interview technique and remedial session)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Good and poor readers used different strategies</li> <li>2. Strategies can be trained</li> </ol>
<b>Block 1986</b>	9 university level ESL and native English students in remedial reading course	Comparison of the reading comprehension strategies used by first and second language readers	Think aloud reports for each sentence they read	Two different codes: general strategies and local strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More successful readers used their general knowledge, focused on overall meaning of text, integrated new information with old and differentiated main ideas from supporting points</li> <li>2. The poor reader rarely did any of the above</li> <li>3. Integrator readers responded in extensive modes while non-integrators responded in reflexive mode.</li> </ol>
<b>Sarig 1987</b>	10 high school readers (low, intermediate and high proficiency)	Contribution of L1 reading strategies and L2 proficiency to L2 reading	Think aloud reports while reading L1 and L2 texts	4 different codes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical aid</li> <li>• Clarification and simplification</li> <li>• Coherence detection</li> <li>• Monitoring moves</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Subjects transferred strategies from L1 to L2</li> <li>2. Good and poor readers used similar strategies</li> <li>3. Success or failure in reading depends on a combination of moves</li> </ol>

					<p>4. Global strategies led to both successful and unsuccessful reading comprehension</p> <p>5. Clarification and simplification strategies contributed to unsuccessful reading</p>
<b>Devine 1087</b>	20 low proficient ESL readers	Interaction between language proficiency and L2 reading	Miscue analysis		Increase in language proficiency enhanced effective strategy use
<b>Barnett 1988</b>	278 university level students	Real and perceived strategy use among university level students and its effect on comprehension	Strategy use questionnaire	<p>Two different codes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Text-level (global or top down strategies);</li> <li>• Word level (local or bottom up strategies)</li> </ul>	<p>Higher comprehension scores were obtained by participants who considered context while reading</p> <p>1. Participants who were trained in strategy use understood passages</p>
<b>Carrel 1989</b>	75 native English speakers learning Spanish; 45 native speakers of Spanish in intermediate ESL courses	Metacognitive awareness of L2 reader strategies and its relationship with comprehension	Strategy use questionnaire, multiple choice comprehension questions	Two different codes : global or top down strategies ; local or bottom up strategies	<p>1. Lower proficiency level students leaning Spanish as a foreign language used more bottom-up processing strategies.</p> <p>2. ESL advanced level students used top-down strategies</p>
<b>Anderson 1991</b>	26 Spanish speaking adult English as a second language students	Individual differences in strategy use	Reading comprehension test; reading text; think aloud reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding main ideas</li> <li>• Understanding direct statements</li> <li>• Drawing inferences</li> </ul>	<p>1. Students who used more strategies comprehend better.</p> <p>2. No significant</p>



					relationship between the amount of unique strategies and comprehension
<b>Block 1992</b>	16 college freshmen proficient and non proficient readers	Comprehension monitoring process used by first and second language readers of English	Think aloud oral reports at sentence level	Two different codes: Meaning-based (global) and word-level (local)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Different monitoring strategies used by proficient and non proficient readers. The former are more aware of the source of the problems and their approaches to solving them</li> <li>2. Less proficient readers used local strategies.</li> <li>3. More proficient readers relied on global strategies.</li> </ol>
<b>Raymond 1993</b>	43 native English readers of French	Effect of strategy training on comprehension	Written questionnaire and written recall	Top-level structure strategy	Training in strategy helped increase the amount of idea units recalled.

**Table 5. Research on Reading Strategies (Mebarki, 2008: 89-90)**

## **Conclusion**

To become an efficient and independent reader, it is important for a learner to acquire and make use of certain skills and strategies. Strategies contribute to make the act of reading more complete and more successful. Strategic reading is not only a matter of knowing which strategies to use, but, in addition, the reader must know how to apply strategies successfully to achieve and improve comprehension. However, here it is the task of the teacher to be aware of learning strategies, reading strategies and how to teach them and train students to use them according to their aim of reading. So, for this reason, we decided to study teachers' beliefs about teaching reading strategies to link the broad important dimension reading strategies and teachers' beliefs and awareness.

## **Chapter three: Communicative Competence**

### **Introduction**

Students learning foreign languages in schools or at college are now taught to use target languages as dynamic systems of communication. It is no longer enough to know the grammar rules, translate classical writers, or rattle off memorized drills. In a communicative approach, learners are encouraged to demonstrate their ability to greet someone, complain, talk about recent events, plan, invite, apologize...so, a communicative approach opens up wider perspectives on language learning. In particular, teachers have become aware that learners must also develop strategies for relating learned structures to their communicative needs in real situation, with real people, in real time. However, the aim of this chapter is to discuss the concept of communicative competence. i.e. Definition of the concept, its components and light a shadow about the role of the teacher in a communicative language classroom.

### **1. The Concept Of Communication**

In the context of language learning and teaching, communication is known as communicative approach or communicative language teaching. An approach to foreign or second language teaching which emphasizes that the goal of language learning is communicative competence and which seeks to make meaningful communication and language use a focus of all classroom activities. The communicative approach was developed particularly by British applied linguists in the 1980s as a reaction away from grammar-based approaches such as Situational Language Teaching and the audio lingual-method. The major principles of Communicative Language Teaching are:

1. learners use a language through using it to communicate
2. authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of class-room activities
3. fluency and accuracy are both important goals in language learning
4. communication involves the integration of different language skills
5. learning is a process of creative construction and involves trial and error

However, the communicative movement in ELT encompasses all modes of language use. It has, as one of its bases, a concept of what means to know a language and to be able to put that knowledge to use in communicating with people in a variety of settings and situations. One of the earliest terms for this concept was communicative competence Hymes (1972). In coining the term, Hymes demonstrated a shift of emphasis among linguists, away from a narrow focus on language as a formal system, a focus clearly seen in the work of Chomsky (1965). So Hymes added the concept of 'communicative' to this knowledge of the formal system of language. Another view of communication is Widdowson's (1970) who sees communication as a dynamic unpredictable process which determines no fixed link between meaning and the way it is realized in a language, since a linguistic structure may express different functions and vice versa. He points out that communication is a relative term and has to be negotiated:

Meaning do not exist ready-made in language itself. They are worked out. We are given linguistic clues to what propositions are expressed and what illocutionary acts are performed. We inevitably rely on common knowledge, we make assumptions about what the person we are addressing can infer from what we say (Widdowson, 1978: 13)

Therefore, we need to enable our learners to apply their own experience of using their first language to the target language and recognize it as another dynamic system for sending and receiving messages. Thus communication is not an innate quality in language teaching methods and materials; it is a part of the learner's process of developing a way of using language spontaneously and appropriately. So the word 'communication' is a situation where two or more participants alternate in the respective roles of speakers and listeners, resulting in genuine exchange of information or in the negotiation of meaning so as to install in the learner the ability to communicate fluently and appropriately (Richards 1981). Furthermore, Widdowson (1990) confirmed that people communicate by communicating rather than by learning about the language system.

## 2. Aims Of Communication

Tricia hedge (2000) in her book “teaching and learning in the language classroom selected a few points from syllabus specification and introduction to course books that demonstrate the aims for students being:

- enable them operate effectively in the real world
- to develop an ever improving capability to use the target language in order to acquire, develop and apply knowledge, solve problems, responds to an experience...
- to develop and apply an ever increasing understanding of how the language is organized, used and learned

Another scholar Devito (2006) in his book “human communication”, summarized aims of communication as follows:

- To discover: communication helps us learn about ourselves and about others. It also helps us to discover the external world of objects, events and other people.
- To relate: communication helps establish and maintain close social relationships with others.
- To help: people such as therapists, teachers or parents use communication to help their patients, students or children. It is also useful when criticizing constructively, expressing empathy or working with groups...
- To persuade: communication helps change others’ attitudes and behaviours
- To play: communication helps us get pleasure, escape or relax through (eg. Listening to comedians, telling jokes...)

Communication by Devito is seen as a process by which meaning is assigned in an attempt to create shared understanding. It is a process whereby information is encoded and imparted by a **sender** to a **receiver** via a **channel**. Then, the **message** is supposed to be decoded by the receiver then a feedback is given to the sender. All these takes place in a **context** which is subject to **interferences (noise)**. The interaction of the message leads to some **effect**. In each act of communication the sex factors (highlighted words) are included. However, Devito, describes the process as follows:” communication occurs when one person sends and receives messages that are distorted by noise, occur within a context, have

some effect, and provide some opportunity for feedback” (Devito, 2006:2) Thus, communication involves the following elements: **Communication context:** including Physical, Social psychological, Temporal and Cultural dimension, **Source – Receiver:** the term is given to both the source (speaker or sender) and the receiver (listener), **Messages:** they are sent and received through sensory organs. They can be verbal (oral/written) or non verbal (clothes,gestures..), **Channel:** it is the medium through which the message passes. So, it can be vocal (speaking VS listening in a face-to face interaction), visual (through gestures), olfactory (emitting and detecting odours), or tactile (through touching), **Noise:** it is any interference or barrier to communication; anything that distorts the message and prevent the receiver from receiving it. Noise can be physical (e.g. others talking loudly or car’s honking), or semantic (e.g. misunderstood meaning) and **Effect:** it is the consequence of the communicative act. It maybe cognitive (e.g. learning how to analyze or evaluate), affective (e.g. learning new bodily movements, developing memory)

### 3. The Concept of Competence

Before the mid 1960’s, competence in language was defined narrowly in terms of grammatical knowledge. The idea was so influential that most linguists and language experts, while attempting to contribute to any issue concerning the nature of language, related discussion to the distinction competence/ performance. However, those contributions were only built on a theoretical basis. Because of the lack of empirical support for this highly theorized concept, linguists had to have resort to communicative competence (a more realistic substitute to linguistic competence).

The concept of competence in its modern guise has its origin with Chomsky’s (1965) distinction of competence/performance, as a conscious reframing of Saussure’s (1922) central dichotomy langue/parole. Hymes (1972) also equates Chomsky’s competence with Saussure’s ‘langue’ where Chomsky associates his views of competence and performance with the Saussurean concepts of langue and parole. But according to Lyons (1996), Chomsky himself refused to identify his notion of ‘competence’ with Saussure’s ‘langue’. In that respect, Chomsky says: “.....it was necessary to reject Saussure’s concept of ‘langue’ as merely a systematic inventory of items and to return rather to a conception of underlying competence as a system of generative processes” (Lyons 1996: 4) because for Chomsky, the difference between Saussure’s ‘langue’ and his own concept of linguistic (or grammatical) competence is the difference between an inventory “basically a store of signs with their grammatical properties, that is, a store of word-like elements, fixed phrases and perhaps, certain limited phrase-types” (Lyons

1996:23) and an innate system of generative rules. Thus, Chomsky came up with the term competence not as a substitute to Saussure's langue, but as a reaction to it, and so there should be no association of the two terms

Chomsky's revolutionary 'competence' found more echo in the 20<sup>th</sup> century because knowledge of a language including knowing how to generate an infinite number of sentences from a limited set grammatical rules (i.e. competence) is much more important than being in possession of the appropriate language system (i.e. langue). Chomsky, in his first seminal work aspects of the theory of syntax, explicitly introduces his theory of competence with a clear distinction between 'knowledge' and 'ability to use knowledge.

Linguistic theory is primarily concerned with an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech community who knows its languages perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of language in actual performance  
(Chomsky, 1965: 3)

Chomsky also adds: ".....we thus make a fundamental distinction between competence (the speaker- hearer's knowledge of the language) and performance (the actual use of language in concrete situations." (Chomsky, 1965: 4) He also tried to show that the linguist is more concerned with knowledge than with the use of this knowledge. For him, generative grammar attempts to characterize in the most neutral possible terms knowledge that provides the basis for actual use of language by a speaker-hearer and so his description of language involves no explicit reference to the way in which his instrument is put to use. He emphasizes that what we call 'knowledge of language' involves in the first place knowledge of grammar (for him language is derivative and perhaps not very interesting concept). He is not then, at this level of defining what he called 'competence', concerned with other dimensions of human language, like variability in the proficiency of language use from one speaker to another or any other grammatically irrelevant condition that is, according to him, out of the scope of syntax. For Chomsky, the idea of capacity or ability has to be excluded because it does not allow us to understand the nature of language where he equated ability to behaviour or actual use which he regards as a 'completely different notion' from competence or knowledge.

From the above discussion and the literature about that issue, we notice that Chomsky's idea about competence is purely theoretical and has nothing to say about language use, language users or even about how this competence is acquired. But language research is not only about theories; it also needs a practical setting and field work to prove the efficiency of those theories. That is the reason why, some linguists found fault in

Chomsky's idea. Francis (1980) for example has highlighted some of the difficulties which arise when the Chomskyan conception of competence is applied to the study of child language development, for one thing a child is simply not an ideal speaker or hearer, and found that this view of competence does not fully cover second or foreign language learning.

#### **4. The Notion Of Communicative Competence**

It is known that it was Dell Hymes who first coined the term 'communicative competence' but before there had been many sociolinguistic contributions which paved the way for this view. Those contributors were motivated by the idea of building a new concept covering what they found missing in Chomsky's competence, mainly the communicative dimension and so dealing with an extended notion of competence. Wilkins, Widdowson, Brumfit, Johnson and many others in the 1970's introduced the idea of communicative competence even before Hymes. In the 1980's, it took a form of revolution. Candlin, Littlewood, Ellis, Canale and Swain, Johnson, Porter, Fearch among many others, contributed greatly to the dissemination of this communicative movement to different parts of the world. Their first motive was against the subaltern position that Chomsky gave to performance. Hymes holds that: "grammaticalness is only one factor of the many factors that interact to determine acceptability."

Halliday (1970: 143) added a different perspective to the notion of competence; he argues that only by closely observing the context of the situation we are able to understand the functions of specific grammatical structures:

Linguistics is concerned with the description of speech acts or texts, since only through the study of language in use are all the functions of language, and therefore all components of meaning brought into focus

In his terms, function is the use to which a grammatical structure is put. It is the purpose of an utterance rather than the particular grammatical form an utterance takes. For Halliday (1970), language performs three basic functions: ideational "...language serves for the expression of content", interpersonal "...language serves to establish and maintain social relations", and textual "language has to provide for making links with itself and with features of the situation in which it is used (Halliday 1970: 143). Later, he enumerated seven basic functions that language performs for children learning their first language:

- 1) The instrumental function: using language to get things;



- 2) The regulatory function: using language to control the behaviour of others;
- 3) The interactional function: using language to create interaction with others;
- 4) The personal function: using language to express personal feelings and meanings;
- 5) The heuristic function: using language to learn and to discover;
- 6) The imaginative function: using language to create a world of the imagination; and
- 7) The representational function: using language to communicate information.

It is clear that for Halliday, language is mainly a social instrument; it can perform one of these functions or the other but always for a social purpose. As Scarella (1992) explains, the main social view of Le Page (1978) for he states that:

.....a society only exists in the competence of its members to make it work as it does; a language only exists in the competence of those who use and regard themselves as users of that language; and the latter competence are the essential mediating system for the former.  
(Le Page in Scarella, & Oxford, 1992: 41)

According to what is mentioned above, competence seems to have become an explicitly social construct. Of course he does not reject the importance of the linguistic competence, but he explains that it is only a mediating system for the competence of the whole society. As already mentioned, before setting on a clear distinct term covering both the linguistic and the social dimensions to language knowledge, competence had to undergo these changes that can be characterized by being attempts to socialize the concept, until Dell Hymes managed to coin the term ‘communicative competence’ as a separate term and giving it different parameters.

Hymes was among the first to investigate the extended notion of competence. His extension of the term involves change and at the same time gives it a much more general character as compared to Chomsky’s very precise and narrow use. He exposed his ideas first in a conference paper published in 1971 as ‘competence and performance in linguistic theory’ and later further elaborated in the more substantial article under the title ‘

on communicative competence' (1972). Hymes premise started from the idea that Chomsky's concept of competence and performance left no room to account systematically for the fact that one of the things we know about language is how to use it appropriately. In his perception of what knowing a language entails, Hymes openly criticizes and tried to recast the scope of Chomsky's competence which dealt primarily with abstract grammatical knowledge. For him, Chomsky not only defining competence in a narrow way, but also has the 'dustbin' view when it comes to performance on the ground that he views it as a subordinate concept. He objects also the absence of a place for socio-cultural factors, something that makes it impossible to talk about competence in an instructional teaching setting.

Another reason of such dissatisfaction was Hymes observation that the chomskyan position lacks empirical support; he argues that it posits "ideal objects in abstraction from socio-cultural features that might enter into their description" (1968). Lyons also explains that there was dissatisfaction with what he called 'the highly theoretical idealized Chomskyan notion of competence as a basis for the very practical business of language teaching' according to Lyons , it is almost impossible, out of an idealized context, to speak about a homogeneous speech community, because even within a single speech community there are such phenomena such as 'diglossia' and limitation of sentence level grammar that meke difference between members of that same community.

Hymes also found fault in Chomsky's theory of competence in the sense that it conflicts his idea of differential competence (1971&1972: 274), which refers to differences among individuals. Scarcella and Oxford (1992) explain that differential competence introduces a comparative and relative dimension, something which opposes Chomsky's assumption that competence is the property of the individual; this whole discussion of differential competence is socially oriented. Hymes (1972: 33) states that: "even the ethnographies that we have, through almost never focused on speaking, show us that communities differ significantly in ways of speaking, in patterns of repertoires and switching, in the roles and meanings of speech". In other words, he is saying that different people have different competences and that there is a social dimension to language use which according to him nobody would deny.

Moreover, language is an interactive system and that meaning is conveyed at a higher level than the sentence. The complex exchanges between participants in the communicative process are imbued with their ideologies, expectations and attitudes; their shared knowledge about each other and the world and the context of the situation in which they find themselves. Hymes (1971: 277- 278) also tries to show that Chomsky's

competence needs and extension because as mentioned before, it says nothing about language acquisition. According to him:

...we have to account for the fact that a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences, not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner.....This competence, moreover, is integral with attitudes, values and motivations concerning language, its features and uses, and integral with competence for, and attitudes toward, the interrelation of language with the other codes of communicative conduct.

However, Hymes attempts to explain that the ability to speak competently not only entails knowing the grammar of a language but also knowing what to say, to whom, when, in what circumstances...In his perspective, there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless. Therefore, for him, the general term competence covers a number of different elements, varying from grammatical knowledge on the one hand and to sociolinguistic knowledge on the other; and by claiming so; he gives his new concept of competence a more general character. This is very deliberate on Hymes's part as it is apparent when he says: "I should therefore take competence as the most general term for the speaking and hearing capabilities of a person" (Hymes 1971: 16), and by the term he also means performance or at least some of its aspects.

Speaking about performance, Hymes notes that some aspects of what Chomsky lumps together under performance are systematic and can be described in the form of rules, and can thus be seen as a form of competence. Chomsky himself later acknowledged this, when in addition to grammatical competence he recognized pragmatic competence which he receives as underlying the ability to make use of the knowledge characterized as grammatical competence. This correspond to what Hymes (1972: 278) described as 'competence for use' as a component of his overall concept of communicative competence. Explaining that, he states:

There are rules of use without rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless. Just as rules of syntax can control aspects of phonology, and just as rules of semantics perhaps control aspects of syntax, so rules of speech acts enter as a controlling factor for linguistic form as a whole.

This is then the positive side of Hymes's contribution. He has succeeded in tightening up the concept of performance, isolating from it that aspect which can be characterized by a certain system of rules represented in the mind and so showing that there are certain aspects of language use that can be explained in terms of underlying knowledge

which we can represent as a system of rules. Therefore, Hymes makes a difference in not only reading into Chomsky's definition of competence but also in coming up with a new term. A term that applies to something that Chomsky would see as biologically based (grammatical competence) and the same time to a kind of knowledge much more socially based (sociolinguistic competence). The former is purely individual, the latter is mainly social. The first concerns form, the second concerns function. The former characterizes a state, the latter involves processes. This new term is communicative competence.

## **5. Definition Of Communicative Competence**

Communicative competence is defined in the Longman Dictionary of applied linguistics as: "communicative competence is knowledge of not only if something is formally possible in a language, but also the knowledge of whether it is feasible, appropriate, or done in a particular SPEECHCOMMUNITY." (2002: 90). Brown (1994) confirms this definition and states that "communicative competence is that aspect of our competence that enables us to convey and interpret messages and to negotiate meanings interpersonally within specific contexts." (Brown 1994:227) Hymes (1967) defines 'communicative competence' in the following words:

Communicative competence is experience-derived knowledge that allows speakers to produce utterances (or texts) that are not only syntactically correct and accurate in their meaning but also socially appropriate in culturally determined communication context. Communicative competence also allows speakers to understand the speech (or text) of their communication partners as a function of both the structural and referential characteristics of the discourse and the social context in which it occurs.  
(Hymes 1967 in Hymes 1972)

According to him, the term communicative competence labels the ability to produce situationally, and more especially, socially acceptable utterances, which in Hymes's view would normally be held to be part of the speaker's competence in a particular language. The distinction between linguistic and communicative competence made by Hymes (1972) also helped to clarify the domain of performance and to isolate the systematic nature of some of the conditions governing language use, he includes what he called the ability for use, which is the individual's underlying potential to realize a possible, feasible and appropriate speech act, and not the actual performance. So the term performance according to Hymes refers to actual use and actual events and the ability for use.

## 6. Components of Communicative Competence

The different definitions of the concept of communicative competence share the idea that notion covers four main components being: grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic and strategic competence. Hedge (2000) in a chapter about ‘the communicative classroom’ in her book ‘teaching and learning in the language classroom’ emphasized another classification of components of communicative ability as being: linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence and fluency. Here is a brief definition of each one of them.

**6.1. Grammatical competence:** it is also known as linguistic competence, which is defined by Canale and Swain as quoted in Brown (2000) as: “the knowledge of lexical items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence- grammar semantics and phonology.” (Brown 2000: 247).

**6.2. Discourse competence:** it is the ability to connect sentences in stretches of discourse and to form a meaningful whole out of a series of utterances. Discourse means everything from simple spoken conversation to lengthy written texts. So, while grammatical competence focuses on sentence grammar, discourse competence is concerned with the intersentential relationships.

**6.3. Sociolinguistic competence:** is the knowledge of the sociocultural rules of language and discourse. It requires an understanding of the social context in which language is used: the roles of the participants, the information they share, and the functions of the interaction.

**6.4. Strategic competence:** Canale and Swain (1980) describe it as:” the verbal and non verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or due to insufficient competence (Brown 2000: 147). Savington (1983) describes this as” the strategies that one uses to compensate for imperfect knowledge of rules – or limiting factors in their application such as fatigue, distraction, and inattention”. so, it is the competence underlying our ability to make repairs to cope with imperfect knowledge and to sustain communication through paraphrase, circumlocution, repetition, hesitation, avoidance and guessing, as well as shifts in register and style.

Nowadays, researchers and educators deal with communicative competence as two main components including linguistic aspects and pragmatic aspects. Here is a brief description of each one of them: **Linguistic aspects**, including: Phonology and orthography, Grammar, Vocabulary and Discourse (textual); **Pragmatic aspects**, including: Functions, Variations, Interactional skills and Cultural framework.

Research in the field created models on bases of these divisions of components. Among the known models: Canale and Swain's (1980), Bachman (1988, 1990) and Savington (1983, 1997). Canale and Swain's model of communicative competence includes four components: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategies competence. Savington (1983, 1997) suggested that a classroom model of communicative competence includes Canale and Swain's four components and further proposed five components of a communicative curriculum that include language arts, language for a purpose, personal second language use, theatre arts and beyond the classroom. Another conceptualization of communicative competence and CLT is that of Bachman (1990), who created a theoretical framework of communicative language ability that includes knowledge structures, strategic competence, psycho-physiological mechanisms, context of situation and language competence. Language competence is further divided into organizational competence (grammatical & textual competences) and pragmatic competence (illocutionary and sociolinguistic competences) (Buchman in Brown 2000: 249)

These elements together, help support both theoretical and practical foundations for CLT. It is clear that Savington (1997) did not rely on these as the sole attributor of CLT. In particular, with regard to the four components she concluded as stated by Sato and Kleinsasser (1999: 495):

Whatever the relative importance of the various components at any given level of overall proficiency, one must keep in mind the interactive nature of their relationship. The whole of communicative competence is always something other than the simple sum of its parts.

## **7. Aims of Communicative Competence**

Lepschy proposes in her contribution “Communication training” as a system of categories which helps to discern teaching and learning methods aimed at developing communicative competence. The learning target communicative competence has two dimensions: First, communicative competence aims at taking the participants from intuitive problem awareness to an analytical one. Secondly, it endeavors to create a great individual scope for interaction. These two dimensions include the capacity to interpret social norms and expectations in and for speech situations. At there is a vast research literature on communicative competence. (Rickheit & Strohner, 2008: 07)

## **8. Communicative Competence and Foreign Language Teaching**

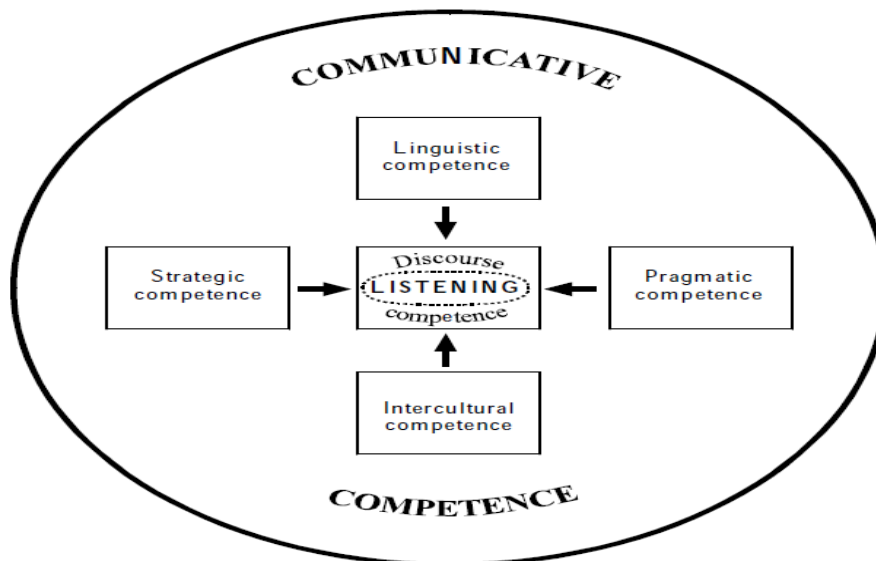
The works of Hymes, Savignon, Canal, Swain and others on the theoretical basis for communicative competence, and the rapid acceptance of such a new principle urged language educationists to apply it on language teaching, and this is what led to what came to be known as the communicative approach or simply communicative language teaching (notional functional approach). Since communicative ability is a complex and many-sided phenomenon, then communicative language teaching is also very complex. But because it is not the main concern of the investigation, we will just summarize a number of general factors which, together, contribute towards the overall communicative approach to foreign language teaching.

## 9. Framework of Communicative Competence Integrating the Four Skills

The proposed framework contains five components which appear inside rectangular boxes of the same size: discourse, linguistic, pragmatic, intercultural and strategic. All these components appear inside an oval, where in the core of that last centered the discourse competence, in the four corners around the discourse we can find the four skills that help to construct the discourse competence that in turn, also shapes each of the other competencies. This theory is mentioned in Celce-Muria and Olshtain (2000: 16) where they emphasize that: “it is in discourse and through discourse that all of the other competencies are realized.” Celce-Muria and Olshtain, 2008: 160) In line with Savignon, each component interacts with the other components to produce an increase in the whole construct of communicative competence. That’s why we placed all the components within a circle. Our construct aims at:

- 1) Showing the relationship among all the components.
- 2) Incorporating both the pragmatic and the intercultural competencies on their own
- 3) Highlighting the function of the four skills to build discourse competence

A detailed explanation of these five components is given below.



*Figure 4* : Schematic representation of the proposed framework of communicative competence integrating the four skills (the capital letters stand for the four skills: L = Listening; S =Speaking; R= Reading; W = Writing) (Martinez-flor & Uso-juan, 2008: 161).



## **10. Communicative Competence and language teaching**

It is frequently commented that it takes some twenty years for new academic concepts and insights to become commonplace in the teaching of our public schools. That is also the case with the notion of communicative competence and language teaching. The concern for communicative language teaching surfaced on both sides of the Atlantic as early as the late 1960s. Partially, it was a reaction against the mechanical nature and boring activity of drills in the audio-lingual method, but communicative competence was also a counter-concept to Chomsky's notion of competence in theoretical linguistics. The communicative competence in language teaching means two different confusing things.

Rivers (1973) and those who work with foreign language teaching in the United States tend to define communicative competence as simply linguistic interaction in the target language: "the ability to function in a truly communicative setting; that is, in a spontaneous transaction involving one or more other persons" (Savignon, 1978: 12). On the other hand, people who work in ESL tends to use communicative competence in Hymes' sense to include not only the linguistic forms of the language, but also its social rules. In addition to these two common definitions of communicative competence in language teaching, Canale and Swain (1979, 1980) suggested three sub-components: grammatical, discourse and sociolinguistics competence, which together make up communicative competence. (Paulston, 1992: 97-98)

## **11. Communication Strategies**

The field of second language acquisition has distinguished between two types of strategy: learning strategies and communication strategies. The former relate to input – processing, storage, and retrieval, that is, to taking messages from others. The latter pertain the output, how we productively express meaning, how we deliver messages to others. In this section, we will examine communication strategies because they are one of the pillars of communication. Brown (2000) defines them as "communicative strategies pertain to the employment of verbal or nonverbal mechanisms for the productive communication of information" (Brown 2000: 127). Faerch and Kasper (1983:36) define communication strategies as "potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal" (Faerch and Kasper in Brown 2000: 127). While the research of the last decade does indeed focus largely on the compensatory nature of communication strategies, more recent approaches seem to take a more positive view of communication strategies as elements of an overall strategic

competence in which learners bring to bear all the possible facets of their growing competence in order to send clear messages in the second language. Perhaps the best way to understand what is meant by communication strategy is to look at a typical list of such strategies.

Many researchers who were interested in the field of language examined different ways followed by learners to solve communication problems. Faerch and Kasper (1983) discusses several strategies including the following: achievement strategies (strategies of guessing, borrowing, translation, paraphrase and cooperative strategies), and reduction strategies (such as avoidance). Dornyei (1995) proposed taxonomy of communication strategies including: avoidance strategies and compensatory strategies.

### **11.1. Avoidance Strategies**

- message abandonment: leaving a message unfinished because of the language difficulties
- Topic avoidance: avoiding topic areas or concepts that pose language difficulties.

### **11.2. Compensatory Strategies**

- circumlocution: describing or exemplifying the target object of action (e.g. the thing you open bottles with for corkscrew)
- Approximation: using an alternative term which expresses the meaning of the target lexical item as closely as possible (e.g. ship for sailboat)
- Use of all purpose words: extending a general, empty lexical item to contexts where specific words are lacking (the overuse of thing, stuff, what-do-you-call-it, thingie)
- Word coinage: creating a non existing L2 word based on a supposed rule (e.g. a vegetarianist for vegetarian).
- Prefabricated patterns: using memorized stock phrases, usually for survival purposes (e.g. where is the \_\_\_ or comment comment allez-vous?, where the morphological components are not known to the learner)
- Non-linguistic signals: mime, gesture, facial expression, or sound imitation.

- Literal translation: translating literally a lexical item, idiom, compound word, or structure from L1 to L2
- Foreignizing: using L1 word by adjusting it to L2 phonology (i.e. with L2 pronunciation) and/or morphology (e.g. adding to it a L2 suffix)
- Code-switching: using L1 word with L1 pronunciation or L3 word L3 pronunciation while speaking in L2.
- Appeal for help: asking for help from the interlocutor either directly (e.g. what do you call...?) or indirectly (e.g. rising intonation, pause, eye contact, puzzled expression)
- Stalling for time-gaining strategies: using fillers or hesitation devices to fill pauses and to gain time to think (e.g. well, now let's see, uh, as a matter of fact) (Dornyei, 1997: 188-189)

To avoid communication problems, as teachers we should on one hand understand the nature of communicative competence; on the other hand, we should understand and analyze the different factors that influence communication. These factors are examined by Powell et al (2004) in their book classroom communication and diversity; among these factors the learning setting and teachers' attitudes and behavior. So, teachers' beliefs are one of the key factors that affect students' communication and motivation of learning.

## **Conclusion**

One of the keys of good teaching is the knowledge of the subject. Teachers need to cover all aspects of the matter. Teachers should know the nature of the communicative approach and communicative language teaching. Further, teachers should shift their emphasis from traditional methodology of lecturing and conveying information into a new and up to date methods and techniques through varying activities, presenting activities and a motivating way, introducing technology and give more focus to learning strategies.

## **Chapter Four: Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire**

### **Introduction**

The study of teachers' beliefs forms part of understanding how teachers conceptualize their work. In order to understand how teachers approach their work it is necessary to understand the beliefs and principles they operate from. Constructivist theories of teacher development see the construction of personal theories of teaching as a central task for teachers. Such theories are often resistant to change and serve as a core reference point for teachers as they process new information and theories. However, this chapter is devoted to describe and analyze teachers' beliefs about teaching reading strategies, teachers' practice of teaching reading strategies and finally the influence of beliefs on their teaching practice with reference to the main factors affecting their beliefs and practice as well.

### **1. The Department of English at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra**

As far as the department of English is concerned, it is one of the newest projects of the university. It was established officially in the academic year 97/98. The first promotion from this department graduated in June 2002. From 1998 to 2006, the number of students increases every year, but one noticeable thing is that even the situation has been improved, the status is still catastrophic. Since its creation, it still and in most of times relies on license teachers. In September 2002, they started the first post graduation class in language and civilization. From that time, the situation has been little ameliorated, in which they took the benefit of most of the post graduate students who taught for four years until they submitted their dissertation. This leads us to say that the majority of the teaching staff of the English department is not specialized in the modules that they teach and took them only by experience or imposed by the administration.

Like all English departments in Algeria, the curriculum of the license of English is based on the teaching of such courses as written expression, oral expression, grammar, phonetics, linguistics and general culture. It also includes a great deal of literature (American, English, and African) and civilization (British and American). The fourth year courses are provided with other modules such as psycho – pedagogy and didactics (i.e. TEFL: teaching English as a foreign language). Another added subject to the English language is the Arabic language course.

Since 2007/2008, the department is carrying out two systems, the classical and the LMD system. The classical system was stopped last year but still the department have

third and fourth year students. The curriculum of the LMD system is different from that of the classical one where it is based on a system of semester and unities. So, the three years of graduation include six semesters; one and two in first year, three and four in second year and five and six in the third year. Each semester is taught in a sort of unities. The basic unity including the main language modules (grammar, written expression, oral expression, linguistics, phonetics, literary texts and culture of the language), the ESP unity, the unity of research methodology and finally the unity of FL and computing. Only semester six is different in which it contains only the preparation of the dissertation where students are not supposed to stop having lectures.

For this year, the number of students increased, including: First year (10 groups), Second year (10 groups), Third year (linguistics, 8 groups), and Third year (civilization and literature), Master one (linguistics), Master one (literature and civilization) and Master two (literature and civilization). The number of first year LMD students reached 636; they are divided into ten groups. The number of students in each group is inconsistent, but in most cases it is between 40 and 70. The program contains the main modules with the following timing (in which 1and 1/2 hour is devoted to each session):

<b>1. Basic unity</b>	
Written expression	3 hours
Oral expression	3 hours
Grammar	3 hours
Phonetics	1and 1/2
Linguistics	1and 1/2
Culture of the language	1and 1/2
Literary texts	1and 1/2
<b>2. Unity of ESP</b>	1and 1/2
<b>3. Unity of research methodology</b>	1and 1/2
<b>4. Unite of FL and computing</b>	1 and ½ for each.

As we mentioned above, the lack of specialized and qualified teachers is evident. The increasing number of students added to the scarcity of qualified lectures unavailable in the Algerian market has obliged the administration to rely on secondary school teachers or even on new inexperienced license teachers. The teaching staff during the period of the study was as follows: no doctor, 26 with MA and more than 20 with only licence degree (the number of the part time teachers is not stable)

## **2. The Sample of the Study**

It was necessary to select a sample because of time, feasibility and quality. We tried to select a representative sample in an objective way. The method used is Random Sampling in which there is no scope for subjectivity or bias. The respondents were all teachers teaching first year LMD students. The number of teachers who teach first year is 19 (9 full time teachers and 10 part time teachers). Only eleven teachers returned back the questionnaire; that means, we received the responses of 57, 89 % of the target population. The remaining did not respond claiming that they do not teach reading and they have no idea about reading strategies.

## **3. Teachers' questionnaire**

### **3.1. The aim of the questionnaire**

The aim of the questionnaire was to explore teachers' awareness and beliefs about teaching reading strategies to first year students. Along the questionnaire, our attempt was to discover the way they perceive knowledge and practice of reading strategies in different courses.

### **3.2. The Description of the Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was handed to twenty teachers of first year LMD students at the English department of Mohamed Khider university of Biskra (the academic year 2010/2011). The distribution of the questionnaire was direct, where we met the participants and explained to them the aim of the questionnaire, then gave them a chance of a few days to answer and give it back. Only two teachers responded through email, where they apologized to meet us and bring the papers so we decided to send them others by email instead of the printed questionnaire. The questionnaire is divided into three main sections:

**Section one** includes questions from 1 to 6. Those questions seek general information about teachers, i.e. their qualifications, their experience in teaching and in teaching at university and which courses do they teach.

**Section two** contains questions from 7 to 17. The intention in those questions is to explore teachers' awareness, knowledge and beliefs about teaching reading strategies in their courses. In this section, teachers are supposed to express their own understanding of

the reading process, the way it is taught, sources of difficulty and ways to improve teaching practice.

**Section three** includes questions from 18 to 37. These questions seek information about teachers' practice of reading strategies in language classrooms. The questions were about activities in reading, reading strategies, types of reading, teachers' change in their practice and factors affecting their understanding of the teaching/learning process.

### 3.3. The Analysis of the Results

#### 3.3.1 Section One: General Information About The Participants

##### Question 1. What is your age?

Teacher	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11
Age	30	30	30	28	35	30	25	25	REFUSED	25	25

**Table 5. Teachers' Age**

From these answers, we notice that all the staff teaching first year are young. The majority are between 25 and 30 years old. This may lead us to think about many issues in teaching English as a foreign language, amongst the lack of experience. Also, as we know, age plays a great role in teachers' beliefs and practice where old teachers are supposed to have more experience where as young teachers are supposed to be more open to new methods, new techniques and especially to new technology applied in the field of TEFL. Students nowadays are learning English for communication, so they expect to see and learn more communicative activities and new teaching ideas that may fit their needs and their future prospects. Even students of first year nowadays, are claiming about teaching methods used by their teachers and able to differentiate between the communicative effective techniques and the traditional ones.

##### Question 2. How long have you been teaching English?

<b>Teacher</b>	<b>T1</b>	<b>T2</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>T6</b>	<b>T7</b>	<b>T8</b>	<b>T9</b>	<b>T10</b>	<b>T11</b>
<b>teaching experience</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

**Table 6. Length of English teaching experience**

What is remarked here is that five teachers have a teaching experience of 7 to 8 years where as other five teachers have an experience of two to five. Also we notice that the most experienced teacher among them is working since ten years.



### **Question 3. How long have you been teaching English at University**

The answers to that question revealed nearly the same answer to the previous one because the majority of the questioned teachers worked only at university. So, they have no experience with different levels of ability or different streams and ages. Only two of them worked as middle school teachers (T5 worked 3 years and T9 worked 6 years at middle school). These two teachers are supposed to know and deal more with the reading skill because of the nature of the subject matter and the syllabus they are teaching. Teaching English at middle and secondary level involve teaching the four skills by every language teacher, and this allows him/her to integrate the reading skill and give it the time needed.

### **Question 4. What is your qualification?**

<b>Teacher</b>	<b>T1</b>	<b>T2</b>	<b>T3</b>	<b>T4</b>	<b>T5</b>	<b>T6</b>	<b>T7</b>	<b>T8</b>	<b>T9</b>	<b>T10</b>	<b>T11</b>
<b>Qualification</b>	MA	MA	MA	MA	MA	MA	BA	BA	MA	BA	BA

**Table 7. Teachers' Qualifications**

So, seven teachers have MA, four have BA and no one is a PHD holder but the reality is that most of the staff are part-time teachers with only license degree and an experience of 1 to 3 years. As we know students graduate with a general English diploma where they do not have enough training, sufficient knowledge about teaching, learning methods and about the different students' needs and levels of ability. However, the period between their graduation and their teaching is not enough to deal with both content and methodology, particularly in large classes like ours, vast syllabus, lack of resources and materials and students low level of ability. We notice also that the department of English lacks doctors or people who have more experience in international systems, i.e. teachers who worked in different settings or met people from different universities and countries, which may enable them to transfer their experience, decide and work on change and improvement.

**1. Question 5. What is your specialty if an” MA” holders?**

Teacher	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T9
Specialty	Language & Civilization	Language & Civilization	Language & Civilization	Applied Linguistics & Language Teaching	Language & Literature	Language & Civilization	Language & Literature

**Table 8. Teachers’ MA specialty**

What is remarked is that four teachers have an MA in language and civilization and doing PHD in the same filed where as two others have MA in language and literature (mainly stylistics) and just one teacher holding MA in applied linguistics and language teaching as a separate field of study and research and doing PHD on teaching English (education). Most teachers who post graduated from the department of English at the university of Biskra, even having language and civilization as a title of the project, they are working on didactics but the problem is that the training (formation) during the theoretical year was not purely about TEFL. Teachers who did language and literature (stylistics) said we dealt with only two main issues being linguistics and literature. The answer to that question may help us predict the responses to the coming ones about teachers’ beliefs as all questions about reading strategies are technical and need knowledge about teaching/learning issues, methods, techniques, methodology and educational psychology as well. As a result, when we delivered the questionnaire many teachers hesitated claiming that they have no idea about reading and when returned back questionnaires, they apologized because most of the technical questions were not answered and left blank.

**Question 6. Which module do you teach to first year students?**

Teacher	<b>T1</b>	<b>T2</b>	<b>T3</b>	<b>T4</b>
Module	ESP	Culture of the Language	Written Expression	Research Methodology
Teacher	<b>T5</b>	<b>T6</b>	<b>T7</b>	<b>T8</b>
Module	Linguistics	Written Expression	Linguistics	Oral expression & ESP
Teacher	<b>T9</b>	<b>T10</b>	<b>T11</b>	
Module	Linguistics	Written Expression	Grammar	

**Table 9. The Modules Taught to First Year Students**

The participants are teaching different subjects both language subjects such grammar, oral expression and written expression or content subjects such as linguistics, ESP and culture of the language. Only teachers of two modules are missing here because we didn't have the chance to meet them as they are not always available, teachers of literary texts and phonetics.

### 3.3.2 Section two: Teachers' awareness and knowledge of reading and reading strategies

Question 7. What are the reading strategies that you know?

Teachers	Strategies Mentioned
T1	skimming, scanning, previewing, SQ3R,
T2	predicting, SQ3R, previewing
T3	scanning, skimming, previewing
T4	previewing, scanning, skimming, the SQ3R, predicting, guessing
T5	scanning, skimming, predicting
T6	scanningg, skimming, SQ3R
T7	NOTHING
T8	personal identification, use of context, synonym substitution
T9	NOTHING
T10	NOTHING
T11	NOTHING

**Table 10. Reading Strategies That Teachers Know**

What is mentioned in the table show us that four teachers refused to answer that question maybe because they do not know or they are not sure about their answers and the different names of reading strategies even we are sure that they use many of them through their teaching. Also, we notice that the majority of the participants already know a few strategies such as scanning, skimming and the SQ3R.

**Question 8. In your opinion, what are the main Purposes behind teaching reading strategies?**

<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Purposes</b>
<b>T1</b>	NOTHING
<b>T2</b>	NOTHING
<b>T3</b>	to help students read quickly according to the purpose of reading
<b>T4</b>	<p>that teacher seems to be more aware and precise; however, mentioned the following purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Train students to use strategies when learning the language;</li> <li>➤ Help students to be aware of the reading process and the reading strategies appropriate to every material or text;</li> <li>➤ Help students to be able to choose the appropriate strategy according to the purpose of reading, i.e. are they supposed to read quickly to get an overview(skim) or to check specific piece of information (scan) or read in detail (SQ3R)</li> </ul>
<b>T5</b>	<p>said: ” the overall purpose for teaching reading is to develop in the reader the attitudes, abilities and skills needed for obtaining information, fostering and reacting to ideas, developing interests and finally deriving pleasure by reading through understanding and comprehension”</p>
<b>T6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Enhance vocabulary skills</li> <li>➤ Enhance grammar skills</li> <li>➤ Enhance writing skills</li> </ul>
<b>T7</b>	NOTHING
<b>T8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Provide models for writing</li> <li>➤ Enhance vocabulary and pronunciation</li> <li>➤ Develop knowledge of syntax</li> </ul>
<b>T9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ To enrich lexicon</li> <li>➤ Motivate them to write</li> </ul>

	➤ To open to them doors on the other culture
<b>T10</b>	NOTHING
<b>T11</b>	NOTHING

**Table 11. Purposes Of Teaching Reading From Teachers' Perspective**

We notice here that four teachers were passive and refused to mention any purpose of reading as if they are not dealing with reading at all, teach reading without deciding the different purposes and the objectives of each reading sequences or if it is not the case, teachers seem unable to express their objectives and thoughts about their practice. A teacher at university should normally be able to hold and discuss any issue about teaching and learning, especially, in our case, we are asking about their personal experience in realistic setting not about what is happening in the literature or theoretical studies.

**Question 9. In your view, what Kind of reading activities students should practice?**

<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Reading Activities</b>
<b>T1</b>	NOTHING
<b>T2</b>	NOTHING
<b>T3</b>	extensive & intensive
<b>T4</b>	intensive & extensive through in-class materials and out-of-class materials
<b>T5</b>	silent reading & loud reading at speeds appropriate to the content and purpose
<b>T6</b>	scanning, skimming, read in detail
<b>T7</b>	NOTHING
<b>T8</b>	NOTHING
<b>T9</b>	intensive reading
<b>T10</b>	NOTHING
<b>T11</b>	NOTHING

**Table 12. Reading Activities Needed For Students' Practice**

Six teachers did not answer the question where as the majority of others mentioned four reading activities including extensive, intensive, silent and loud reading. In fact, all types of reading activities may be applied to achieve communicative goals. So, for a communicative task, teachers may choose the type of reading suitable to realize the objectives of the task based on the size of the group, time and materials available.

**Question 10. What are the principles behind the teaching reading?**

<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Principles behind Teaching Reading</b>
<b>T1</b>	NOTHING
<b>T2</b>	NOTHING
<b>T3</b>	NOTHING
<b>T4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The teacher is just a guide instead of reader (only orient the reading process)</li> <li>➤ The purpose of reading should be clear from the beginning to be able to choose the suitable strategy</li> <li>➤ A variety of materials on a wide range of topics should be available</li> <li>➤ Involve learners to choose what they want to read (their needs &amp; interests)</li> <li>➤ The teacher is a role model for the reader (avoid making mistakes, control of one's pronunciation)</li> </ul>
<b>T5</b>	NOTHING
<b>T6</b>	NOTHING
<b>T7</b>	NOTHING
<b>T8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Reading is not a passive skill, students should be engaged and involved</li> </ul>
<b>T9</b>	NOTHING
<b>T10</b>	NOTHING
<b>T11</b>	NOTHING

**Table 13. Principles Behind Teaching Reading From Teachers' Perspective**

As far as principles are concerned, nine participants did not respond and only two teachers tried to answer the question. Teachers four seems to be more aware of the reading process and gave himself/herself more time to answer the question. That teacher spoke about three main pillars of the teaching/ learning process, which are:

- Objectives (should be clear)
- Learner' centeredness (teacher just as a guide where involving students and enhancing interaction)
- The course (interest of learners)

- Variation of materials and activities to motivate learners and avoid boredom

### **Question 11. What do a reading sequence look like?**

Unfortunately, ten teachers refused to answer that question. Only one teacher (named T4) explained a reading sequence as follows:

“Teachers should consider reading strategies as a part of every lesson objectives, so in every language course (grammar, phonetics, written expression) or content lesson (culture, linguistics, ESP), we may teach reading strategies as a part of any reading task. For me and as many educationalists agree, a reading lesson should be presented in three stages: before reading, during reading and after reading stage.

#### **[1] Before reading: Plan for the reading task**

- Set a purpose or decide in advance what to read for
- Decide if more linguistic or background knowledge is needed
- Determine whether to enter the text from the top down (attend to the overall meaning) or from the bottom up (focus on the words and phrases)

#### **[2] During and after reading: Monitor comprehension**

- Verify predictions and check for inaccurate guesses
- Decide what is and is not important to understand
- Reread to check comprehension
- Ask for help

#### **[3] After reading: Evaluate comprehension and strategy use**

- Evaluate comprehension in a particular task or area
- Evaluate overall progress in reading and in particular types of reading tasks
- Decide if the strategies used were appropriate for the purpose and for the task
- Modify strategies if necessary

That teacher added this reading sequence is brought from the official site of essentials of language teaching that belong to the NCLRC (centre The National Capital Language Resource Center, Washington, DC). Finally, that teacher said:” in the phase of planning, teachers should raise students’ awareness about reading strategies and how to apply them either by discussing them or modelling (i.e. giving them examples)”



**Question 12. In your view, what are the characteristics of good language readers?**

<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Characteristics of Good Readers</b>
<b>T1</b>	➤ a good reader should apply all what he/she learns in the other 3 skills (listening, speaking and writing)
<b>T2</b>	NOTHING
<b>T3</b>	NOTHING
<b>T4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ are motivated to read</li> <li>➤ read extensively</li> <li>➤ integrate information in the text with existing knowledge (able to activate his/her schemata)</li> <li>➤ have a flexible reading style, depending on what he/she is reading</li> <li>➤ rely on different skills (perceptual processing, phonemic processing and recall)</li> <li>➤ read for a purpose</li> <li>➤ choose the appropriate strategy depends on time, space and purpose when using any reading strategy.(eg.SQ3R)</li> </ul>
<b>T5</b>	NOTHING
<b>T6</b>	NOTHING
<b>T7</b>	NOTHING
<b>T8</b>	➤ Able to decode any alphabetical construction
<b>T9</b>	➤ Strict, serious, resourceful
<b>T10</b>	NOTHING
<b>T11</b>	NOTHING

**Table 14. Teachers' Perception Of Characteristics Of Good Readers**

Understanding characteristics of proficient or good readers is a key element to understand our practice of reading. If teachers know what are the characteristics of good language readers, they will surely know if their students are good or not, and if not the case, what are the factors that teachers should work on to improve the status of their learners. Unfortunately, seven participants did not reply at all, two answered in a very general way and only one gave a few technical characteristics. Researchers agreed about a set of characteristics, summarized by Baumann and Duffy (1997) as following:

- Mentally engaged
- Motivated to read and to learn
- Socially active around reading tasks
- Strategic in monitoring the interactive processes that assist comprehension by setting goals that shape their reading processes, monitoring their emerging understanding of a text and coordinating a variety of comprehension strategies to control the reading process (Baumann & Duffy 1997 in Schoenbach et al, 1999)

**Question 13. A. Rate each of the following statements by circling the appropriate number?**

The respondents were presented with three statements and asked to grade them in terms of importance on a scale from 1 to 5 starting with the most important statement. The value is given as follows:

- [1] Strongly agree
- [2] I agree
- [3] Disagree
- [4] Strongly disagree
- [5] Neutral

**a) Learning Reading**

Statements	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11
<b>Students learn reading naturally as they acquire language skills</b>	3	1	1	2	3	2	1	2	2	1	1
<b>phonics is the most important way of helping students to learn reading</b>	1	3	5	3	5	3	4	1	5	2	2
<b>students cannot learn reading only if they learn reading strategies</b>	3	1	2	1	3	1	2	2	3	2	1

**Table 15. Teachers' Definition Of Reading**

Most of the participants are with the view arguing that young readers begin to read by drawing on what they know about the meaningfulness of language. Their recreation of meaning is confirmed, or not, by the selective sampling of words and letters. Phonics and word matching skills, which enable readers to translate letters and words into oral equivalents, develop in context and are needed to refine the readers' ability; they are not regarded as the basis of it.

From the table, we notice that the majority of teachers strongly agree that students learn reading naturally as they acquire language skills whereas only a few strongly agree that students cannot learn reading only if they learn reading strategies. It is obvious that teachers neglect the importance of teaching strategies whereas strategies determine the approach for achieving the learning objectives and are included in the pre-instructional activities, information presentation, learner activities, testing, and follow-through. Teaching learning strategies also fosters autonomy, increase motivation, reduce anxiety and most importantly enhance communicative competence. Rebecca Oxford confirms that and says: (1990) "...are especially important for language learning because they are tools for active, self-directed involvement, which is essential for developing communicative competence" (Oxford in Lessard, 1997) or as the proverb says: "Give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Teach him how to fish and he eats for a lifetime" (Griffiths, 2004: 1)

**b) In order for someone to read, she/he needs the following skills**

Statements	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11
<b>Comprehension</b>	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	5	1	1
<b>Word recognition</b>	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	1
<b>knowledge of letters and sounds</b>	1	1	1	5	2	1	2	1	1	1	1

**Table 16. Skills Needed in Reading**

Seven participants strongly agree that comprehension, word recognition and knowledge of letters and sounds are skills needed in reading and gave them the same value. T4 gave more importance to comprehension, then word recognition and less focus on letters and sounds. T9 gave more importance to knowledge of letters and sounds which in fact is less important than comprehension where the communicative shift of language teaching focuses on meaning of the context rather than form. In this sense, Browne (1998: 8) argued that 'the teaching of reading is influenced by the conscious and unconscious assumptions teachers have about what is involved in learning to read and, albeit simplistically, this can be matched to the models of reading. The model that teachers and schools subscribe to affects which skills and processes they stress and the order in which they are taught. This is linked to the definition of reading that teachers have and their understanding of

reading strategies and uses of reading. Thus, the way teachers perceive the nature of reading and reading process, influence highly their practice, their objectives and their decisions.

**C. reading activities can help students improve the following skills**

skills	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11
<b>Speaking</b>	1	1	2	1	3	1	2	1	3	2	1
<b>Listening</b>	1	1	2	1	3	1	2	1	5	2	1
<b>Writing</b>	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1
<b>Thinking</b>	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1

**Table 17. Skills Improved Through Reading Activities**

The majority of teachers agree that reading activities help in developing speaking, listening, writing and thinking. That confirms that our teachers are aware about the role of teaching reading and reading strategies to improve language skills as well as thinking skill (cognitive processes). But what is also obvious is that teachers valued writing more than speaking, listening and thinking. In fact, reading activities improve communicative competence with all its components (the linguistic aspects and the pragmatic aspects).

**Question 14. How confident you are about teaching reading strategies?**

<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Teachers' Confidence</b>
<b>T1</b>	confident in a limited way
<b>T2</b>	confident in a limited way
<b>T3</b>	not at all confident
<b>T4</b>	confident in a limited way
<b>T5</b>	quite confident
<b>T6</b>	quite confident
<b>T7</b>	confident in a limited way
<b>T8</b>	<u>very confident</u>
<b>T9</b>	<u>quite confident</u>
<b>T10</b>	<u>quite confident</u>
<b>T11</b>	confident in a limited way

**Table 18. Teachers' Confidence in Teaching Reading Strategies**

It is good to be confident in ourselves, but it is better to be realistic and objective. Teachers (5, 6, 9 and 10) stated that they are quite confident; teacher 8 seems to be very confident. If we refer just to the answer to that question, we will feel optimistic and happy about the status of teaching at our department but in fact through the analysis of the previous question and that question, we find a great sort of contradiction. The majority of our teachers are not aware about the reading skill, they do not know its principles, purposes and what a reading sequence look like. Further, they do not know reading strategies, types of reading activities and what the characteristics of good readers are and they pretend being quite and very confident about teaching reading. Five teachers seem to be realistic where one is very realistic by saying the truth of the matter declaring that he/she is not confident at all. Objectivity is one of the characteristics of the scientific researchers, and teachers are researchers so should have this spirit. If we don't think about our problems, talk about them and know our needs, we will never think about change or bring it to our practice.

**Question 15. What do you think, being able to read means**

Statements	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11
<b>knowing the alphabetical code</b>					√						
<b>being able to extract meaning from a text</b>	√	√	√		√			√	√		√
<b>being able to integrate a number of skills in order to extract meaning</b>	√			√		√	√	√		√	

**Table 19. Defning Ability To Read**

As far as knowing the alphabetical code, only one teacher put a tick because this type of knowledge doesn't mean ability to read. 6 teachers emphasized the ability to extract meaning from a text and ability to integrate a number of skills in order to extract meaning, so the latter includes the former, i.e. a reader cannot extract meaning from a text only if he/she is able to choose and use the appropriate strategy for that. Thus, being able to read means being able to use strategies to achieve the communicative goal behind reading, which lies in the message and meaning, rather than knowing the alphabetical system which is only one aspect of communicative competence.

**Question 16. Sources of difficulty in reading may involve**

Source	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	N
Many topics to cover	√		√			√	√			√	√	6
Large number	√			√	√	√		√	√	√	√	8
Students' cultural background	√				√	√		√			√	5
Students' level	√	√			√	√		√			√	6
Lack of time	√	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√	1
Lack of resources	√					√	√				√	4
Lack of teachers' knowledge	√			√	√	√	√	√				6
Lack of motivation	√				√	√	√	√	√			6

**Table 20. Sources Of Difficulty In Teaching Reading**

Frankly speaking, all these factors contribute in creating teachers' and students demotivation. The first factor is in not emphasized by many teachers, but our curriculum is based on quantity and content rather than quality and skills improvement. Thus, instead of the focus on developing skills, teachers are obliged to finish the content by the end of the semester or the year. As far as the size of our classes is concerned, the situation we are living in is catastrophic. The number of students per class for this year reached 70 students per group. This is for a TD session where as for lectures; it may reach 200 and 300 per section. The third factor is students' background and students' level; it causes a great difficulty because first year students came from different streams (literary, scientific and technical) and from different regions (south, north, and east). Being so, implies that they



have different levels of ability, different perception of the world and different motives to learn the language and culture. In most of cases, students who come from north or east are more open to new culture, new technology and more interactively motivated to learn and read about that language where as students coming from the south are with less knowledge and less motivation either to learn or to read. There are many students who think that being integrated to the culture of the other language doesn't mean only reading it, knowing it but rather assimilation to it; that is why they reject the culture of the foreign language and then reject reading everything about it.

Speaking about time, 10 teachers emphasized that factor because as teachers we are supposed to finish the syllabus given by the administration by the end of the semester or the year. This leads teachers to think, shall we focus on the content or teaching methodology; if teachers decide a change in a program, adding materials, varying activities or applying a new technique in their practice they should think a lot about time devoted to the session and the objectives behind each lesson. Here, I remember the story of one of the teachers of the department who had a chance of training with an American group under the MEPI project (Middle East Partnership Initiative) between the US embassy and the Algerian ministry of higher education. That teacher learnt a lot of new ideas during all phases of the training. She told me: "when I came back, and decided on change in my practice, the first thing I applied was group work. In phonetics, with the first group, it was just first trial but a challenge in itself. I spent 40 minutes to divide the groups, explain the assignment and make them familiar with group work, but in next groups, the experience was amazing, however, we spent a long time in doing one activity instead of four or five.

Now, we move to the last and most important factor which is lack of teachers' knowledge. As a matter of fact, we lack in Algeria what is called in service training; so, there is no bridge between teachers' knowledge of teaching as graduate students and their practice of teaching when they start the profession. Nowadays, many scholars and educationalists discussed the issue of teacher development, what teachers need to know about language, what teachers need to know about personal wellbeing by Debra Ferguson (2008), what teachers need to know about learning difficulties by Peter Westwood (2008), and what teachers need to know about teaching methods by Peter Westwood (2008), what teachers need to know about language qualities of effective teachers by James Strong

(2007), the skillful teacher by Stephen Brookfield (2006), Teaching as a performing art by Seymour Sarason (1999) and many other interesting books. Further, even if we don't have the chance of participating in a training program, or attending international conferences abroad, as PHD researchers, we may at least attend our national and international seminars, read research findings, and follow online conferences and software resources. However, I don't agree with the four teachers who mentioned the lack of resources as a source of difficulty because reading materials are available where we go (in the internet, books...)

As far as motivation is concerned, as teachers we may work on changing our practice to fit our students' needs and different levels of ability so as to reduce anxiety and increase motivation. All of us agree, that factors influencing motivation are many internal and external; as teachers, we may not influence the internal one but the focus on the external factors may result in a change in the internal one (such as interest, goal). Teachers, who claim that their students are not motivated, should blame themselves of being not motivating. With materials that we have, in our circumstances, large classes, however, we may increase our students' motivation by the following strategies:

- ✓ enthusiasm and good relations with students
- ✓ varying activities
- ✓ knowing students needs by conducting case studies simply through questionnaires and interviews or our daily observation
- ✓ being open to know technology
- ✓ Read about what is happening in the fields of TEFL and educational psychology.
- ✓ Focus on individual, pair and group work in the classroom
- ✓ Encourage interaction
- ✓ Join online conferences and teaching forums
- ✓ Creating a space of interaction with your students as a personal website, a Moodle, a blog, a social network.....

**Question 17. Ways of improving teaching practice my include (tick the appropriate answer)**

ways	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	N
[1] cooperation between teachers	√			√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	9
[2] quality of resources	√					√	√	√		√		5
[3] quantity of resources	√						√			√		3
[4] smaller class size	√		√	√	√	√	√			√		7
[5] in-service training	√			√	√				√			4
[6] clear department policy	√	√			√				√			4
[7] more time for reading	√	√		√		√	√	√		√	√	8

**Table 21. Ways To Improve Teaching Practice**

We notice that more value is given to cooperation between teachers then more time for reading then smaller class size. Let's discuss the status of our department with reference to these factors. As far as cooperation between teachers is concerned, teachers gave it more value because all are aware that collaboration is essential to improve the status of teaching in any institution. Now, at the level of the English department, teachers of the same module are asked to meet once per a month in a form of pedagogical committees for each module, then, teachers of each year meet to discuss all issues related to the unity and

advancement of courses and students problems. In that process, every committee has a responsible and each year has a representative teacher who is in charge of: writing monthly a report about everything related to the process, discuss the problems which students raised with teachers and with the head of department and try to find together alternative solutions.

Quality and quantity of resources; teachers gave them least value because in fact we don't lack neither quality nor quantity of resources. We have a very rich library at our university; also teachers have access to internet either at faculty or outside. However, resources are not a serious factor to talk about when dealing with reading materials.

The third factor is smaller class size. As we mentioned above in the description of the department, the number of students per group reached 70 and sometimes more in a TD session, where as in a lecture, it may reach 200 and more. That's why all teachers suffer to find solution to deal with such crowded classes. Teachers don't have the chance even to move in the classroom and exchange ideas or feedback with their students. In a lecture, it is really difficult to speak about an interactive or communicative lecture. The challenge is a multifaceted issue: large number, low level of ability and a hard learning environment like the amphi theatre or rooms where no space to move, group students or engage them in activities such as role play.

Now, we move to in- service training; in fact in the Algerian university we don't have such programs to train and form teachers to be able to enter the profession with considerable knowledge and awareness. So, everything teachers do in the classroom is a part of their personal improvement or understanding. Through, teachers who join online discussion and teaching forums, exchange ideas with people abroad and attend seminars have more chance to change and improve.

As far as the department policy is concerned, in the LMD system there is a framework (what is called in French "canvas") which is supposed to be followed in timing, the type of courses and semesters devoted to them. However, teachers don't have the ability to change these basic things; rather, the only authority teachers have is the syllabus because

as a part of the department's policy, it is the staff teaching the module, are responsible for designing the syllabi. This leads us to talk about the last factor that teachers gave important value which is more time for reading. As teachers of particular module, we don't have the right to change the timing, the structure of the unity or anything related to the curriculum. However, teachers find that confusing and a sort of injustice, oppression and discrimination.

### 3.3.3 Section Three: Teachers' Practice of Reading Strategies in Language Classrooms

**Question 18. Reading strategies best be taught in the module of:**

Teachers	Mentioned Modules
T1	Written Expression, Oral Expression, phonetics & culture of the language
T2	Research Methodology
T3	Oral Expression & Research Methodology
T4	ALL OF THEM
T5	Written Expression, culture of the language & ESP
T6	ALL OF THEM
T7	ALL OF THEM
T8	ALL OF THEM
T9	Grammar & Written Expression
T10	Written Expression, Oral Expression & culture of the language
T11	Research Methodology

**Table 22. Teachers' Views About Best Module For Teaching Reading Strategies**

From the answers above, we notice that only four teachers are aware of the importance of teaching reading strategies in every point we teach about language. As we mentioned before, the main objective of the department's curriculum is to learn language and develop language skills; however, teaching content is just a means not a goal in itself. If we teach culture, ESP or any other content module it is to teach language skill, i.e.

integrating receptive and productive skills in every module we teach. A reading task must be integrated to objectives of all courses and this might not be achieved without teaching reading strategies to help students develop this capacity of comprehension to handle linguistic competence, pragmatic competence as well as content knowledge. Other teachers mentioned modules such as written expression, oral expression and research methodology where in fact, when we had a look at the syllabi of 1<sup>st</sup> year, we noticed that only the teacher of research methodology “study skills” who integrated the lesson of reading strategies and reading microskills.

**Question 19. Whatever your choice is state why?**

About the reason, teachers answered in the following terms:

- **T1 said:**” reading is a very important stage in all modules, but due to many factors, we can integrate it only in a few of them.’

- **T2 mentioned:** “lack of time to cover the syllabus”

- **T3 declared:**” because in other modules, we don’t have time.”

- **T4 explained:** “we are learning English through a set of modules, not the opposite, i.e. learning content through language. So, our first purpose is to develop language skills not the developing the knowledge of the content of each module. That’s why all four skills must be integrated in every course we teach and teachers should train their students to read and use reading strategies whenever they deal with any reading task or material; otherwise, even the content will be difficult and lose the purpose which it is designed for.”

- **T5** didn’t answer at all

- **T6 stated:** “**reading** is necessary to acquire language and knowledge about that language.”

- **T7 said:**” they help the learner develop his learning strategies as well as thinking strategies”

- **T8 declared:** “ in all modules because I find that reading as a skill is not a part of any module to be practiced; all modules regardless of their objectives, must focus on learning how to read in order to understand and achieve learning outcomes”

- **T9** didn’t answer

- **T10** didn't answer

- **T11** didn't answer.

Research proved that teaching learning strategies is essential in any practice or with any content. Confirming that, Oxford (1990) says: “learning strategies are specific actions, behaviours, steps, or techniques students use, often consciously, to improve their progress in apprehending, internalizing, and using the L2” (Oxford 1990 in Oxford, 1994). So, teachers who chose only a particular module and claimed about time have to rethink about their practice and their beliefs.

**Question 20. What is the size of your class?**

<b>Teachers</b>	<b>class size</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>class size</b>
<b>T1</b>	60-74	<b>T7</b>	60-70
<b>T2</b>	60-70	<b>T8</b>	60-70
<b>T3</b>	60-70	<b>T9</b>	37
<b>T4</b>	120-180	<b>T10</b>	65
<b>T5</b>	60-70	<b>T11</b>	60-70
<b>T6</b>	60-70		

**Table 23. The Class Size**

We notice from teachers' responses that class size at the department of English doesn't fit the standards of pedagogy, standards of the LMD system nor the conditions of communicative language teaching, where the focus normally is on the learners (learner-centered approach) as the heart of the learning/teaching process. In our case, teachers claim that they are not able even to remember students' names, control activities or work on pair or group work. Teachers, in this case feel sick because even if they decide to change their practice, sometimes, in an amphi theatre or a small classroom, the teacher is not even able to move between the rows, correct students works or at least interact with his/her students.

**Question 21. In your opinion, how can teachers help students learn when and how to use learning strategies?**

ways	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	N
modeling the strategies aloud		√	√	√					√			4
allowing time in the class for individual and group use of different strategies as preparation for in class and out of class reading	√			√		√		√			√	5
using cloze to review vocabulary items												0
encouraging students to talk about what strategies they think will help them approach a reading assignment				√	√		√	√	√	√		6

**Table 24. Ways Used By Teachers To Help Students Learn When and How To Use Learning Strategies**

Teachers gave more importance to encouraging students to talk about what strategies they think will help them approach the reading assignments then use the appropriate one,



then allowing time in the class for individual and group use of different strategies as a preparation for in class and out of class reading and less importance to modeling the strategies aloud. In fact, all these ways maybe used and all have the same value according to the nature of the task or the assignment, the purpose of reading and the type of the reading material.

**Question 22. In your view, teaching Reading strategies enhance communicative competence?**

To that question, all teachers responded positively and said ‘yes’, only one teacher said ‘no’ and we don’t know the reason why.

**Question 23. If yes, do they develop linguistic or pragmatic competence?**

competence aspects	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	N
linguistic aspects	√	√	√	√		√	√		√	√	√	9
pragmatic aspects	√			√			√	√				4

**Table 25. Reading Strategies enhance linguistic or pragmatic competence?**

Unfortunately, the majority of teachers think that reading strategies enhance only the linguistic aspect of communicative competence (i.e. Phonology and orthography, Grammar, Vocabulary and Discourse), and they neglect the pragmatic component that includes (Functions, Variations, Interactional skills and Cultural framework). What is remarked here, is that even the pragmatic aspects of communicative competence may be taught and developed through reading. However, the answers reveal that teachers still lack knowledge and awareness about the issue of communicative competence and are still thinking about Chomsky’s view of the concept ; whereas, in this question, we mean Hymes notion encompassing all aspects beyond the grammatical and the linguistic knowledge.

**Question 24. In your view, what are Strategies that help students read quickly?**

competence aspects	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	N
Previewing		√	√	√		√		√	√	√	√	8
Predicting												0
skimming	√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√			8
Scanning	√	√		√	√	√	√	√		√		8
guessing								√		√		2
Paraphrasing						√		√		√		3

**Table 26. Strategies That Help Students Read Quickly**

The majority of teachers are aware that the main reading strategies used when reading quickly and don't having time are: previewing, scanning and skimming. Teachers who mentioned paraphrasing, in my view are wrong because doing so is a difficult task that needs time and thinking about meaning. Same thing can be said about guessing where the reader needs indexes and references to guess, so time also is a problem here to read quickly. Therefore, previewing is best strategy to read quickly when the purpose is to have a look at a reading material to decide whether or not it is useful and we should read it or not. Skimming is reading quickly to get an overview and scanning is quick reading to check a specific piece of information.

### **Question 25. What do you do to plan for a reading task?**

Unfortunately, teachers who were confident in ‘question 14’ now are passive and refused to answer the question. Eight teachers did not answer. Only three of the participants explained the way they plan for a reading lesson or reading task. The answers were as following:

#### **T1 stated: “my reading lesson look like**

- choosing an appropriate text suitable for the activity
- explaining the main ideas of the text
- teacher’s first reading
- asking students to look for the new vocabulary in dictionaries after their first silent reading
- giving the opportunity to students to read by engaging the maximum number in the task.”

#### **T4 said:” My plan for a reading task is as follows:**

- set a purpose or decide in advance what to read for
- decide if more linguistic knowledge is needed (vocabulary, phonology or grammar)
- determine whether to enter the text from the top-down (attend to the overall meaning) or from bottom-up (focus on the words or phrases)
- determine or select the suitable strategy after discussing that with students and let them choose the appropriate one.”

#### **T8 said: “I plan for reading tasks in the following way:**

- prepare the reading material or text
- ask students to read silently to get the general idea
- asking them for a second reading to understand the whole meaning
- read in detail in order to review, summarize or evaluate. “

**Question 26. What do you know about PDP?**

<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>knowledge</b>
<b>T1</b>	personal development planning	<b>T7</b>	NOTHING
<b>T2</b>	pre-during and post reading	<b>T8</b>	personal development planning
<b>T3</b>	NOTHING	<b>T9</b>	NOTHING
<b>T4</b>	pre-during and post reading	<b>T10</b>	NOTHING
<b>T5</b>	NOTHING	<b>T11</b>	NOTHING
<b>T6</b>	NOTHING		

**Table 27. Teachers' Knowledge Of PDP**

We notice that the majority of our teachers do not know much about the teaching/learning process; that's why six of them did not respond and said nothing about. Two teachers mentioned something out of the subject of teaching reading and only two teachers confirmed that they have considerable knowledge about the different stages of a reading task.

**Question 27. If you apply it in the classroom, what kind of activities do you use in each stage?**

<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Activities</b>
<b>T1</b>	NOTHING	<b>T7</b>	NOTHING
<b>T2</b>	Fill in the gaps, discussion, matching	<b>T8</b>	Storytelling, loud reading
<b>T3</b>	NOTHING	<b>T9</b>	NOTHING
<b>T4</b>	Brainstorming, word splash, cloze, matching, MCQ, strips , discussion	<b>T10</b>	NOTHING
<b>T5</b>	NOTHING	<b>T11</b>	NOTHING
<b>T6</b>	NOTHING		

**Table 28. Activities Used In PDP**

As we notice in the table, eight teachers didn't mention any reading activity even we are sure that many of them deal with reading activities in a way or another. The problem is that teachers are not able to express their beliefs as we not aware of the purpose of many techniques and activities they apply in their classrooms. Evidently, all teachers teach reading for a particular purpose, and absolutely they ask students to accomplish a task or an assignment; however, they give instruction but when asked to describe a lesson sequence, a lesson plan or smart objectives, they feel speechless because of the lack knowledge about TEFL itself (methods, techniques, materials, activities...)

**Question 28. What do you know about the SQ3R?**

Teachers	Knowledge	Teachers	Knowledge
T1	survey, questions, read, recite, review	T7	NOTHING
T2	survey, questions, read, recall, review	T8	survey, questions, read, recite, review
T3	NOTHING	T9	NOTHING
T4	survey, questions, read, recall, review	T10	NOTHING
T5	NOTHING	T11	NOTHING
T6	NOTHING		

**Table 29. Teachers' Knowledge Of The SQ3R**

Nearly the same can be said as in the case of PDP, seven teachers have no idea about the SQ3R strategy which represents a process we can use to read something in detail. It is useful when we need to fully understand written information. There are five stages in the process. The first two involve previewing, skimming and scanning. then, **Survey** which means : means previewing to decide if it will be of any help; and then skimming the contents, introduction, chapter introductions and chapter summaries to get an overview. **Questions** : when we survey, make a note of any questions that come to mind. Then scan to find answers to these questions. This can help you to understand and structure the information. Finally **The 3Rs in SQ3R** representing: **Read**, Then read through the useful sections of the document in detail, making sure we understand all the important points. Take notes, perhaps as a 'mind map'. **Recall**: once we've finished reading, run through it in our minds several times to recall what we've read. Make sure we know what the main points are and how the details fit around them. **Review** : once we've recalled the information, the last stage is to review it. Reread the document, expand our notes, or discuss the material with friends. An effective method of reviewing information is to try to teach it to someone else.

**Question 29. Do you apply this technique (SQ3R) in the classroom?**

Only two responded positively, all others stated that they do not use this strategy in their classrooms. The reason is clear because they dont have much knowledge about reading strategies and puposes behing each strategy.

**Question 30. The following question present 8 teaching techniques rank them from 1 to 8.**

(1 to the most frequently used in your classes, 2 to the next frequent and 8 to the least frequent technique used.)

Readings	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11
[1] Paired reading	1	DID NOT ANSWER	DID NOT ANSWER	2	DID NOT ANSWER	3	DID NOT ANSWER	2	4	DID NOT ANSWER	DID NOT ANSWER
[2] Group reading	2			1		4		6	3		
[3] Silent reading	3			4		2		4	1		
[4] Loud individual reading	3			1		1		2			
[5] Story telling	6			5		3		5			
[6] Plays	7			7		7		5			
[7] big books	5			8		5		8			
[8] reading schemes	8			3		6		8	7		

**Table 30. Ranking Types Of Readings Used In The Classroom**

Six teachers were realistic and did not answer because either they don't know these types or because they don't use them in their classrooms. One teacher ranked only four of them and gave a remark about the others, declaring that they are not used at all in my teaching, how can we rank them and give them value. The remaining showed contradiction because when asked about a reading lesson plan and activities used in teaching reading, the majority answered negatively, whereas now, they are claiming using all the eight types of reading. Moreover, whatever the ranking is, our intention is just to raise teachers'

awareness about a few types of reading and see the way they perceive them. All mentioned types maybe applied according to the objectives of the teacher, time devoted to the task, available teaching materials, class size and students' level.

As far as paired reading is concerned, research showed great importance of that technique; however, this approach Waterland (1985) suggested that the adult would read with the child and each would contribute to the reading from the book. There would be a gradual development from the child listening to the reading to the child reading alongside the teacher, and then the child begins to take over the reading. None of this sequence can be prescribed however, the teacher sensitive to the needs of the child, will make decisions about how the learners can be supported. (In Campbell, 1990: 25)

Silent reading is also given a considerable focus ; to confirm that, Campbell Campbell (1990: 70) recognised the importance of silent reading but argued that three aspects within the organisation of sustained silent reading required careful attention. Time, materials and guidance. A short, gradually lengthening amount of time linked to a natural break in the school day, a wide range of interesting and meaningful books, and guidelines, which included quietness with the teacher also reading were suggested

**Question 31. During your classes, in reading activities, do your students work?**

competence aspects	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	N
Individually	√	√	√		√	√	√	√	√		√	9
in pairs	√			√	√	√	√	√				6
in small group				√	√	√	√	√		√		6
as a whole class									√			1



**Table 31.Type Of Students' Work In Reading Tasks**

**Question 32. In the following activity, rate the factors that influence teachers practice and change in belief:**

**a. factors that influence your practice**

factors	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11
[1] Heads' views	4	3	1	3	5	3	1	4	5	4	1
[2] Students' level	2	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
[3] Materials	1	1	1	3	2	1	1	2	2	2	1
[4] colleagues views	3	3	5	4	3	3	2	4	4	4	3
[5] time devoted for sessions	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	3	4	1
[6] syllabus	1	1	2	1	2	4	1	1	2	3	2
[7] class size	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	2	1
[8] my own beliefs	4	1	2	1	4	5	3	1	5	3	3

**Table 32. Factors That Influence Teachers' Practice**

We notice from the table, that the majority of teachers gave less value to colleagues view where as research confirmed that collaboration between teachers is one of the effective ways to to make change. Nowadays, in the USA for example, their is a tendency to use the **IDEA CYCLE** (IDENTIFY/ DESCRIBE/ EXPAND/ACT) where teachers and

educators are supposed to exchange their ideas and talk about their problems. The process is as follows :

1. **identify** an issue (what needs improvement or reinforcement)
2. **describe** the situation (focus person speaks, partner listens)
3. **expand** (invite more description, multiply interpretations and perspectives, suggest possible actions)
4. **act** (focus person choose an action)

But at the same time, in summarising Lortie's (1975) work, Hargreaves (1989) claimed that, 'teachers avoid long-term planning and collaboration with their colleagues and resist involvement in whole-school policy-making, in favour of gaining marginal improvements in time and resources to make their own classroom work easier'. (p. 54) Perhaps this was the way of thinking for teachers who did not give value to colleagues' suggestions bore little or no influence on their practice.

**b. What might lead you to change your teaching practice?**

Factors	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11
1) Change in syllabus	1	3	1	5	2	5	1	1	5	3	1
2) Your own understanding of the positive effect that a new practice has on class	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	2	2	1
3) suggestions of your	2	3	1	2	1	5	1	2	3	2	3

colleagues											
4) motivation (any reward given by your institution)	2	3	3	2	3	1	1	3	2	2	1

**Table 33. Reasons To Change Teachers' Beliefs**

The majority emphasised the understanding of the positive effect that a new practice has on class as is the key element for a change in teaching practice, reconfirmed that “the extent to which teachers adopt new instructional practices in their classrooms, relates closely to the degree of alignment between their personal beliefs and the assumptions underlying particular innovative programs or methods” (Medwell, Wray, Poulson and Fox, 1998: 25)

**Question 33. Which of the following materials do you use to teach reading?**

The response to this question was expected; however, ten teachers confirmed that they use commercially produced materials and this is obvious because in Algeria, at the university level, we do not have such university produced materials. One teacher ‘T8’ chose university produced materials and we do not know what the participant means by that. In fact, all teachers at the English departments rely on their own materials (internet, books, CDs, audio, video tapes). This implies that a teacher who is not familiar with technology, will find great difficulty to bring materials that he /she needs for any reading task where reading needs always to be integrated either with speaking, listening or writing to achieve the communicative aim of teaching foreign language.

**Question 34. Please state An example of a reading activity that you have recently done in class, which you think best exemplifies your approach to the teaching of reading (also state your aims)**

To that question, unfortunately, only two teachers responded positively where all others said nothing about through in previous questions, they declared teaching reading in their classrooms. Teachers T4 and T6 answered in the following terms:

**T4 said :**'a recent activity i applied in the classroom was : reading a text about 'memory' to first year students in the course of Study Skills (research methodology). The sequence of the reading task was as follows :

- ❖ Pre-reading activity : based on brainstorming as an individual work, where students were supposed to write everything they know about the subject before reading the handout. They were asked to draw a mindmap and write all words and expressions they know about the subject.

- ❖ During reading : i gave students strips including all the key concepts of the lesson, mainly problems of memory and ways to improve memory. Then, grouped students into small groups and asked them to discuss the concepts one by one. Also, students were asked to invite me in a case of confusion or disagreement. So my job was only a guide and facilitator. Finally together, we discussed the difficult concepts in the strips, linked them together to have an overview of the text.

- ❖ Post reading : i gave students the handout of the lesson, where all concepts in the strips are explained in detail, asked my students to use the SQ3R to read in detail then summarize the lesson in their own words as a home assignment.

Then, **T4 added:** "The aim of that activity as follows : « the aim of these activities was to activate students schemata (prior knowledge) about the new subject to bridge the gap between what they already know and new concepts and ideas. Also, the objective was to give them the chance to interact and be involved in everything we do in class through group work. In addition to that, to eliminate the distance between the teacher and students in the amphitheatre so as to increase motivation and reduce anxiety where they could be in contact with the teachers as well as their classmates. Another reason, is to encourage students to discuss and have critical thinking besides giving them the chance to speak the foreign language with the teacher and together."

**T6 said :** " in grammar, i taught students parts of speech using reading a literary text "

But that participant did explain neither the task sequence nor the aim behind teaching.

**Question 35. Briefly describe one or two of your most important beliefs about teaching reading that guide you in your day to day practice.**

To that question, participants also refused to express their beliefs about teaching reading through we are sure that every teacher has a certain belief, positif or negative but reflects his/her own perception of the matter. Only three teachers answered the question (T4 ,T6 and T8)

**T4 stated the following:** «as far as I am concerned, i believe:

[1] Before starting any process of teaching any subject, we should first teach our learners learning strategies. Many studies, mainly Oxford's proved that teaching learning strategies is the only way to encourage autonomy and realise learner-centeredness. (learning strategies including reading strategies, listening strategies...)

[2] As a teacher of language or any other subject, we should (if not must) know the main aspects of pedagogy (the learner, the course, the learning environment) even if we are teaching civilization or literature, being a teacher obliges us to know about TEFL and educational psychology in order to be able to know our students' needs and to work to meet those needs. Also, being open to what is happening in research about education may help us be flexible and able to bring change to our practice. »

**T6 briefly said :** “ Teaching reading strategies is essential to enhance learning a foreign language “

**T8 said:”** according to me, the reading skill is the most important way through which we teach students many things. I believe that only the lack of reading influences students' level because it is the means to develop their writing, learning styles. So, the best way to enrich students' knowledge is reading; however, every teacher should teach reading.”

**Question 36. Think about your first year of teaching and compare what you did then with what you do now; what are some of the important ways your approach to teaching reading has changed?**

Change is regarded as a major dimension of teachers' professional lives. Education is normally predicted around the need to provide opportunities for thoughtful, positive change. Pennington (1990:132) describes positive change as central to the professional life of a teacher. She comments that "a distinguishing characteristic of the notion of teaching as a profession is the centrality of career growth as an ongoing goal (Pennington in Richards et al, 2001:5). In addition, Freeman (1989 pp 29-30) highlights a number of aspects of the notion of change.

- Change does not necessarily mean doing something differently; it can mean a change in awareness. Change can be an affirmation of current practice
- Change is not necessarily immediate or complete. Indeed some changes occur over time, with the collaborator serving only to initiate the process.
- Some changes are directly accessible by collaborator and thereafter quantifiable, whereas others are not.
- Some types of a change can come to closure and others are open-ended (Freeman in Richards et al 200: 5)

From the responses of our participants, we infer that they are not aware about the meaning of change itself, which prevented them from answering the question although every one of us witnesses a change in his /her life daily. The participants were also showed passivity to that question where only two of them responded to it (T1 and T4) saying the following:

Teachers	Then	Now
<b>T1</b>	Slight emphasis on reading	great emphasis especially in history and culture, extra activities after reading (checking words, reporting, commenting, giving personal views)
<b>T4</b>	I thought that because of time, I cannot teach reading in class, so i used always to give home assignments. Also, i intended to use only individual reading with whole texts, once i thought that group reading is impossible.	For me, time now is not a problem. Now, I use the SQ3R my students where i train them to read quickly for different purposes (skim, scan and preview). Also instead of reading a long boring text, now i use strips, word splash, mindmaps. ..and instead of doing it individually, i ask students to read in group, discuss what they read and make a review so as to enhance interaction and get scaffolding.

**Table 34. Teachers' Change In The Approach Of Teaching Reading**

**Question 37. What are the sources of the changes you identified above?**

sources	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11
feedback from colleagues											
feedback from students											
trial and error				√							
keeping a teaching journal											
attending in-service courses				√							
attending seminars and conference	√			√							
self discover	√			√							

**Table 35. The Sources Of The Change Mentioned**



## **Explanation of the given answer by T1 and T4**

**T1 said :** “ of course, seminars and conferences are very useful ways in giving teachers the opportunity to exchange information and knowledge in the teaching-learning process. Those ways also let teachers to rethink about their methods, techniques in dealing with students “

**T4 said :** “ as university teachers, though we do not have the chance to attend training programs such as the MEPI which was recently carried out as a convention between our ministry of Higher education and US embassy, we have to rely on ourselves and our own resources to be aware of the new findings, new research, new methods and techniques. So, we should not stay with hands crossed and blame our authorities, our educational system and our students; rather, we should work on our teaching practice and knowledge by:

- ✓ Conducting research (case studies) about our learners and about the status of FL learning
- ✓ Being updated, particularly in using technology
- ✓ Attend conferences at Algerian universities or online
- ✓ Join forums online and group discussions, further, we may create a space for our learners as well as for us such as a blog, a Moodle or a website...etc”

## **4. Results**

The analysis of the teachers' questionnaire, unfortunately, revealed negative results from teachers who participated in the questionnaire. This section is devoted to discuss the general results obtained from data analysis. As far as teachers' personal information, we found that the majority of the staff teaching first year students are young (between 25 and 30 years old) and non-experienced. Another fact is that the majority of our teachers are part time teachers with only a license degree. s that, most of teachers who have MA, are specialized in language and civilization which means that their TEFL courses were not intensive and enough to have a comprehensive knowledge about pedagogy and TEFL. Another demotivating factor for teachers is the lack of training. All staff of the English department at Mohamed Kheider University did not have any chance of training program which is the same in all Algerian universities.

Concerning the learning situation level or the teaching environment, demotivating factors of different sources are present. The first factor is the crowded classes and the large number of students per group where many of our first year groups reached 70 students per class ; this is in a TD session where as we may find more than 200 in a lecture. The second factor that teachers always claim about the number of full time teachers teaching at the English department where we have just 26. Each year, the university finds out job positions but no candidates come to be recruited. The third factor is the syllabus where teachers are supposed to teach the whole content so as they must finish by the end of the year or semester. In this case, in most of modules, teachers focus on the content rather than language skills because they are obliged to cover the whole syllabus and have one unified exam. This leads us to speak about another important factor which is time ; teachers are confused about distributing time and are they supposed to focus on form, language skills or on content and the different subjects in the program. However, many teachers such as the teacher of the culture of the language, linguistics, ESP do not have time to teach strategies or competencies or focus on the communicative purpose of teaching such content. However, in many cases, we forget that we are teaching content for the sake of teaching language skills not the opposite.

Now, we move to teachers' beliefs, awareness and knowledge which is the aim of this study. The analysis of data revealed negative answers about those elements. The participants, when asked about the nature of the reading skill, i.e. what is the purpose of the reading skill, what are principles behind teaching reading, what are characteristics of good reader and what does a reading sequence look, all were passive, and only one teacher seemed to have a satisfactory knowledge about that. Then, when we asked them about reading strategies, the question was general in order to give them a chance to say whatever they know about; however, the majority were passive. We did not ask about the different types in a more technical way in order to avoid confusion, though, they did not respond to our question. Further, when asked about confidence, many of them said confident in a limited way, and others were between quite and very confident but when asked about activities they deal with to teach reading and reading strategies, only one teacher responded to the question.

Dealing with teachers' practice in the classroom, the participants were asked about the difference strategies they teach, materials they use and the different activities they rely on for a reading task. Most of questionnaire participants were conservative to answer in a clear way. Even, a few teachers mentioned a few reading strategies such as : skimming, scanning and previewing, when asked about the reading activities, the reading lesson

sequence, only one teacher was active and answered the question. Further, when asked about the most known reading lesson plan (PDP), the majority show negative reaction to that. Also, we asked teachers about a reading activity that they recently used in class and unfortunately, only one teacher explained his or her approach in teaching the activity and the aim behind that.

Finally, teachers were asked about the main factors that influence their practice, main beliefs about reading and reading strategies and any change that happened in their practice during their experience in teaching. About factors, all participants agree that students' number, students' level and time devoted to reading are the key elements affecting their teaching practice. Concerning their main beliefs about reading, only one teacher spoke about the importance of teaching reading strategies in all courses of the curriculum and the importance of teachers' awareness of everything happens in the field of TEFL and educational psychology. As far as change in practice is concerned, same thing can be said; only one teacher responded to the question and raised the issue of time and the type of reading materials. That teacher spoke about strategies that maybe used by students to gain time and fit the objectives of the lesson. Also, that teacher emphasized the importance of avoiding long boring texts; instead, teachers should focus on short and motivating reading materials.

## **Conclusion**

The results revealed that our teachers lack knowledge about the reading skill in general and reading strategies in particular. We have noticed that our teachers are not aware and need access to different sorts of knowledge. This questionnaire revealed that there is a strong need to train our teachers and organize workshops, seminars and conferences so as to discuss the different needs of the students, difficulties they encounter and to handle the different issues related to language learning and teaching.

## **Chapter Five: Pedagogical Implications**

### **Introduction**

Teachers' awareness, beliefs, knowledge and abilities are the most important factors in promoting students' learning. Teaching is a knowledge-based profession, and teachers, like other professionals, must remain informed about the latest development in content and teaching strategies. Staying current is especially important for foreign language teachers, given the rapid developments in cognitive research, particularly in second language acquisition. However, the aim of this chapter is to raise teachers' awareness about teachers' knowledge, teacher development and teaching reading strategies. To achieve this aim, the implications are classified into two paradigms: implications about teachers' knowledge and awareness and implications about teaching reading and reading strategies.

### **1. Implications about Teachers' Beliefs, Knowledge and Awareness**

When we handed out the questionnaire to the teachers of the department, the majority refused to respond because it is about the reading skill, claiming that they do not know much about it or they do not know at all. This reaction is due to the lack of awareness and knowledge about the learning/ teaching process. If teachers have general knowledge about what is happening in the field of TEFL, no one will refuse to respond to such questionnaire or interview or whatever. To solve that problem, the actions should not be done only by the teacher but it is a shared responsibility of the teacher, the educational system, the faculty staff and students as well. This section aims to provide a few suggestions to remind all of these sides about the importance of teachers' cognition and metacognition.

To solve these problems, one of the basic solutions is teacher education, training and development. Teachers start the career at University without any training program to support their knowledge and abilities. However, our Ministry of Higher Education can organize training programs to provide teachers with the knowledge needed, to raise their awareness about the different issues related to teaching and learning and help them change their negative beliefs and improve their practice. The authorities are claiming that the budget is not sufficient but if they exploit the budget devoted to short term training programs and other activities that are not beneficial, they can save money for at least two

teachers per a year. If this is not allowed and cannot be realized, our universities can organize training programs (sessions) led by our professors and doctors who are professionals and may do many things in the field of teaching.

Another action can be done by teachers at university if they are not supported by their institutions, is attending, participating and organizing conferences about the different issues that may lead them to raise their awareness, change their beliefs and improve their ways and practice. Though, we don't have chance to be trained in the different disciplines related to teaching (such as TEFL, sociolinguistics, language and linguistics, language and cultural diversity, language development, psycholinguistics, discourse analysis), we can support our knowledge by participating or at least attending conferences to achieve that and to see what is happening in the field of education.

Being open minded and updated is also another key element for teacher development. Teachers who do not have chance to meet people or who do not have time to do what we mentioned above, they can get access to the internet and read about what is happening in the domain of teaching languages. Nowadays, all conference papers, books and published articles are uploaded in the internet, so everyone can get access and take the benefit of them. In the past, teachers and researchers used to suffer from the lack of materials and the means of communications; nowadays, we can find any book we need and we can contact any person we think about.

## **2. Implications about Reading and Reading Strategies**

As we all know, teachers at the Algerian universities do not have the right to choose the different subjects of the curriculum; however, we cannot deny the fact that teachers have the right to prepare and change their syllabi if they want. The syllabus of each module we teach is not fixed, so we can change, add and improve. What we suggest here is not a complete change; rather, trying to integrate the reading skill in all modules we teach. Teachers claim that reading has to be taught only in content modules, but in fact, in every module we teach, we should integrate the four skills to enhance students' communicative competence because the aim today is to teach English for communication. Thus, even

teachers who are teaching grammar, written expression, oral expression, linguistics and phonetics normally they devote one or two activities to the reading skill.

A problem mentioned by the majority of the participants is the lack of time and the big number of students per class; what leads teachers to keep on teaching with traditional ways and techniques. Most teachers claim that 'if we have a small number and enough time, we can do better', in fact the good teacher is the one who is able to manipulate his/her class according to the circumstances. We all agree that the number of students is imaginable but we can vary activities and read about ways to deal with large classes. The large class does not prevent us if we want to design a reading activity or teach students reading strategies.

As far as reading is concerned, the participants when asked about principles, purposes and reading strategies, some did not reply and others spoke in general terms which implies that there is a great lack of knowledge about the reading skill and that it is neglected in our classrooms. To solve this problem, teachers should integrate one type of reading to each lesson we deliver; for example, in one lesson we use silent reading, in the next, we apply loud reading, then we ask them for extensive reading and intensive reading.....etc. further, when teaching a reading task, teachers can at the same time explain one or two appropriate strategies that suit the needed purpose; in this case, the teacher is not obliged to teach all reading strategies in a specific lesson.

Another basic element in teaching reading is the lesson sequence. Teachers should divide the reading task into at least three stages to facilitate the task for students. This can be done by relying on the PDP and varying activities, keeping reading strategies always in the phase of planning to raise their metacognitive abilities from the beginning. During reading tasks, one of the main principles that teachers should focus on is the focus on the learners (learner-centredness) and the focus on the communicative value of teaching where the teacher is just a guide even monitoring can be done by students themselves.

When dealing with reading strategies, teachers should bear in mind instruction in reading strategies is not an add-on, but rather an integral part of the use of reading activities

in the language classroom. Instructors can help their students become effective readers by teaching them how to use strategies before, during, and after reading. Here is an example of a lesson sequence:

### **Before Reading: Plan For The Reading Task**

- Set a purpose or decide in advance what to read for
- Decide if more linguistic or background knowledge is needed
- Determine whether to enter the text from the top down (attend to the overall meaning) or from the bottom up (focus on the words and phrases)

### **During And After Reading: Monitor Comprehension**

- Verify predictions and check for inaccurate guesses
- Decide what is and is not important to understand
- Reread to check comprehension
- Ask for help

### **After Reading: Evaluate Comprehension And Strategy Use**

- Evaluate comprehension in a particular task or area
- Evaluate overall progress in reading and in particular types of reading tasks
- Decide if the strategies used were appropriate for the purpose and for the task
- Modify strategies if necessary

Developing reading activities involves more than identifying a text that is "at the right level," writing a set of comprehension questions for students to answer after reading, handing out the assignment and sending students away to do it. A fully-developed reading activity supports students as readers through pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities. As you design reading tasks, keep in mind that complete recall of all the information in a text is an unrealistic expectation even for native speakers. Reading activities that are meant to increase communicative competence should be success oriented and build up students' confidence in their reading ability.

First Construct the reading activity around a purpose that has significance for the students make sure students understand what the purpose for reading is: to get the main idea, obtain specific information, understand most or the entire message, enjoy a story, or

decide whether or not to read more. Recognizing the purpose for reading will help students select appropriate reading strategies.

Second define the activity's instructional goal and the appropriate type of response, in addition to the main purpose for reading, an activity can also have one or more instructional purposes, such as practicing or reviewing specific grammatical constructions, introducing new vocabulary, or familiarizing students with the typical structure of a certain type of text.

Third, check the level of difficulty of the text; the factors listed below can help you judge the relative ease or difficulty of a reading text for a particular purpose and a particular group of students.

- How is the information organized? Does the story line, narrative, or instruction conform to familiar expectations? Texts in which the events are presented in natural chronological order, which have an informative title, and which present the information following an obvious organization (main ideas first, details and examples second) are easier to follow.
- How familiar are the students with the topic? Remember that misapplication of background knowledge due to cultural differences can create major comprehension difficulties.
- Does the text contain redundancy? At the lower levels of proficiency, listeners may find short, simple messages easier to process, but students with higher proficiency benefit from the natural redundancy of authentic language.
- Does the text offer visual support to aid in reading comprehension? Visual aids such as photographs, maps, and diagrams help students preview the content of the text, guess the meanings of unknown words, and check comprehension while reading.

Remember that the level of difficulty of a text is not the same as the level of difficulty of a reading task. Students who lack the vocabulary to identify all of the items on a menu can still determine whether the restaurant serves steak and whether they can afford to order one.

Fourth, use pre-reading activities to prepare students for reading. The activities you use during pre-reading may serve as preparation in several ways. During pre-reading you may:

- Assess students' background knowledge of the topic and linguistic content of the text



- Give students the background knowledge necessary for comprehension of the text, or activate the existing knowledge that the students possess
- Clarify any cultural information which may be necessary to comprehend the passage
- Make students aware of the type of text they will be reading and the purpose(s) for reading
- Provide opportunities for group or collaborative work and for class discussion activities

Pre-reading activities are most important at lower levels of language proficiency and at earlier stages of reading instruction. As students become more proficient at using reading strategies, you will be able to reduce the amount of guided pre-reading and allow students to do these activities themselves. Pre-reading activities that teachers can apply may be:

- Using the title, subtitles, and divisions within the text to predict content and organization or sequence of information
- Looking at pictures, maps, diagrams, or graphs and their captions
- Talking about the author's background, writing style, and usual topics
- Skimming to find the theme or main idea and eliciting related prior knowledge
- Reviewing vocabulary or grammatical structures
- Reading over the comprehension questions to focus attention on finding that information while reading
- Constructing semantic webs (a graphic arrangement of concepts or words showing how they are related)
- Doing guided practice with guessing meaning from context or checking comprehension while reading

### **Match while-reading activities to the purpose for reading**

In while-reading activities, students check their comprehension as they read. The purpose for reading determines the appropriate type and level of comprehension.

- When reading for specific information, students need to ask themselves, have I obtained the information I was looking for?
- When reading for pleasure, students need to ask themselves, Do I understand the story line/sequence of ideas well enough to enjoy reading this?

- When reading for thorough understanding (intensive reading), students need to ask themselves, Do I understand each main idea and how the author supports it? Does what I'm reading agree with my predictions, and, if not, how does it differ? To check comprehension in this situation, students may
  - Stop at the end of each section to review and check their predictions, restate the main idea and summarize the section
  - Use the comprehension questions as guides to the text, stopping to answer them as they read

Another key element when teaching reading is the focus on authenticity. For students to develop communicative competence in reading, classroom and homework reading activities must resemble (or be) real-life reading tasks that involve meaningful communication. They must therefore be authentic in three ways.

- **The reading material must be authentic:** It must be the kind of material that students will need and want to be able to read when traveling, studying abroad, or using the language in other contexts outside the classroom. When selecting texts for student assignments, remember that the difficulty of a reading text is less a function of the language, and more a function of the conceptual difficulty and the task(s) that students are expected to complete. Simplifying a text by changing the language often removes natural redundancy and makes the organization somewhat difficult for students to predict. This actually makes a text more difficult to read than if the original were used. Rather than simplifying a text by changing its language, make it more approachable by eliciting students' existing knowledge in pre-reading discussion, reviewing new vocabulary before reading, and asking students to perform tasks that are within their competence, such as skimming to get the main idea or scanning for specific information, before they begin intensive reading.

- **The reading purpose must be authentic:** Students must be reading for reasons that make sense and have relevance to them. "Because the teacher assigned it" is not an authentic reason for reading a text. To identify relevant reading purposes, ask students how they plan to use the language they are learning and what topics they are interested in reading and learning about. Give them opportunities to choose their reading assignments, and encourage them to use the library, the Internet, and foreign language newsstands and bookstores to find other things they would like to read.

- **The reading approach must be authentic:** Students should read the text in a way that matches the reading purpose, the type of text, and the way people normally read. This

means that reading aloud will take place only in situations where it would take place outside the classroom, such as reading for pleasure. The majority of students' reading should be done silently.

Teachers, who claim about time, simply can teach students strategies that can be used quickly and even with large classes. Strategies that can help students read more quickly and effectively include

- **Previewing:** reviewing titles, section headings, and photo captions to get a sense of the structure and content of a reading selection
- **Predicting:** using knowledge of the subject matter to make predictions about content and vocabulary and check comprehension; using knowledge of the text type and purpose to make predictions about discourse structure; using knowledge about the author to make predictions about writing style, vocabulary, and content
- **Skimming and scanning:** using a quick survey of the text to get the main idea, identify text structure, confirm or question predictions
- **Guessing from context:** using prior knowledge of the subject and the ideas in the text as clues to the meanings of unknown words, instead of stopping to look them up
- **Paraphrasing:** stopping at the end of a section to check comprehension by restating the information and ideas in the text

Also teachers can help students learn when and how to use reading strategies in several ways:

- By modeling the strategies aloud, talking through the processes of previewing, predicting, skimming and scanning, and paraphrasing. This shows students how the strategies work and how much they can know about a text before they begin to read word by word.
- By allowing time in class for group and individual previewing and predicting activities as preparation for in-class or out-of-class reading. Allocating class time to these activities indicates their importance and value.
- By using cloze (fill in the blank) exercises to review vocabulary items. This helps students learn to guess meaning from context.
- By encouraging students to talk about what strategies they think will help them approach a reading assignment, and then talking after reading about what strategies they actually used. This helps students develop flexibility in their choice of strategies.

When language learners use reading strategies, they find that they can control the reading experience, and they gain confidence in their ability to read the language.

## **Conclusion**

Teachers need to explore beliefs of all aspects of language and psychology and need to know hundreds of strategies to know first the needs and difficulties of their learner; then, choose the appropriate methodology of teaching. All of us agree that we have many problems and deficiencies in our educational system, but as teachers and main agents in higher education, we may solve the problem by reading about teaching and learning issues, reading about pedagogy, reading about technology and try to create a space for our development, a space where we can work on change and improvement. This space maybe provided via a personal web site, a forum, blog or a moodle for both teachers and students to discuss their issues, problems and needs.

## General Conclusion

The investigation carried out in this study has tried to confirm the hypothesis stated in the introduction, i.e. students communicative competence will be improved if teachers are aware of the role of reading strategies and know the best way to teach them.

Before moving to teachers' knowledge, the dilemma is that our teachers are not able to express what they are doing in their classes. Absolutely, the majority of the participants know strategies and use them in one way or another. When asked to state their own principles, one or two of the main beliefs, many of them responded negatively. Even if we do not have much knowledge, normally we are aware about what we are doing.

The teachers' questionnaire revealed that our teachers do not have much knowledge about the reading skill. The first problem is the lack of knowledge about reading as a process. However, when asked about reading principles, reading purposes and reading strategies, the most of responses were negative. Besides that, teachers showed negative perception of reading lesson sequence and activities.

Concerning the different factors influencing their practice, teachers agreed on the following: classroom size, time devoted to each module and time devoted to content rather than skills, lack of training. At some extent, they are right because the number of students increases each year and unfortunately the number of teachers decrease.

As far as their practice is concerned, the participants even claimed at the beginning that they teach reading, finally when asked about they said it is best be taught in a few modules not all of them. And when asked about reading activities that they used or a sample activity to describe, all were passive and did not answer.

At the end of the study, we did not offer a new method or a new issue about the subject; rather, we would remind our teaching about the importance of reading strategies in everything we teach and the importance of teachers' awareness in every step we walk and every action we do. However, we tried to present a few ideas about knowledge and reading strategies. The implications were divided into two axes.

Axe one teachers' knowledge and awareness: including a reminder for our higher authorities and teachers about the importance of training, conferences and getting access to

other universities to see what is happening in the field. Though, all we claim about training, as researchers we may train ourselves by ourselves especially nowadays where we have access to universities, to forums, online conferences...

Axe two presents general ideas and guidelines about a reading lesson, with the focus of skills and strategies. This section provide teachers about a few guidelines on how to teach reading, when and how to use reading strategies, what are the principles that guide in teaching reading and what a reading sequence looks like

We hope that these ideas will be helpful and useful for our teachers. We wish to remind teacher about the following remarks: A good teacher was not born that way; If your institute does not support you, try to support yourself; Never let your students know things about the subject more than you; Be always updated; Carry out research and investigate studies on your subject as well as your students.

## Bibliography

- **Anderson, N.J** (1999) Exploring Second Language Reading: Issues and Strategies. Toronto: Heinle & Heinle Publisher.
- **Aebersold, J. A. & Field, M. L. (1997)** From Reader To Reading Teacher: Issues And Strategies For Second Language Classrooms. Cambridge University Press, 43-45.
- **Basturkmen, H., Loewen, S., & Ellis, R. (2004)** Teachers' Stated Beliefs About Incidental Focus On Form And Their Classroom Practices. "Applied Linguistics" (2), 243-272.
- **Borg, S. (2001)** Key Concepts In ELT: Teachers' Beliefs, "ELT Journal" 55(2):186-187.
- **Borg, S (2003).** Teacher Cognition In Language Teaching: A Review of Research on What language Teachers Think, Know, Believe, And Do. Cambridge University Press
- **Borg, S (2009).** English Language Teachers' Conceptions of Research. "Applied Linguistics " 30/3: 358–388
- **Breen, M. P., Hird, B., Milton, M., Thwaite, A, & Oliver, R. (2001).** Making Sense Of Language Teaching: Teachers' Principles and Classroom Practices. "Applied Linguistics" (4), 470-501.
- **Brindley, S. (1994).** Teaching English. Routledge
- **Brown, D. H (1990).** Strategies for Developing Reading Skills. <http://www.nclrc.org/essentials/reading/stratread.htm>
- **Brown, H, D (2000).** Principles of Language Learning and Teaching (4<sup>th</sup> ed). Pearson Education
- **Brown, H. D (1994),** Principles of Language Learning and Teaching (5<sup>th</sup> ed). Pearson Education
- **Browne, A. (1998).** A Practical Guide to Teaching Reading in the Early Years. Paul Chapman Publishing
- **Chamot, A. U., Barnhardt, S., El-Dinary, P. B., & Robbins, J. (1999).** The Learning Strategies Handbook. Longman.
- **Chomsky, N. (1965).** Aspects of The Theory of Syntax. Mouton.
- **Campbell, R.(1990)** Reading Together, Milton Keynes: Open University Press
- **Davies, F. (1995).** Introducing Reading. Penguin Books.
- **Davis, H. (2003)** Teachers' Beliefs. The Gale Group Online. <http://www.education.com/reference/article/teacher-beliefs/#A>

- **Day, R & Bamford, J. (1998).** Extensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom. Cambridge University Press.
- **Dechant, E. (1991).** Understanding and Teaching Reading: An Interactive Model. Hillsdale, NJ : Lawrence Erlbaum.
- **Dilts, R.B (1999)** Sleight of Mouth: The Magic of Conversational Belief Change. Capitola, C.A: Meta Publications
- **Devito, J. A (2006).** Human Communication: The Basic Course (10<sup>th</sup> ed). Pearson Education.
- **Dornyei, Z. & Scott, M. L (1997).** Communication Strategies in a Second Language: Definitions and Taxonomies. "Language Learning" 47:1 March 1997;173-210
- **Ellis, R (1994).** The study of second language acquisition. Oxford University Press
- **Eskey, D.E (1988).** Holding in the Bottom: An Interactive Approach to the Language Problems of Second Language Readers, in Carrel, P.L; Devine, J; Eskey, D.E (Eds), Interactive Approach to Second Language Reading, pp 74 – 93. Cambridge University Press.
- **Foertsch, M. (1998).** A study of Reading Practices, Instruction, and Achievement in District 31 schools. Hawaii: North Central Regional Education Laboratory. <http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/31abs.htm>
- **Gatbonton, E. (1999).** Investigating Experienced ESL Teachers' Pedagogical knowledge. "Modern Language Journal “, 83(1), 35-50.
- **Gough, p. (1985).** One Second of Reading. In H. Signer & R.Rudell (EDS). Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading(3<sup>rd</sup>). New York, DE: International Reading Association.
- **Grabe, W and Stoller, F.L (2002).** Teaching and Researching Reading. Pearson Education
- **Griffiths, C (2004)** Language Learning Strategies: Theory and Research. School of Foundations Studies AIS St Helens, Auckland, New Zealand. [citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.138.7807](http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.138.7807)
- **Harmer, J. (2001)** The practice of English Language Teaching. Pearson Education. Longman.
- **Harmer, J. (2007)** How to Teach English. Pearson. Longman.
- **Hedge, T (2000)** Teaching and learning in the language classroom. Oxford University Press.



- **Heisat, A .et al** (2009). The Use of Reading Strategies in Developing Students' Reading Competency among Primary School Teachers in Malaysia. "European Journal of Social Sciences" Volume 12, Number 2
- **Hymes, D** (1971) On Communicative Competence. USA: Pride and Holmes (eds)
- **Johnson, K. E.** (1994). Teaching and Teacher Education: The Emerging Beliefs and Instructional Practices of Pre-Services English as a Second Language Teachers. "Teaching and Teacher Education", 10, 439-452
- **Johnson, K. E.** (1996). The Role of Theory in L2 Teacher Education. "Tesol Quarterly", 30 (4), 765-771.
- Kostopoulou, A. (2005). Teachers' Beliefs about the Teaching of Reading in Early Years Settings. PHD Thesis. Institute of Education. University of Warwick.
- **Lessard C, M** (1997). Language Learning Strategies: An Overview for L2 Teachers. "The Internet TESL Journal " 3, pp 34 – 37
- **Liang et al** (1998). An Initial Study on Reading Problems and Strategies: A Teacher's Perspective. <http://apps.emoe.gov.my/ipba/rdipba/cd1/article56.pdf>.
- **Lyons, J** (1996), language and linguistics. Cambridge University Press
- **Martinez-flor & Uso-juan** (2008). Teaching Intercultural Communicative Competence through the Four Skills. "Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses " 21 (2008): 157-170 ; [http://rua.ua.es/dspace/bitstream/10045/10400/1/RAEI\\_21\\_09.pdf](http://rua.ua.es/dspace/bitstream/10045/10400/1/RAEI_21_09.pdf)
- **Mcnamara, Danielle.S.** (2007). Reading Comprehension Strategies: Theories Interactions, and Technologies. Laurence Erlbaum Associates,
- **Mebarki, Z.** (2008). A Descriptive Study of Reading Comprehension Difficulties And Strategies of Microbiology Students Of Ferhat Abbas University. PHD Thesis. University of Constantine
- **Murphy, E.** (2000) Strangers in a strange land: Teachers' beliefs about Teaching and Learning French as a Second or Foreign Language in Online Learning Environments. <http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/stranger.htm>.
- **Naashia, M.** (2006). An Exploratory Study of the Interplay between Teachers' Beliefs, Instructional Practices and Professional Development. PHD thesis in Language Teaching and Learning, The University of Auckland.

- **Nespor, J.** (1987). The role of Beliefs in the Practice of Teaching. “Journal of Curriculum Studies”, 19(4):317-328.
- **Nga, T.T.** (2005). Teachers’ Beliefs about Teaching Reading Strategies and their Classroom Practices: A Case Study of Viet Ba High School. MA dissertation. Department of postgraduate studies. Vietnam national university.
- **Nunan, D.** (1992). The teacher as Decision-Maker. In J. Flowerdew & M. Brock & S. Hsia (Eds.), Perspectives on second language teacher education. HongKong.
- **Nuttal, C.** (1982). Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language. Heinemann Educational Books.
- **O’Malley et al** (1985). Learning Strategy Applications With Students of English as a Second Language. “TESOL Quarterly” 19(3), pp 557-584.
- **O’Malley, J.M and Chamot, A.U** (1990). Learning Strategies in Second Language Acquisition. Cambridge University Press.
- **Oxford, R.L** (1990). Language Learning Strategies: What Every teacher should know. New York: Newbury House.
- **Oxford, R** (1994), Language Learning Strategies: An Update. “Digest” October94. University of Alabama. <http://www.cal.org/ericell/digest/oxford01.html>
- **Pang, E. S. et al** (2003). Teaching Reading. International Academy of Education, [www.ibe.unesco.org/publications](http://www.ibe.unesco.org/publications)
- **Parajes, M.F** (1992). Teachers’ Beliefs and Educational Research: Cleaning up a Messy Construct. “Review of Educational Research” 62 (3), pp 307 – 332.
- **Paulston, C. B.** (1992), Linguistics and Communicative Competence: Topics in ESL, Longdunn University Press.
- **Richards, J.C and Rogers, T.S** (1986). Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching. Cambridge University Press.
- **Richards, J. C** (1996). Communicative language teaching. Cambridge university press
- **Richards, J.C.** (1998) Beyond Training. Cambridge University Press.
- **Richards, J. C. et al** (2001). Exploring Teachers’ Beliefs and the Process of Change. “Pac Journal” , Vol. 1.1. 44-64  
<http://www.professorjackrichards.com/pdfs/exploring-teacher-change.pdf>

- **Richardson et al** (1991). The Relationship between Teachers' Beliefs and Practices in Reading Comprehension Instruction. "American Educational Research Journal" 28 (3). 559-586
- **Rickheit, J and H, Strohner (eds)** (2008). The Handbook of Communication Competence. Walter de Gruyter. Berlin.
- **Samuel,S and Kamil, M.** (1988). Models of the Reading Process, in P. Carrel, J. Devine & D. Eskey (eds.) in Interactive Approaches to Second Language Reading, pp 22 – 34. Cambridge University Press.
- **Sato, K & Kleinasser, R. C** (1999) Communicative Language Teaching(CLT): Practical Understanding. "The Modern Language Journal" 83, IV.
- **Savignon, J.S.** (1978) Communicative Competence: Theory and Classroom Practice, Central States Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.
- **Savignon, J, S.** (2002) Interpreting Communicative Language Teaching, Yale University Press.
- **Scarcella, R. C. and R. L. Oxford** (1992). The Tapestry of Language Learning: The Individual in the Communicative Classroom. Boston, MA: Heinle and Heinle Publishers.
- **Schoenbach, R. et al** (1999). Reading for Understanding: A Guide to Improving Reading in Middle and High School Classrooms. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 38
- **Silberstein, S.** (1994). Techniques and resources in teaching reading. Oxford University Press.
- **Smith, F.** (1985) (2<sup>ed</sup>). Reading. Cambridge University Press
- **Smith, D. B.** (1996) Teacher Decision-Making in the Adult ESL Dlassroom, in D. Freeman and J. Richards (eds), Teacher Learning in Language Teaching.
- **Stern, H.H** (1992). Issues and Options in Language Teaching. Oxford University Press
- **Urquhart, S., and Weir, S.** (1998). Reading in a Second Language: Process, Product and Practice. Longman
- **Ur, P** (1996). A Course in Language Teaching: Practice and Theory. Cambridge University Press.
- **Vaezi, S.** (2006) Reading Theories. University of Science and Technology, Iran
- **Vacca, A, L.et al** (2006) Knowledge and Beliefs about Reading. Pearson Education.
- **Wallace, C.** (1992). Reading. Oxford University Press.

- **Wenden, A. and Rubin, J.** (1987). *Learner Strategies in Language Learning*. Prentice Hall
- **Widdowson. H .G** (1979), *Explorations in applied linguistics, part 1*. Oxford University Press.
- **Woods, D.** (1996) *Teacher Cognition in Language Teaching: Beliefs, Decision-Making and Classroom Practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- **Woods, D.** (1991) Teachers' Interpretations of Second Language Teaching Curricula, "RELC Journal", 22(2):1-19.
- **Zacharias, N.T.** (2003). A Survey of Tertiary Teachers' Beliefs about English Language Teaching in Indonesia with regard to the role of English as a global language. MA dissertation, **Institute** for English Language Education Assumption University of Thailand.

## Appendix

# Teachers' questionnaire

*Dear teachers,*

This questionnaire is a part of a Magister research work. The study aims to explore teachers' beliefs about teaching reading strategies to foreign language learners to enhance their communicative competence (the case of 1<sup>st</sup> year LMD teachers at the department of English, University of Biskra. Therefore, your answers and suggestions will be very helpful and useful. So we shall be grateful to you if you could answer the following questions.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Section one: General Information**

1. Age :
  
2. Length of teaching  
experience.....
  
3. Length of teaching experience at  
university.....
  
4. Teacher's qualification
  - ❖ Licence
  - ❖ Master
  - ❖ Doctorate
  
5. If a master or PHD holder, in which specialty
  - ❖ Applied linguistics and language teaching
  - ❖ Language and civilization
  - ❖ Language and Literature
  - ❖ Language and Linguistics



**9.** In your view, what kind of reading should students do ?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**10.** What are the principles behind the teaching of reading ?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**11** .What do reading sequences look like ?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**12** In your view, what are characteristics of good language readers ?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

**13** Rate each of the following statements by circling the appropriate number. The numbers represent the following values :

- [1] I strongly agree
- [2] I agree
- [3] Disagree
- [4] Strongly disagree
- [5] neutral

**a)** learning reading

Students learn naturally as they acquire language skills	1	2	3	4	5
Phonics is the most important way of helping students learn to read	1	2	3	4	5
Students can not learn reading only if they learn reading strategies	1	2	3	4	5

**b)** in order for someone to read she /he needs to acquire the following skills

Comprehension	1	2	3	4	5
Word recognition	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledge of letters and sounds	1	2	3	4	5

**c)** Reading activities can help students improve the following skills

Speaking	1	2	3	4	5
Listening	1	2	3	4	5
Writing	1	2	3	4	5
Thinking	1	2	3	4	5



**14** How confident you are about teaching reading strategies

- ❖ Very confident
- ❖ Quite confident
- ❖ Confident in a limited way
- ❖ Not at all confident
- ❖ I dont know /i can not tell

**15** What do you think, being able to read means :

- ❖ Knowing the alphabetical code
- ❖ Being able to extract meaning from a text
- ❖ Being able to integrate a number of skills in order to extact meaning

**16** Sources of difficulty in teaching reading may involve :

- ❖ Many topics to cover in order to deal with the department curriculum
- ❖ The large number of students per class
- ❖ Students' cultural background
- ❖ Students' level
- ❖ Lack of time
- ❖ Lack of resources
- ❖ Lack of teachers' knowledge
- ❖ Lack of motivation

**17** Ways of improving teaching practice may include (tick the appropriate answer (s):

- ❖ Cooperation between teachers
- ❖ Quality of resources
- ❖ Quantity of resources
- ❖ Smaller class size
- ❖ In –service training

- ❖ Clear department policy
- ❖ More time for reading
- ❖

**Section three: teachers' practice of reading strategies in language classroom**

**18** Reading strategies best be taught in the module of :

- ❖ Grammar
- ❖ Written expression
- ❖ Oral expression
- ❖ Phonetics
- ❖ Linguistics
- ❖ Culture of the language
- ❖ ESP
- ❖ Research methodology
- ❖ All of them

**19** Whatever your choice is state why ?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**20** What is the size of the class you are teaching ?.....

**21** In your opinion, how can teachers help students learn when and how to use reading strategies ? is it by :

- ❖ Modeling the strategies aloud
- ❖ Allowing time in class for group and individual previewing, predicting, scanning.....etc activities as preparation for in –class and out of class reading
- ❖ Using Cloze (fill in the gaps) exercises to review vocabulary items

- ❖ Encouraging students to talk about what strategies they think will help them approach a reading assignment and then talking after reading about what strategies they actually used

22 In your view, does teaching reading strategies enhance communicative competence

❖ Yes

❖ No

23 If yes, do they develop :

❖ Linguistic aspects of communicate competence

❖ Pragmatic aspects of communicative competence

24 In your view, what are strategies that can help students read more quickly

❖ Previewing

❖ Predicting

❖ Skimming

❖ Scanning

❖ Guessing

❖ Paraphrasing

25 How do you do to plan for a reading task ?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

**26** What do you know about PDP ?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**27** If you apply it in the classroom, what kind of activities do you use in each stage(mention at least three)

[1] .....  
.  
[2] .....  
.  
[3] .....  
..  
[4] .....  
.  
[5] .....  
.  
[6] .....  
..

**28** What do you know about the SQ3R ?

.....  
.....  
.....

Do you apply this technique in the classroom ?

❖ Yes

❖ No

**29** The following question present 8 teaching techniques. Please rank them from 1 to 8. Give 1 to the most frequently used in your classes, 2 to the next frequent and 8 to the least frequent technique used.

- ❖ Paired reading
- ❖ Group reading
- ❖ silent reading
- ❖ loud individual reading
- ❖ story telling
- ❖ plays
- ❖ big books
- ❖ reading schemes

**30** During your classes, in reading activities, do your students work

- ❖ individually
- ❖ In pairs
- ❖ In small groups
- ❖ As a whole class

**31** In the following question rate the factors that influence your teaching practice (with reading) the numbers represent the following values :

- [1] Strong influence
- [2] Significant influence
- [3] Little influence
- [4] No influence at all
- [5] Do not know /I can not tell

A. Factors that influence your practice

Head's views	1	2	3	4	5
Students' level	1	2	3	4	5
Materials	1	2	3	4	5
Colleagues' views	1	2	3	4	5

Time devoted for sessions	1	2	3	4	5
Syllabus	1	2	3	4	5
Class size	1	2	3	4	5
My own beliefs	1	2	3	4	5

B. hat might lead you to change your teaching practice ?

A change in the syllabus or department policy	1	2	3	4	5
Your own understanding of the positive effect that a new practice has on class	1	2	3	4	5
Suggestions of your colleagues	1	2	3	4	5
Motivation (any reward given by your institution)	1	2	3	4	5

32 Which of the following materials do you use to teach reading

- ❖ Commercially produced materials
- ❖ University produced materials
- ❖ Others,  
specify.....

33 Please state an example of a reading activity that you have recently done in class, which you think best exemplifies your approach to the teaching of reading (also state your aims)

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....Briefly describe one or two of your most

important beliefs about teaching reading that guide you in your day to day teaching (eg. Note taking plays an important role in language learning)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

34 Think about your first year(s) of teaching and compare what you did **then** with what you do **now** ; what are some of the important ways your approach to teaching reading has changed (eg. My teaching is not as teacher-centred as before and now i tend to use the SQ3R in my classes)

<b><u>Then</u></b>	<b><u>Now</u></b>
..... ..... ..... ..... ..... ..... .....	..... ..... ..... ..... ..... ..... .....

35 What are the sources of the changes you identified above ? mention 3 most important of the following options (1, 2,3) and explain your response in the space provided

- ❖ Feedback from colleagues
- ❖ Feedback from students
- ❖ Through trial and error
- ❖ Keeping a teaching journal
- ❖ Attending in – service courses
- ❖ Attending seminars and conferences
- ❖ Self discovery

*Explain*.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**« Thank you for your help and collaboration »**

Youcef LAALA



## RESUME

Des recherches antérieures ont révélé le rôle influent des croyances des enseignants dans la détermination de leur comportement professionnel. Ces croyances des enseignants affectent non seulement leurs enseignement, mais produisent de nouveaux inputs, ceci suggère d'importantes implications pour la mise en œuvre des innovations éducatives et de formation des enseignants. Un fait commun dans nos universités est la négligence de l'enseignement des stratégies d'apprentissage en général et des stratégies de lecture en particulier. Toutefois, le but de cette recherche est d'explorer les croyances des enseignants (sensibilisations et connaissances) sur l'enseignement des stratégies de lecture aux apprenants en langues étrangères comme moyen d'améliorer leur compétence communicative. L'intention est aussi de découvrir les croyances de l'enseignant sur l'enseignement des stratégies de lecture au département d'Anglais de l'Université Mohamed Khider et d'examiner la mesure dans laquelle leurs croyances sont reflétées dans leurs classes de lecture / pratiques de classe. Nous émettons l'hypothèse que si les enseignants ont des connaissances et croyances positives sur les stratégies de lecture, ils peuvent contribuer à améliorer les compétences communicatives de l'étudiant et si ces derniers vraiment comprend certaines stratégies efficace, ils seront en mesure de les utiliser plus efficacement et de les appliquer de manière appropriée pour leur sens compréhension de la lecture. Pour atteindre cet objectif, l'étude a été menée par questionnaire pour construire une expression des enseignants concernant leurs croyances, sensibilisation, connaissances et les difficultés rencontrées dans l'enseignement des stratégies de lecture aux apprenants en langues étrangères. Les résultats ont confirmé que les enseignants n'ont pas beaucoup de connaissances sur les stratégies de lecture et comment les enseigner et que la compétence en lecture est négligée dans nos salles de classe.

Enfin, l'étude propose quelques implications pour élever les connaissances des enseignants et les sensibiliser sur l'importance d'enseigner les stratégies de lecture dans tous les cours d'Anglais. Nous espérons que cette étude sera bénéfique pour les enseignants de la langue étrangère en ce sens qu'il leur donnera une vue générale sur l'importance de développement des enseignants, leurs croyances et leurs connaissances dans toutes les modules qu'ils enseignent.

## ملخص

أثبتت الدراسات السابقة الدور المؤثر لمعتقدات الأساتذة في تحديد سلوكهم المهني. معتقدات الأساتذة تؤثر ليس فقط على تدريسهم، ولكن أيضا على اختيار كل المساهمات الجديدة، مما يشير إلى انعكاسات مهمة على تنفيذ الابتكارات التعليمية وإعداد الأساتذة. هناك حقيقة شائعة في جامعاتنا هو إهمال تدريس استراتيجيات التعلم بصفة عامة واستراتيجيات القراءة على وجه الخصوص. لذلك، فإن الهدف من هذا البحث هو استكشاف معتقدات الأساتذة (الوعي والمعرفة) عن تدريس استراتيجيات القراءة لمتعلمي اللغة الأجنبية كوسيلة لتحسين كفاءتهم في التواصل، فالقصد من ذلك هو معرفة معتقدات الأساتذة عن تدريس استراتيجيات القراءة في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة محمد خيضر ودراسة مدى انعكاس معتقداتهم على دروس القراءة / الممارسات الصفية. ونحن نفترض أنه إذا كان للأساتذة معارف ومعتقدات ايجابية حول استراتيجيات القراءة، يمكن أن يكون لهم دور كبير في تعزيز الكفاءة التواصلية عند الطلبة وإذا فهم الطلبة استراتيجيات القراءة الفعالة فهما صحيحا، سيكون لهم القدرة على استخدامها على نحو أكثر فعالية وتطبيقها بشكل مناسب بتحقيق أهداف القراءة والفهم. ولتحقيق هذا الهدف، اعتمدنا في الدراسة على استبيان للأساتذة لمعرفة معتقدات ومعارف ووعي الأساتذة والصعوبات التي يواجهونها في تدريس استراتيجيات القراءة لمتعلمي اللغة الأجنبية. أثبتت النتائج ان معرفة الأساتذة بمهارة القراءة غير كافية وان مهارة القراءة مهملة في صفوف اللغة الانجليزية. وأخيرا، تقدم الدراسة بعض التوصيات لزيادة معرفة ووعي الأستاذ حول أهمية استراتيجيات القراءة في جميع مقاييس اللغة الأجنبية. ونأمل أن تكون هذه الدراسة مفيدة للأساتذة حيث توفر لهم نظرة عامة عن أهمية تطور الأستاذ، معتقداته والمعرفة الأستاذ بكل مجال يدرسه