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Improving Students' Reading Comprehension through Extensive Reading Activity

Case Study of First Year LMD Students of English at Algerian Universities

Dissertation Submitted For the Fulfillment of Master Degree in

'Didactics in Foreign Languages'

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to my beloved parents "BELKHARROUBI Ayoub" and "BENKHALED Ghazala" for their support and encouragement and who always stand by me.

To my dear brothers "Rafik Hawass" and "Mohamed Redah" who helped me a lot in my life.

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Abstract

Currently, extensive reading is regarded as one of the most important components in language learning. It gives learners the ability to enrich their proficiency level in English as well. Accordingly, this study aims at investigating and analyzing the role of extensive reading in improving students' reading comprehension, as interest in reading shifts now and then. A party of learners is not habituated to read more often which is reflected in their performances and the hindrances they face in class, while another party strives to read more often for better results. There is a range of techniques that provide students with ways and solutions to read, and one of them is extensive reading. To set up the research, a mixed-method approach is used and collected data from research instruments is examined both qualitatively and quantitatively. The data was gathered by a questionnaire designed for first year English students at Abdel Hamid Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem; and an interview addressed to EFL teachers from different Algerian universities. The results reveal that extensive reading has got a noticeable and positive influence on beginners' English proficiency and on improving their reading comprehension. It allows students to acquire a new set of vocabulary which facilitates the reading comprehension task. Besides, extensive reading promotes a reading habit and offers a better reading experience.

Keywords: Reading skill, reading comprehension, extensive reading, EFL learners

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Introduction

General Introduction

There are four main skills in language learning that need be sharpened in EFL Teaching/Learning: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Moreover, speaking and writing are the receptive skills while reading and listening are the productive skills. So, the more students listen the more they speak well, the more students read, the more they write well. These skills are essential for Language mastery and improving them equally leads to successful learning.

For the present study's purpose, reading is the main aspect to be explored, as it is an essential skill for students to be able to master other EFL sub- skills. A learner who wants to be a good writer needs to be a good reader; in addition, they need to master reading in order to communicate and retain a variety of information and knowledge; such as, technology, science, sport, economics, and so on. Such information is transferred through written material like a book, newspaper, magazine, journal, and articles so they could be able to get good understanding of these written materials. Therefore, to achieve full comprehension from the written material, they need to read it well and effectively.

Learning English cannot be separated from the process of reading; because by reading learners' ability in using English develops. Among the four skills, reading is one of the most important skills to acquire for overall language proficiency, yet, it remains neglected by most students. Furthermore, in a foreign language situation, good reading comprehension is a necessity for those studying languages, in this case English, in order to achieve such competence. One process of reading which tends to influence learners' language is reading what they want and what they like frequently; and it is referred to as extensive reading.

When students read extensively, they read a lot for the sake of enjoyment in order to explore the wide ranges of vocabulary and grammar structure. They also read some easy and enjoyable books or any other material to build their reading speed and reading fluency, let alone reading comprehension. The aim of extensive reading is to help students become better at the skill of reading rather than reading to study the language itself. When students are reading extensively, they read quickly and enjoyably with adequate comprehension.

The reason which motivated us to discuss this topic As EFL students are usually required to do readings as part of their homework and classroom tasks; so they mostly come across difficulties in understanding the meaning of a given passage or text; because they are not

familiar with reading and developing their reading skill more often. Therefore, this study attempts to disclose the importance of extensive reading in developing the students' reading comprehension skill. It ventures more into explaining how improving one's comprehension by reading extensively is mandatory for completing tasks; as well as, introducing the right methods and techniques to achieve their objectives.

The present study investigates the improvement of reading comprehension through extensive reading, and it aims to achieve following objectives,

1- To find out the learning process of teaching extensive reading programme.
2- To describe students' attitudes in learning reading through extensive activity.
3- To shed light on the importance of developing students' reading comprehension through extensive reading activities.

Beginner learners may possess low reading comprehension in understanding English passages well and successfully due to various factors. They find difficulties in comprehending the text if they are not familiar with a lot of the words that appear in the text. Thus, the present study is conducted to shed light on the status and use of extensive reading for first year LMD students of English at university in order to develop their reading comprehension, and the difficulties that obstruct them from learning the target language correctly.

Therefore, the current research work is set up to answer the following questions,

1. How can extensive reading enhance students' reading comprehension?

2. How can extensive reading influence students' reading comprehension?

As tentative answers to these questions, two main hypotheses can be suggested:

1- If students adopt extensive reading as a basic activity, this may encourage them to read outside and inside the class and to improve their reading skill.
2- Extensive reading may influence student's reading comprehension positively by enriching their vocabulary stock and improving their cognitive skills.

Extensive reading is growing as an important activity; because it helps students obtain new words and expressions that facilitate the comprehension process. It is a process of having a large amount of information. Therefore, reading comprehension is considered an essential skill as it enables students to fully discern and understand meaning of both information and

narrative text, it is vital for learning and literacy, and assists students to develop their reading comprehension ability.

The present research data is outlined and analysed through a mixed-method approach (qualitative and quantitative). In order to collect adequate data for the research study, two tools of research are employed: students' questionnaire and teachers' interview. 40 first year EFL LMD students from three different universities in Algeria, and 10 teachers from University of Abdel Hamid Ibn Badis in Mostaganem are randomly chosen as participants in order to identify and reveal both opinions and attitudes concerning the importance of extensive reading in enriching the EFL student with much vocabulary, enhancing their thinking and understanding; therefore, facilitating the reading comprehension process.

The present study is comprised of three chapters. The first chapter is devoted to the literature review that centers on definitions that introduce and explain the skill of reading as an important receptive skill, its relation with good reading comprehension, as well as, its improvement through the activity of extensive reading. The second chapter describes the methodology design and covers the data analysis of the students' questionnaire. The third chapter analyzes the teachers' interview and interprets the whole findings and ends with some recommendations.

Chapter One
Extensive Reading as a Notion and a Method

Chapter One: **Extensive Reading as a Notion and a Method**

Introduction

Reading is one of the skills that must be paid attention to by students in learning the target language "English". Reading is an active activity, and through it, students can interact with the text to understand it. This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part aims to shed light on the definition of reading and some notions of reading comprehension. Besides, it attempts to introduce reading as a process and product and the cognitive factors that affect reading comprehension. It also shows the importance of reading and the reading strategies (skimming and scanning).The second part is devoted to demonstrate the types of reading dealing with the role of extensive reading. Finally, this chapter concludes with the characteristic and the benefits of extensive reading.

I. 01. The Notion of Reading

Reading has been defined mainly as a complex process. It is devoted to be the most vital skill which can help students to improve other language skills. In fact, it is considered as a process of communication between the reader and author. Through reading, the reader can interact with the text to understand the meaning. According to Arthur Richards (1998), reading is an activity performed to gain information from printed passages. This activity involves building meaning from written letters.

Moreover, combining information from text with existing background knowledge will achieve meaning and lead to better understanding (p. 12). Emerald Dechant (1991) defined reading as developing representation or mental model of text by relating what is on the page to one's own fund of knowledge or experience (p. 01). The closer the representation of the reader is to the mental representation of the writer when he puts his ideas into print, the better the reader will comprehend what the writer intends, and the better communication between writer and reader will be. That is, the relation between the text and pervious knowledge and experience enhances the representation of the text. When the representation of the reader and the writer is closer as the writer expresses his ideas, this will help the reader to comprehend what the writer means and facilitate communication between the two.

However, David Nunan (2004) defined reading as a fluent process of the reader combining information from a text and their own background knowledge to build meaning (p. 68). According to her, reading is one of the essential Skills to learn English. It is categorized as a receptive skill. It means when readers read a book or a passage; they will get information from it. Readers get the information from the text and the information from their existing background knowledge in order to get the meaning. Though practicing reading activity aims to enrich the knowledge, building vocabulary improves focus and concentration and better writing skill. Reading is divided into two parts: comprehension of and decoding words as cited that, "reading can be conceptualized as consisting of two separate, but highly interrelated aspects - word identification and comprehension", (Hook & Jones, 2002 and Pressley, Roehrig, 2006; as cited in Reading Horizons, p. 164).

I. 02. Defining Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is defined as the ability to process a text. It is the act of understanding the meaning of a text or a passage. According to Seyed Hossein Fazeli (2010), the word comprehension refers to "the ability to go beyond the words, to understand the ideas conveyed in the entire text" (pp. 376-380). Besides, reading comprehensions is considered a strategy that helps the reader to recover information and construct meaning from the text.

N.B. Smith and H.A Robinson (1980) explain reading comprehension as evaluating, utilizing, and understanding of ideas and information gained through an interaction between the reader and the author (p. 05). This means that reading comprehension is a process that takes place when making connection between the reader's thought and the language used in the text in order to understand the content of the text. Therefore, the main purpose of reading comprehension is to gain general understanding of what is described in the text; because when students read, they decode information and relate it to their existed knowledge in order to reach the level of comprehension.

Paul Yovanoff, Luke Duesbery, Julie Alonzo and **Gerald** Tindal (2005) state that reading comprehension is based on the language process, motivation, decoding, and vocabulary with the use of meta-cognition and comprehension monitoring strategies (p. 83). As readers master their reading comprehension skill, they will be able to move from the level of learning to reading to the level of reading to learn.

Moreover, reading comprehension is divided into two complex types which are higher and lower levels. The lower level consists on the use of words' recognition, while higher level consists on the use of syntax and semantics, as William Grabe and Fredericka L. Stoller (2002) state, "Reading comprehension is a complex, multiple task ability. These processes were divided into two equally difficult main types, lower-level and higher-level processes" (p. 45).

I. 03. Reading as a Process and Product

It is worth mentioning that reading is a skill which develops only with practice. It is a multifaceted process as it has been viewed both as a process and product and the following elements are explained therefore.

I. 03. 01. Reading as a Process

This type is generally defined by J. Charles Alderson (2000, p. 03) as "reading properly". That is, the reader interacts with the text to come up with the meaning. Understanding the process of reading is important to understand the nature of reading. This process does not require only looking at print or decoding information or knowing what reading is, but it also requires the reader to think about what they are reading to make link between what they are reading and the meaning of other things.

Thus, when readers read a passage naturally, they will use the process of thinking to think about what the writer means. That is to say, the process approach is reflection of what the real writers did in real life. It normally occurs during reading, and it is devoted to increase the level of mental representation. Moreover, in order to teach process approach, it is worth to support students in implementing it and providing opportunities for independent practice.

I. 03. 02. Reading as a Product

Product, with regard to the activity of reading, refers to the actual information and insights reached as a result of reading. The product of the reading process is comprehension (Barry Lazarte, 1995, p. 55). There may be as many different reading products as there are different readers. This is because readers may differ in their experiences and knowledge.

Alderson (2000) shows that in order for the reading product to be attained, students must understand different levels of materials. Students are required to explain the same passage from different perspectives and different points of views; because each student is influenced by their prior knowledge and their experiences. The product of reading is what readers get from prints they understand. Moreover, there exit various factors that might influence comprehension while reading that will be tackled subsequently.

I. 04. Cognitive Factors Affecting Reading Comprehension

There are different factors that affect reading comprehension, which need to be highlighted in order to gain further understanding of the topic at hand. These factors include background knowledge, vocabulary and fluency.

I. 04. 01. Background Knowledge

Background knowledge plays an important role in reading comprehension. It is often known as prior knowledge, which refers to the connection of new information with existed knowledge that the reader has experienced before. Barry Beyer (1991) explains that every student brings knowledge to school on a variety of areas, which is acquired through past experiences in academic and real life. In addition, matching background knowledge and text helps the students to become active readers and facilitate reading comprehension.

I. 04. 02. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is considered as one of the most important part in learning English. The term vocabulary is said to be a collection of words, and students must know those words to understand the language when they listen and read; as well as, grasp new words in order to re-use them in speaking and writing. However, Evelyn Hatch and Cheryl Brown (1995) defined vocabulary as a list or a set of words that the individual speakers of the language might use (p. 01). Thus, learning a language without vocabulary is like a body without mind and students need to acquire a number of words in order to understand and to be understood.

I. 04. 03. Fluency

Fluency is a process in which the learner reads rapidly. It allows the reader to retain information with accuracy. Thus, Grabe (2009) defined the term fluency as, "The ability to read rapidly with ease and accuracy, and to read with appropriate expression and phrasing" (p. 291). It means that readers read fluently with smooth, correct, and appropriate expression. Besides, the ability to read fluently develops through reading practice, in which students will be able to master reading fluently. Such factors that maintain stable achievement in reading go necessarily hand in hand with properly implemented and employed reading strategies as demonstrated next.

I. 05. Reading Strategies

Reading skill is divided into two main strategies known as skimming and scanning. Skimming is related to getting a general idea, while scanning is regarded as obtaining specific information.

I. 05. 01. Skimming

Skimming enables the reader to get a general idea about the content of any written passage. It can be defined as a process of reading quickly, according to Paul Davies and Eric Prearse (2000), "Skimming is looking through a text just to get a general idea of what it is about, in other words, the gist" (p. 91). In this strategy, the reader will get a general idea about the text and will neglect unnecessary information; because when the reader skims, his eyes pass across the whole text which is a useful technique to get an overview of the main ideas.

It is also described as a type of saving time and getting overall meaning. When the teachers request their students to skim the text, their purpose is to help the learner to have an idea about the main points of the text. It entails their ability to focus on and pick out the main elements rapidly. Yan Shem (2009) also stated, "Skimming is a fast-reading skill that does not require reading word by word, but it does require a high degree of concentration" (p. 164). So, skimming is an organized search in a fast way for seeking information about an article, chapter, or a book.

I. 05. 02. Scanning

Scanning is considered as an activity practiced to find information from a text quickly. It is a technique that is very applicable because it can be applied in a variety of texts, According to Paul and Eric (2000),

> When scanning a text, you look quickly through it to find some specific information, for example, looking through a telephone directory for a specific number, a sports' article for the result of specific soccer game, or a textbook for the mention of a specific topic" (p. 91).

In other words, scanning is a strategy in which the rapid reading of a book, a chapter or a passage takes place in order to recover targeted information or to find answers to certain questions. Moreover, scanning is considered as a type which focuses on searching for specific information.

Hence, scanning is an effective technique which helps the reader to find what they are interested in, and the reader uses scanning strategy to reach specific facts that they need. When this strategy is applied, learners will be able to read with more attention without caring about the other parts of the text. More thoroughly, this strategy is useful when the reader knows what he is looking for in a passage or any written material. It involves moving your eyes quickly down the page seeking specific words and phrases or searching for particular pieces of information; such as, a date, a name or a number.

I. 06. The Importance of Reading Comprehension

Most of the learners may face problems in comprehending the written material when reading; because understanding the meaning of texts might be a great challenge. According to readers, they may be able to understand each word in the text, but they may not be able to achieve general understanding of the whole text. For this reason, learners will become de-motivated.

However, reading comprehension is viewed as a key of learning a language which plays an important role in language teaching. Furthermore, reading comprehension influences the learner to improve the language skill; as well as, English language. S. Byers, P. T. Jones & Kervin (2012, pp. 18–27) claim that comprehension is generally considered to be an essential skill required in all learning areas. Reading comprehension is believed to be important; because it builds knowledge of language which will facilitate reading ability. It has also

proved in developing the ability to adapt the reading style according to the reading purpose, which also develops an awareness of the structure of the written text in English. Reading comprehension requires the reader to be an active constructor of meaning, and it is important for understanding text for broader learning success in education.

Reading comprehension is regarded to be a useful tool in increasing reading skill, which helps learners to have an overall understanding of what is described in the text rather than to obtain meaning from isolated words or sentences. The learners should master reading skill first which will enable them to achieve comprehension, then move to master other skills; because when the learners reach the highest level of comprehension, this leads them to acquire new vocabulary and to improve writing skill.

I. 07. Types of Reading

There are two kinds of teaching reading; Extensive and Intensive. They are different in some cases. Extensive Reading covers a large area, while Intensive Reading covers narrower area.

I. 07. 01. Intensive Reading

Intensive reading is a type which deals with short texts. It is defined as narrow reading as well. It involves a higher level of comprehension to arrive at deep understanding of words, sentences and paragraphs. Moreover, intensive reading is a process of concentration in which the teachers involve their students with intensive reading that requires them to focus on the language rather than the text. This type is very famous, and it is known as reading between the lines by using dictionaries, translation, analysis and comparison. Intensive reading implies a close study which emphasizes grasping a detailed study that is required in developing vocabulary, grammar and comprehension; as well as, the reading skill. Douglas Brown (1994) claims that intensive reading calls attention to grammatical forms, discourse markers, and other surface structure details for the purpose of understanding literal meaning, implications, rhetorical relationships and the like.

Renandya (2007) agrees that intensive reading concerns pupils that typically work with short texts by a close guidance from the teacher in order to obtain detailed meaning from the text, and to enhance vocabulary and grammar knowledge (p. 135). In the same line of

thought, Nation (2009) claims that, "Intensive reading is a good opportunity for making learners aware of how the various vocabulary, grammatical, cohesive, formatting, and ideas content aspects of a text work together to achieve the communicative purpose of the text" (p. 47). Thus, intensive reading is considered as a tool to achieve communicative purposes of the text by promoting learners to be aware of a different aspect of texts; such as, vocabulary and grammar, cohesion, formatting and constructing content ideas. Intensive reading is an approach that allows the learners to reach high degree in mastering the language skills.

I. 07. 02. Extensive Reading

There are several definitions for the term extensive reading. First, according to Richard Day and Julian Bamford (2004), extensive reading is a technique in the teaching of reading which is defined as a situation where students read a lot of materials in their level and in a new language; they read for general, for overall meaning, and for information at one with enjoyment (p.01) Besides that, George Jacobs and Thomas Farrell (2012) define extensive reading as, "A simple idea, by reading regularly, students learn to read better and come to enjoy reading more, they also improve their vocabulary and grammar, as well as, their writing, speaking and listening" (p. 02). Moreover, it is an approach which is based on reading long texts and a wide range and quantity of materials in order to get global understanding.

The goal of extensive reading is reading for pleasure, for enjoyments and to gain background knowledge. This type is usually used inside or outside the classroom. It requires the learners to read self-selected materials; as well as, it allows them to choose materials that attract them to read, and they have the right to stop reading if they get bored or face difficulty in understanding that materials. Therefore, extensive reading refers to, "The reading students do on their own with no help or guidance from the teacher … you learn to read by reading, and the objective of extensive reading is exactly that: to learn reading by reading" (Cristina Paulson Cristina, Bratt and Bruder Mary Newton, 1976, p. 199).

However, practicing extensive reading as an activity motivates the learners and encourages them to develop their reading comprehension ability, and achieve autonomy in reading. It also gives the opportunity for better developing the ability of critical thinking. In depth, it is known as voluntary reading which means reading for free to share common ideas independently with no help of teachers' supervision. In general, extensive reading approach is

devoted to help the learner enhance their vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and to master their speaking and writing skill.

I. 07. 02. 01. Characteristics of Extensive Reading

In extensive reading activities for teaching languages, Bamford and Day (2002) mention that the extensive reading approach consists of ten principles that are listed and explained as follows,

- **The reading material is easy**

It is generally believed that reading for pleasure requires learners to read as much as possible, and they can select a large amount of books that are available for them to choose from at their level. Learners are free to read easy materials which can provide them with information, at least 98% of words and enhance their reading ability. When learners select difficult materials to read, they will not enjoy them because of the difficulty in understanding and grasping the meaning. Thus, students would not succeed in reading extensively if they have to struggle with difficult materials.

- **A variety of reading material on a wide range of topics must be available**

Involving students with a variety of materials on a wide range of topics will promote them to read in different ways and for different reasons. Therefore, the variety of materials should be obtained in the library for the students to choose what they are interested in. Hence, providing various materials leads to learning flexible reading ability and reading for different purposes (entertainments, for pleasure and for knowledge).

- **Learners choose what they want to read**

Students are free to choose materials on their own, and they anticipate understanding and enjoying. Self-selected materials are the key for extensive reading. Students can stop reading materials, if they find them too difficult or less interesting. Therefore, choosing what they prefer to read motivates the students to be responsible on their own learning.

- **Learners read as much as possible**

Reading a large amount of materials gives the opportunity for the student's personal experience. Teachers can do a lot to help students explore extensive reading outside of the classroom. In addition to that, the more students read, the positive result students will gain.

- **The purpose of reading is usually related to pleasure, information and general understanding**

The goal of extensive reading is to give a chance for students to understand what they read, what the text is about, and what they feel about it. More deeply, extensive reading encourages students to get overall understanding, obtain information, guarantee enjoyment or entertaining pastime.

- **Reading is its own reward**

The fundamental aim of extensive reading is enjoyment; so, usually it is not followed by comprehension questions. For that reason, teachers can provide the reader by a set of follow-up activities after reading activities. It contributes to reflect reader's experience not only reading comprehension.

- **Fast speed of reading**

As students read extensively, they choose to read books and materials that are easy to understand and retain. The latter encourages reading fluency. Instead, students involve fast reading of a large amount of materials, where they may encounter unknown words. In this case, students may guess the meaning; but they are discouraged to use dictionaries; because this may interrupt reading and makes fluency impossible.

- **Reading is individual and silent**

Students read out of the classroom, in their own time, when and where they choose, individually and silently. This silent reading has been said to help structural awareness, build vocabulary, and promote confidence in the language.

- **Teachers orient and guide their students**

It is emphasized on the teachers' role in guiding students to read extensively. The teacher encourages and assists their students with their reading tasks, which the students undertake during and /or after class. The teacher is considered as an active member who helps students select what they enjoy reading most.

- **The teacher is a role model of a reader**

This element focuses on the teacher-student's contribution in extensive reading. Teachers can recommend reading material to individual students. In this way, teachers and students can become an informal reading community, experiencing together the value and the pleasure to be found in the written work. Moreover, the teacher will increase students' motivation to read and enjoy reading (pp. 136–141).

I. 07. 02. 02. The Role of Extensive Reading

There are many reasons why extensive reading is beneficial to language development. According to Timothy Bell (1998) stated that extensive reading plays an important role in developing reading comprehension; such as,

"1) Providing 'comprehensible input', 2) Enhancing learners' general language, 3) Increasing the students' exposure to the target language, 4) Increasing knowledge of vocabulary, 5) Leading to improvement in writing, 6) Motivating learners to read, 7) Helping to build confidence with extended texts and, 8) Facilitating the development of prediction skills.

Thus, the role of extensive reading develops the students' ability to read and listen so that they can develop good reading and listening habits. Moreover, it allows the students to meet the language in its natural way, and achieve reading speed and reading fluency in order to process the language more automatically. Beside, the role of extensive reading is building students' vocabulary. When students read a lot, they will come across thousands of words which they master and predict vocabulary and grammar. It also helps the students get a sense of how grammatical patterns work in context. It helps the students to be a good at writing. Finally, extensive reading builds confidence, motivation, enjoyment and love for reading which makes the students more effective language users.

I. 07. 02. 03. The Benefit of Extensive Reading

Chapter One: **Extensive Reading as a Notion and a Method**

Extensive reading is basically used to learn new languages. Thus, it has an influence on students with certain benefits as Sweet A.P (2000) states that, "Effective reading instruction can develop engaged readers who are knowledgeable, strategic, socially interactive, and motivated" (p. 06). Moreover, Grabe, as cited in Darrell Wilkinson (2012), discusses some of the benefits of extensive reading that are: building vocabulary and structural awareness, enhancing background knowledge, developing automaticity, improving comprehension skills, and promoting confidence and motivation.

Besides that, the first benefit of extensive reading is that using a certain activity will help the students to be motivated to read more; because when students find easy materials that interest them; they will discover that they have the ability to read in English and will enjoy that as well. The second benefit is that students will become better readers. The reason behind this is reading a lot which will help the students to become better readers as Christine Nuttall (168.1982) cited, "We learn to read by reading". Moving to the third benefit, students will be able to reach high levels by enhancing their vocabulary. By reading extensively, students will be able to be familiar with difficult words, sentences and paragraphs. The fourth one, extensive reading develops the students' ability in writing skill; because the more students read, the better they will be good at writing and they will become better in their language.

Moreover, extensive reading achieves to improve an overall language competence, because reading a lot will enhance the four skills and improve reading comprehension. It is widely known that extensive reading can develop the learner's autonomy; because when the students decide when, what and how often they read; this will promote the learner to achieve autonomy.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to define, explain, and describe the improvement of reading comprehension through extensive reading. The purpose of this study is to provide background knowledge about reading comprehension and extensive reading. It has started with a detailed description of what reading comprehension and extensive reading are by showing the techniques and strategies that help students to be better readers; and to sidelight on the role and the importance of extensive reading which is considered as a tool that provides learners to read freely with amusement. To sum up, we can conclude that free voluntary reading is important as it makes students better readers and confident in their reading abilities. It also facilitates reading comprehension to students.

Chapter One: **Extensive Reading as a Notion and a Method**

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Chapter Two Methodology and Analysis of Collected Data

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Introduction

The present chapter attempts to provide an overview on the methodological design of the study which is based on the role of extensive reading in improving reading comprehension; in addition to the effective strategies that may boost reading extensively. More deeply, this chapter is devoted to present the methodology and procedures of the study, data collection tools and procedure, the study context, participants, and data analysis. It also portrays the research design through the description of the population addressed and their answers through a questionnaire for students and an interview for teachers.

II. 01. Research Methods

Data collection, as one of the most important components in research methodology, is the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes. Accordingly, Marshall, Catherine and Gretchen B. Rossman (1990) describe data collection as, "The process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data, it is described as messy, ambiguous and time-consuming, but also as a creative and fascinating process" (p. 50). Accordingly, in this study, the researcher employs both quantitative and qualitative methods; therefore; data analysis is based on a mixed method analysis approach. Both methods are based on empirical investigation and evidence.

II. 01. 01. Quantitative Method

Quantitative research methods help researchers to understand the magnitude and scale of a humanitarian crisis by proving a numerical picture. Martha Aliaga and Brenda Gunderson (2002) describe this method as, "The explaining of an issue or phenomenon through gathering data in numerical form and analyzing with the aid of mathematical methods in particular statistics (p.100). That is, they address the question of how many and how much; as well as, they are characterized by the collection of data which can be analyzed numerically to be interpreted using statistics, tables, and graphs. Speaking of the present research, quantitative research methods are opted to see whether extensive reading is a useful tool in developing student's reading comprehension or not.

II. 01. 02. Qualitative Method

Qualitative research is the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcript, field notes, and other materials that the researcher accumulates to increase his understanding of a given phenomenon. Thus, Robert Bogdon and Sari knopp Bicklen (1998, p. 157) claim that the researcher starts from something specific to something general. Moreover, it explores data from the perspective of both groups and individuals, and it generates case studies. Similarly, Marshall, Catherine and Gretchen B. Rossman (1999, p. 150) state that qualitative data analysis is a search for general statements about relationships among categories of data. It is noticeable that the result was positive. The majority of participants based on selecting yes in open-ended questions which indicate that extensive reading is a major components in influencing students' reading comprehension achievements.

II. 02. Target Population

A population can be defined by any number of characteristics within a group that statisticians use to draw conclusions about the subjects in a study. Michael Newman (1995, p. 205) defines population as a group of individuals of a species occupying a defined space at a particular time or a collective group of organisms of the same species (or some other groups within which individuals may exchange genetic information). Thus, a population is all the members of a group that are of interest for the study. The target population addressed in this study includes EFL students from different Algerian universities and a sample of teachers from Abdel Hamid Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem. Moreover, the researcher has chosen two groups of participants: EFL teachers, and first year EFL students.

II. 02. 01. Participants

The first group of informants entails 10 EFL teachers from ELT department at the University of Mostaganem. These selected teachers are of different English language specialties. Most of them have taught reading and other language skills. Two of them have taught English for more than 20 years and five of them more than 10 years; whereas, three of the teachers have taught English for less than 10 years. They teach modules in different LMD levels, starting from first year Licence to Master Two.

The second group of informants involves 40 first year students from the department of English in Abdel Hamid Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem. Their ages range from 19 to 21. The researcher has randomly selected one class which was naturally formed in order to make the research more reliable and more objective. The main reason behind choosing LMD1 students is to find to what extent these beginner learners are motivated to master English since they are beginners and they need to work hard in order to reach and earn their high level degree.

II. 03. Research Tools

As collecting data is a standard and systematic procedure to get information needed (Mohammad Nazir, 1988, p. 211) as mentioned before, the researcher has used a mixed–method research. Namely, the investigator involved both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Therefore; in the data collection, two main research instruments are used: students' questionnaire and teachers' interview.

II. 03. 01. Students' Questionnaire

Questionnaire is a method of collecting quantitative data, and which is regarded as one of the most crucial devices of gathering information. It is often engaged as a tool for giving answers for a set of questions. Korthari C.R (2004) expounds questionnaire as, "Mailed to respondents who are expected to read and understand the questions and write down the reply in the space meant for the purpose in the questionnaire itself" (p. 100). Thus, learners read and understand the questions which need to be simple and straightforward; then, they answer the questions by themselves.

As mentioned earlier, a questionnaire is regarded as the most effective method for gathering data, and such a method permits learners to respond freely and express their beliefs and attitudes. Korthari C.R describes the questionnaire as, "The heart of survey operation" (2004, p. 97). The questionnaire aims at helping the examiner to clarify many issues about the subject matter under investigation; therefore, the questionnaire helps to increase awareness so that further studies can be achieved.

II. 03. 01. 01. The Description of Students' Questionnaire

In the present research**,** the questionnaire is addressed to 40 students of first year EFL LMD students at Abedel Hamid Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem. The researcher employed both open and closed-ended questions. Open questions do not restrict the answer while the closed questions typically restrict the answer in a specific way and which sometimes requires another justification answer. The questions which are designed in this questionnaire aim to gather students' answers, worries, and views on the topic investigated. The present questionnaire consists of 18 questions in order to better comprehend some significant points.

The questionnaire is segmented into three sections. Each one has certain objectives. The first section is related to personal background. There are four questions reserved in section one which aim to have and collect general information. The first two questions identify the number of years spent in learning English and their level of proficiency. The remaining questions seek to identify their interest and awareness toward reading.

The second section includes seven questions. They are put forward to determine the opinion of the students about reading comprehension. The first two questions attempt to know the skill which is important and if reading is considered a source of knowledge. The third and the fourth questions investigate how reading comprehension is described and how students evaluate their level of reading comprehension. Questions five and six seek to discover whether the learners attempt to enhance their reading comprehension, as well as, figure out the techniques and strategies used to comprehend any text at hand. The last question aims to identify the difficulties of understanding the text and whether vocabulary knowledge improves reading comprehension.

In the last section, the investigator intends to collect data concerning the practice of extensive reading. It includes seven questions. The two first questions endeavor to know how often learners read in English, and the reason for reading. The third and fourth questions attempt to explore the learners' reason for reading, and where they prefer to read; either inside or outside the room and what learners like to read. Question five intends to know if learners try to get the general understanding or detailed understanding while reading. Finally, questions six and seven aim to figure out whether extensive reading motivates the learners to learn English more, and if it is a significant component to understand the text.

II. 03. 02. Teachers' Interview

The second research tool used to gather information in the present study is the interview, which is considered as one of the most fundamental methods of collecting data in the qualitative approach. Donland Jacobs and Chris Sorensen (2006) highlight the term interview as follow, "Interviews are used to gather data from people about opinions, beliefs, and feelings about situations in their own words" (p. 438). Moreover, the interview is an oral conversation which helps researchers to gather information by asking some questions related to a given topic. In this respect, the researcher has decided to interview some EFL teachers of first year LMD at Mostaganem University to provide another dimension to the study. The teachers' opinions about the matter under investigation are very important, as they may provide answers to the research questions that can be useful to find answers to the present study's hypotheses. The teachers were kindly invited to have a word about the issue through answering the questions designed by the researcher in the interview. They were asked to express their opinions, beliefs, and suggestions.

II. 03. 02. 01. The Description of Teacher's Interview

The interview's questions are designed for EFL teachers from the department of English at Abedel Hamid Ibn Badis University, in Mostaganem. 10 teachers are randomly selected to participate in order to collect data about the role of extensive reading in enhancing reading comprehension of their students. The interview consists of fifteen questions. It is divided purposefully into three sections. The aim of the first section is to find out the teachers' practices that include how long they have been teaching, how they assess their learners' English level of proficiency, which module they teach and the kind of text they usually use in their classes.

The second part deals with the role of the teachers to figure out the difficulties that the learners face while reading, and the techniques that the teachers usually use in order to keep the learners motivated; encourage them to develop their reading skill gradually, and to know the importance of reading comprehension. The aim behind the third part is to know whether extensive reading is a useful technique that helps the learners to enrich the level of comprehension or not.

II. 04. Procedure

This study has taken place at the department of English language, University of Abdel Hamid Ibn Badis - Mostaganem. In this research, the questionnaire was distributed among EFL first year students who were selected randomly. This process took for more than two weeks. The questionnaires were sent via facebook messenger and email for first year LMD students. They are from different universities; such as, University of Mascara "Istanbuli", University of Relizane "Ahemed Zabana" and University of Mostaganem "Abdel Hamid Ibn Badis" in order to gather the needed answers. It is worth mentioning that, at first, the target population addressed was only students from English department in Abdel Hamid Ibn Badis, but due to the extraordinary changes this year due to Lockdown, the other universities were included at the last minute. As for the teachers' interview, the interview questions were sent via emails for the teachers to get the answers. The period of the study continued from July 2020 to august 2020 due to the pandemic of Covid-19.

II. 05. Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire

Section One: Personal Background.

Question 01. How many years have you studied English?

The aim of asking this question is to know the number of years students spent in learning English. This helps the researcher to figure their level. This question also is asked to find out the experience of the students in the field of English. The following table shows their experience with the English language.

Table 01. Students' Educational Duration in Learning English.

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Seven	32	80%
Eight	08	20%
Total	40	100%

The answers show that 80% of participants spent seven years in learning English; four years in secondary school and three years in high school. Another group 20% of students spent eight years in learning English, because they repeated a year.

Question 02. How do you describe your level in English language now as a university student?

The aim of this question is to figure out the level of students in speaking and learning English. Their answers are displayed in the following table.

Table 02. Students' Level of Proficiency in English

Options	Number of students	Percentage
Satisfactory	2	5%
(good	10	25%
Average	16	40%
Low	12	30%
Very low	00	00

From the above table's results, it is shown that the majority of students claim that their level is average (40%) in speaking and learning English; because they are first year and they have to work harder in order to reach the required level. (30%) of the students indicate that they have low level in English, because they do not like to learn English. (25%) of participants claim that their level of proficiency in English is good; because they are interested in reading. Only (05%) of students answered by satisfactory as they have the ability to master English.

Question03. Do you like reading?

The aim behind this question is to figure out whether the students are interested in reading, and also to determine to which level students can reach to develop comprehension. The following table demonstrates the participants' choice.

Table 03. Student's Enjoyments in Reading

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Yes	30	75%
No	10	25%
Total	40	100%

As the results show in the table, it is shown that most of participants (75%) indicate that they like reading, and they prefer to enhance their reading skill. (25%) of participants answered no, and they claim that they do not have the habit of reading, and they do not intend to develop their reading habits as well.

Q**uestion 04.** What do you like reading exactly?

The aim of this question is to reveal what the students prefer to read. This question is designed to know what attracts students to read and what makes them enjoy it at the same time. Their answers are classified into three categories as manifested in the following table.

Table 04. Students' Preferences in Reading

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Books	12	30%
Short stories	16	40%
Magazines	12	30%
Total	40	100%

From the gathered answers of the participants, it is apparent how the majority of them with (40%) prefer to read short stories so they can improve their vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. The number of students who like to read books is equal to the number of

students who like to read magazine. (30%) of learners like to read books in order to become cultivated and to gain background knowledge. The same percentage (30%) of students read magazines for the sake of having fun, and being aware of daily life and actuality.

Section 02: Reading Comprehension

Question 01. Which of the four skills is important according to you?

The aim behind this question is to know which skill is important according to each student and if they think of language skills as separate or related to one another. The present table describes the students' choice.

Table 05. The Skill which Interests the Students Most

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Writing	2	5%
Reading	20	50%
Speaking	12	30%
Listening	06	15%
Total	40	100%

From the precedent table, the results show that most students are interested more in reading skill (50%). They justified that reading a lot helps the learners to be better in the other skills. (30%) of the participants prefer the speaking skill. (15%) of them is interested in listening. Only (05%) like writing; because most of learners consider writing a difficult skill to master. The answers of the students refer to their interest in the receptive skills rather than the productive ones because the more students listen and read, the better they speak and write.

Question 02. Is reading considered a source of knowledge?

This question intends to get the opinion of the learners about the reading skill being a source of knowledge and to see whether learners agree with the idea that reading skill increases their English level and become more knowledgeable. This table depicts their choices and answers.

Table 06. The Importance of Reading Skill as a Source of Knowledge.

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Yes	34	85%
No	06	15%
Total	40	100%

It is noticed that the majority of the participants (85%) agree on the idea that reading is considered a source of knowledge. They claim that reading is an effective skill in enriching them with new information and in improving their writing skill. However (15%) disagree as they claim that reading is not the only source of knowledge, but also the other skills provide large amounts of information.

Question 03. How do you describe your reading comprehension?

The aim of this question is to demonstrate if students are familiar with reading comprehension as a sub-skill, and whether they can achieve comprehension while reading. The table below shows the different answers of students.

Table 07. The Students' Reading Comprehension Level.

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Very good	02	5%
Good	09	22%
Average	10	25%
Bad	08	20%
Very bad	11	28%

The table above illustrates that (28%) students may possess poor reading comprehension ability. They claim that reading comprehension is not important according to them, and they do not have the desire to enhance their level. (25%) answered that they have an average level in reading comprehension, as they are attempt to enhance their reading comprehension even more. (22%) of participants mention that they are good at reading comprehension due to practicing different strategies that may boost comprehension. (20%)

claim that they are bad at reading comprehension. Only (05%) agree that their level is very good and the reason behind this is their love for reading.

Question 04. Do you attempt to enhance your reading comprehension?

      This question seeks to expose whether the students have the desire and intention to enhance their reading comprehension from poor to good level. The results are demonstrated in the following table.

Table 08. Student's Desire to improve their Reading Comprehension

Options	Number of the Students	Percentage
Yes	38	95%
No	2	5%
Total	40	100%

      The results indicate that the majority of participating students (95%) claim that they endeavor to be better in their reading comprehension. Still, only (05%) of participants is not motivated to develop their reading comprehension.

Question 05. If yes, what strategies or techniques do you use to comprehend texts?

      The question aims to figure out if students employ strategies that may help them to understand the text. It also attempts to single out the different techniques the actually use while reading. The table below shows the different answers of the participants.

Table 09. Strategies that Students Use in Text Comprehension.

Options	Number of the Students	Percentage
By consulting the dictionary	12	30%
By stopping and thinking about what you are reading	8	20%
By building background knowledge	13	32%
by taking notes	7	18%
Total	40	100%

Out of forty students, it is shown that (32%) of the participants rely heavily on building their background knowledge. (30%) of them prefer to comprehend the text by using the dictionary to be familiar with unknown words they come across while reading. Whereas (20%) of participants claim that the only strategy that helps them to comprehend the text is by stopping and considering what they are reading. (18%) of the participants take notes regularly so they can remember the main points, ideas and the newly-acquired information.

Q**uestion 06.** The difficulty in understanding the text is due to….

This question seeks to discover the main difficulties that the students face while reading. There are two options suggested for the participants in the questionnaire, mainly, the possibility of coming across some new or unclear terms; as well as, the little instances of practicing reading

Table 10. The Difficulties Students Face while Reading

Options	Number of the Students	Percentage
Difficult vocabulary and expressions	24	60%
Unfamiliarity with reading texts	16	40%
Total	40	100%

As the result is shown in the table above, participant students mentioned their answers as follows; the majority of the students (60%) stated that the difficulty in understanding the text is due to difficult vocabulary and expression. (40%) though cannot understand the text; because of the unfamiliarity with reading texts, that is the lack of reading much.

Question 07. Does vocabulary knowledge improve your reading comprehension?

This question aims to know if a rich vocabulary stock in the target language is the key to improving reading comprehension. The students answered by yes or no in the table below.

Table 11. Vocabulary is the Key to Better Reading Comprehension

Options	Number of the Students	Percentage
Yes	40	100%
No	00	00
Total	40	100%

It is perceived that all the respondents agree on the fact that vocabulary knowledge improves reading comprehension and might aid learners to succeed in their reading tasks. They indicate that vocabulary holds significant responsibility in learning a foreign language. Word meaning is highly related with reading comprehension abilities as well. Word meaning is important to comprehend texts, and without vocabulary neither the text is understood, nor can the ideas or meaning be conveyed.

Section 03: Extensive Reading

Question 01. How often do you read in English?

The aim behind this question is to know about the frequency of students' reading practices in English. This question is to know how often student keep in touch with reading because the more they read the more they shows how they like reading .The options are stated on the table below.

Table 12. Student's Frequency of Reading.

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Always	02	5%
Sometimes	10	25%
Often	20	50%
Rarely	03	8%
Never	05	12%
Total	40	100%

Concerning this question, it is noticed that (50%) of the respondents answered that they often read in English. They mentioned that they read when they find books that interest

them. (25%) of students said that they read sometimes in English in order to research or to do homework. (12%) of them indicate that they never read in English while (08%) do rarely read in English. (05%) admit that they always read in English, because reading helps a lot in mastering the target language.

Question 02. Your reason for reading is…..

The aim of this is to reveal why students read which its answer is going to be personal to figure out what suits or appeals to the students to go for reading. There are options stated on the questionnaire for the learners to pick out one or more.

Table 13. The Main Reasons for Reading.

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Reading for pleasure	16	40%
Reading to gain knowledge	20	50%
Reading for exams	04	10%
All of them	00	00
Total	40	100%

The table demonstrates that the majority of respondents (50%) read to learn and gain more information. (40%) of the study's respondents mention that their reason for reading is for pleasure, they read for the sake of enjoyment. However, just 4 students choose to read only for exams in order to have good marks, and they read only materials that are related to their lessons.

Question 03. In which setting do you prefer reading?

This question aims to know if the students prefer to read outside the classroom or inside the classroom. Because the surrounding plays an important role because the more the place is calm the more students focus on reading in contrast to the noisy places students lose concentration.

Table 14. Students' Reading Whereabouts.

Options	Number of students	Percentage
Inside the classroom	07	18%
Outside the classroom	33	82%
Total	40	100%

According to the results shown on this table, (82%) of respondents say that they prefer to read outside the classroom. As they justified, it is helpful and comfortable as they are free to choose the materials that suit their needs. They also indicate that they like to read outside the classroom; because they have plenty of time to learn well rather than reading inside the classroom as the time is limited. By contrast, (18%) of the rest of respondents prefer to read inside the classroom. They claim that reading inside the classroom with the teacher and their classmates motivate and encourage them to get and exchange new knowledge.

Question 04. Do you like to read….

This question endeavors to find out if students prefer to read what teachers ask them to or prefer to read self-selected materials, in order to figure out in which option the students are motivated to read and enjoy more. The results are illustrated as follows,

Table 15. Students' Preferences concerning Reading Material

Options	Number of students	Percentage
What teachers ask you to read as a task	14	35%
Self_ selected material (such as, short stories, articles, newspapers, etc.)	16	40%
Both of them	10	25%
Total	40	100%

The table above indicates that (40%) of respondents prefer to read self–selected materials; because they like to read what satisfies them, which motivates them even more. (35%) of them prefer what teachers ask them to read as a task. They stated that the teacher is

the guide; because his duty is to know what students need to learn. (25%) of participants like to read both of options; because it helps them to have deep understanding of what they are reading.

Question 05. While reading, do you try to get ….

This question intends to identify what the students try to obtain while reading, To see in which students focus more during reading .The table below shows the participant students' answers.

Table 16. Students' Objective during Reading

Options	Number of students	Percentage
The main ideas	10	25%
Detailed understanding	23	57%
General understanding	07	18%
Total	40	100%

From the result shown in the table above, it is evident that over the half of participants (57%) try to get detailed understanding which means scanning ,to achieve comprehension and reach deep understanding and retention. (25%) of them try to get the main ideas while reading in order to know what the text is about. The rest (18%) mentions that when they are reading, they try to have general understanding which means skimming.

Question 06. Would extensive reading promote your motivation to learn English more?

This question attempts to know if extensive reading motivates the students to learn English more. And to see to what extent does extensive reading effect on student's motivation to learn the English language. The students answer by yes or no as depicted in the following table.

Table 17. Extensive Reading's Role in Motivating Students to Improve their English.

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Yes	31	78%
No	9	22%

Total	40	100%

The results demonstrate that the majority of respondents (78%) indicate that extensive reading motivates learners to learn English more, because extensive reading means reading a lot and reading for the sake of enjoyment. So, the more students read, this will increase their motivation to read more often. Whereas (22%) of respondents say no and claim that extensive reading does not increase their motivation; because they are not interested in enhancing their English language.

Question 07. Is extensive reading a significant component in understanding the text?

The aim of the last question is to know the point of view of first year students and if extensive reading is necessary for accomplishing understanding of the text. The table below depicts the students' opinions.

Table 18. Extensive Reading is a Key-element in Text Understanding.

Options	Number of Students	Percentage
Agree	22	55%
Neutral	18	45%
Disagree	00	00%
Total	40	100%

The results indicated in this table show that the majority of respondents (55%) agree that extensive reading is a significant component in understanding the text. Moreover, (45%) of them are neutral about it; however, none of the respondents disagree that extensive reading may play an important role in understanding the text.

 Conclusion

Extensive reading is a very imperative ingredient of learning a language. The more students read, the better they will be able to achieve certain comprehension, and the better they would be talented at reading. However, the results of this study indicate that simply giving learners the freedom to choose books to read is inadequate to make such an influence. By contrast, when motivating activities and more time for reading were used, there would be

an improvement in students' reading comprehension. Moreover, the students' response in learning reading through Extensive Reading activity was very good. The present chapter aims at providing an overview about the research design of the present study through highlighting the description of research methods, target population, research tools and procedure of the study. It includes the present data analysis and the answers obtained from the students' questionnaire concerning the use of extensive reading in enhancing reading comprehension. As the final results show that reading extensively has a positive impact on students to be better at reading comprehension and for those who consider improving their reading skill.

Chapter Three

Interview Analysis and Results' Discussions

Introduction

The general aim of this study is to expound the importance of extensive reading in enhancing student's reading understanding, and also reveal the different strategies that the EFL learners use to promote reading comprehension achievement. The instruments used in data collection are students' questionnaire and teachers' interview. Therefore, this chapter is the last part which presents the analysis of the rest of the collected data, that is teachers' interviews. It also manifests the limitation of the study and contributes to provide suggestions and recommendations.

III. 01.The Analysis of Teachers' Interview

The interview is addressed to ten teachers of English at Abdel Hamid Ibn Badis University in Mostaganem. It includes 15 questions that aim at identifying the types of difficulties which Algerian first year EFL learners encounter in learning reading as a skill and find out which techniques they employ throughout reading. It aims to suggest effective strategies to boost reading comprehension as well. Before shedding light on the analysis of the teachers' answers to the research interview, it is worth mentioning that the participant teachers were most helpful since they accepted to reply via their professional emails due to their inability to have an interview in person because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Section One: Background Information

Question 01. How long have you been teaching English?

The aim behind question one is to reveal the number of years during which teachers have been teaching English in order to discover the duration of experience which they get through teaching English modules. Based on the data collection and from the teachers' interview replies, the results demonstrate that the participant possess quite enough experience in teaching English as a Foreign Language. Their experience ranges from 07 to 25 years. Two of them have experienced teaching English for 07 years. However, five of them have the experience of more than 13 years. The remaining have experienced teaching English less than 25 years.

Question 02. Which module do you teach?

The basic aim of question two is to know the kind of modules teachers teach throughout their professional career which accordingly require learners to prepare homework by reading some books and periodicals. From the gathered answers, the teachers have been teaching different modules, such as, Phonetics, Phonology, Morpho-syntax, Linguistics, Semantics, Research methodology, Written Expression, Oral Expression, Didactics (different modules in the same specialty), Sociology, Applied Linguistics, Intercultural Studies, and Grammar. Therefore, the majority of the above-listed modules require research and readings to be done.

Question 03. How do you assess your learner's English level proficiency?

This question is aimed to figure out how teachers evaluate their student's level as beginner learners of English at university. Based on the different answers from the teachers, most of them agree that their students' level is average. They claim that there are various ways of assessment through tests and exams and CC (Control continue i.e continuous evaluation). They provide texts or different activities they might engage in, through discussions, and other skills such as reading and writing.

Question 04. What kind of texts do you usually use?

Based on question four, the researcher wants to find out the kind of texts which teachers usually use in order to help learners engage in a successful environment for learning English. The participant teachers state that they use texts which are interesting and fit their level such as scientific texts, articles, chapters from different books, and texts that are long and short which contain challenging discourse. In addition, these kinds of texts are related to the syllabus. The teachers also believe that using such texts as an aid in their lecture will achieve enjoyment and motivate the students to develop their level in term of pronunciation and vocabulary.

Section Two: Reading Comprehension

Question 05. What are the difficulties which your learners face while reading?

The goal of question five is to identify the difficulties that learners may struggle in mastering reading skill and learning English language, which they usually face while reading.

Most of the teachers agree that learners are de-motivated to read. They also claim that learners may be discouraged to enhance their reading skill; because they encounter certain difficulties such as problems of mispronunciation and misunderstanding of new words. Learners do not focus while readings; as well as, they do not take enough time to understand appropriately. Furthermore, they may struggle with difficult vocabulary items, and difficulty in understanding complex sentence structures.

Question 06. What are the techniques that you use in order to help your learners enhance their reading skill?

Concerning question six, it attempts to investigate the techniques which teachers usually apply with their students in developing their reading skill to become active readers. The teachers declare that the techniques they use are: providing them with short stories to read outside the classroom, and engaging them to read different passages in the classroom. Moreover, they ask learners to read carefully, and explain new words if encountered. Teachers insist that their learners must not be stopped r interrupted from reading as they can get the meaning from the whole sentence or paragraph.

Besides, the teachers mention that explaining to their students any background they get about the topic is helpful, highlighting difficult words along the way, consulting English-English dictionaries, and expanding their readings. Furthermore, using targeted activities, pre-reading activities, while-reading activities, and post-reading activities also encourages them to do extensive reading to enrich their vocabulary stock and cultural knowledge, and even to engage in topic discussions with peers. Finally, they also state that inviting learners to read about topics which they will write or transform into essays, paragraphs and summaries. Moreover, providing learners with these techniques will make them feel confident, and will keep them concentrated and active in the learning process for improving the reading skill and gaining knowledge.

Question 7. How do you encourage your students to develop their reading comprehension if they do not read much?

Based on question seven, the researcher seeks to identify the role of teachers in encouraging their learners to develop their reading comprehension if they do not read much. Most of the teachers share the same instructional methods. They state that in order to encourage their students; it is better for learners to search for texts that interest them, teach

them translation which is related to reading, and ask them during practice sessions to translate texts instantly. However, if they do not read carefully and understand the point, they cannot translate correctly. Moreover, it is essential to lead them to work cooperatively and ask them each time to select reading texts and analyse them which is another strategy that helps them to read more often. In addition to that, motivating them to read for leisure, song lyrics, short stories, book covers, extracts and summaries of films is also beneficial for enhancing the students' reading capacities.

Question 08. How important is reading comprehension in learning English?

Question eight endeavours to investigate the importance of reading comprehension in the process of learning English. The teachers determine that reading is an important skill in learning a language at the same level as speaking, writing, and listening. In developing language proficiency, they agree that reading comprehension fills the learners with knowledge so that they will be able to develop their vocabulary repertoire, and especially their critical thinking.

Question 09. Do your learners appreciate the reading skill?

Question nine aims to know whether learners appreciate reading skill of not. All teachers claim that some learners appreciate reading skills while others do not. They state that learners will appreciate the reading skill when texts are interesting, and because they have different learning styles. They also claim that other learners will not appreciate reading; because they are lazy who prefer to look for ready-made summaries instead of reading or watching films to facilitate their tasks. Moreover, technology is not helping as they do not read beyond what is required for subjects taught and exams. Ultimately, they get easily discouraged to read more as they do not master reading strategies, and have poor vocabulary.

Section Three: Extensive Reading

Question 10. If students read with no purpose, how does the teacher interfere?

Concerning question ten, the researcher intends to clarify how the teacher interferes if their students read with no purpose. Based on different answers of teachers, they claim that their role is to make them aware of the importance of reading for developing their level in English. They might persuade them by asking for feedback, and making sure to include a question for them to discuss after reading so they read with a purpose in mind. Moreover, the

teacher can be a facilitator through the choice of texts they may like. That is, by making the right choice in selecting the right activities, the learners might be involved in the learning process and their interest can be triggered as well.

Question 11. How much reading should they do?

The goal of question eleven is to reveal the extent of reading learners should do. Teachers assert that learners should read a wide range of different materials (reading a lot). The teacher requires his learners to guess meaning from titles/headlines through inferring from context. It is also preferable to divide the reading passage into sections and small parts, and to practice intensive reading. However, reading a lot leads to developing their reading skill as it is also essential to develop thinking and autonomous learning and to enrich student's learning experience.

Question 12. If your students struggle with difficult passages to comprehend, what do you do about it?

This question aims to clarify the solutions which teachers resort to and may suggest when their learners struggle to understand different passages. They advocate that they must recommend them to use dictionaries to understand the difficult words, explaining vocabulary needed to understand, ask questions and answer activities, then highlight the difficult passages by underlining the pieces that prevent understanding, share ideas and try to participate and discuss in groups rather than just giving them direct answers, and also focus on key-words and main ideas.

Question 13. Do you agree that extensive reading plays an essential role in improving learners' English level?

Question thirteen attempts to figure out whether extensive reading plays an important role in improving learner's English level. All teachers agree that extensive reading is the key to developing learner's English level; because through extensive reading, the learners may come across new words or difficult terms where they use and consult the dictionary. They also mention that it broadens students' knowledge and culture**,** and enriches his/her vocabulary and reading abilities. Some of the teachers pinpointed at the fact that extensive reading fosters their cognitive and critical thinking skills.

Question 14. How do you keep your students motivated with their reading task?

The goal of question fourteen is to figure how teachers can motivate students with their reading skill and keep them interested in and attached to the activity. They state that in order to motivate the students, it is preferable to use stories, plan lessons from films and hand them the parts of extracts; as well as, invite them to read the rest at home. Additionally, they should highlight the difficult passages, underline the pieces that prevent understanding, share ideas and try to discuss in groups rather than just giving them direct answers. Helping them to choose smart texts related to actors, films, topics they are interested in may help as well. Sending them books, encouraging them, keeping in touch with latest topics to get much vocabulary related to different contexts.

Question 15. Would you please suggest some effective techniques and strategies that may help students overcome this hindrance?

The last question intends to gather the effective techniques and strategies that teachers suggest to boost students in learning. They provided the following strategies:

- Preparing students for reading (broad discussions of themes, understanding the importance of reading in the process of learning in a given subject).
- Including students in decision-making as they have different preferences and strategies (text selection; so as to satisfy most preferences).
- Selecting texts with topics that interest them, using dictionaries, and engaging them in the classroom to read different passages.
- Starting with less challenging texts.
- Always asking for/giving feedback.
- Deciding upon the frequency of reading.
- Giving them time to do readings depending on the text requirements.
- Making the reading purpose clear.
- Loving English.
- Be engaged to learn beyond the grade requirements.
- Read, read, read anything you come across.
- Diversifying reading topics: song / books / electronic books / stories / plays / jokes etc…
- Looking for more online reading strategies to develop their reading skills.

III. 02. Results and Discussions of Findings

Based on the data gathered and analyzed from the learners' questionnaire and the teachers' interview, the results are discussed as follows,

III. 02. 01. Discussion of Teachers' Interview

The analysis of teachers' interview revealed that teachers do consider extensive reading activity as one of the most effective components in promoting student's comprehension and other skills of English. This implies how teachers desire to develop their students' awareness towards extensive reading in enhancing the level of comprehension. Furthermore, the teachers are trying to enhance their students' English level through the use of different techniques and strategies of teaching the target language. Moreover, teachers attempt to provide their students with effective suggestions that enable them to continue learning the language properly, developing comprehension and reading a lot over the time in order to be responsible for their learning.

However, the main reason behind the failure of students in learning the language and improving reading comprehension is due to the lack of interest in the reading skill. This implies that students should be aware of the use of extensive reading activity in which better comprehension can be achieved. Still, three results obtained from three sections in the teachers interview. Accordingly, from the results gained from the first part that contains four questions of the interview, we can draw a conclusion that teacher's experience reflect positively in the teaching process.

The result of section two revealed that teachers are interested more in helping the learner to be aware of the value of reading comprehension and attempt to make them understand that without reading, comprehension does not improve and their English level either gets poorer or remains still. The conclusion of section three is noticed through the fact that reading extensively is a key factor which constructs language skills; namely, speaking listening and writing.

III. 02. 02. Discussion of the Student's Questionnaire

The present study focuses on involving students to read extensively in order to get background knowledge and to boost their reading comprehension. Participant students confirm that extensive reading is a useful tool in learning the target language. As the results shown that students like English, but they find difficulties in understanding the meaning, and they agree that extensive reading is important indeed. Because it allows them to read a large amount of various material which requires them to enhance their reading comprehension and improve other skills along the process. Moreover, a considerable number of students use English in their daily life especially at university, and a lot of them confess that they like learning English. They also recognize how it plays an important role in their studies. On one hand, this implies that students consider English an important part of their life and also their studies. In brief, students' awareness about the importance of English is very high.

On the other hand, extensive reading holds a significant responsibility in learning a foreign language, and as explained in the literature review, it is considered as one of the most important reasons behind the students' level of proficiency in English. Furthermore, the majority of students express their interest in developing their reading comprehension and English vocabulary level. This is justified by using different strategies to boost reading comprehension; such as, selecting texts with topics that interest them, using dictionaries, engaging themselves in the classroom to read different passages.

However, extensive reading activity creates an atmosphere of reading that helps the students become active by the use of beneficial strategic techniques to comprehend the text better than before. The present work deals with the attitudes of students towards extensive reading in improving comprehension, and the study aims to investigate the main reasons behind the difficulty of comprehending a text, eventually this issue motivated the researcher to find out why the majority of learners are struggling in achieving text comprehension.

Based on the results obtained from section one of the questionnaire, we can draw a conclusion that the majority of students have a positive attitude towards the reading skill. Their response in learning reading was very welcoming. They were interested in the teaching and learning process alike.

Concerning the results of section two, we can draw a conclusion that reading comprehension is the basic factor in developing students' constructive attitude towards

learning the target language. The students' replies revealed that without reading comprehension, they cannot improve their English one hundred percent. Accordingly, the result of section three concludes that extensive reading helps the learner to be motivated in developing their language in terms of comprehension, spelling and vocabulary, and motivates them to read more and more for better achievement and performance.

III. 03. Recommendations and Suggestions

After the analysis of the present study which was about the improvement of reading comprehension through extensive reading as an extra skill, it is helpful to add some suggestions and recommendations for teachers and learners for better mastery of the reading skill. The role of teachers of English is to raise learner's awareness about the importance of extensive reading in developing comprehension and learning other skills.

In addition, teachers may supply their learners with extensive reading strategies, especially for those learners whose level of comprehension is weak; because extensive reading facilitates the learning of other components; such as, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.

- Extensive reading is an approach which enables learners to gain fluency, improve comprehension, build vocabulary and read independently.
- Extensive reading promotes student's motivation in learning the target language.
- The role of teachers is to develop students' reading comprehension, supply them with material to read extensively and encourage them to select the books depending on their interest.
- Encouraging students to read more may develop positive attitudes towards reading.
- Many studies have proved that reading large quantities of materials increases the reading ability of students and enhances reading comprehension, which helps them to be familiar with difficult words and passages hard to understand.
- Using extensive reading would create for the learners a range of opportunities to build up background knowledge in different domains.

- Extensive reading plays an important role in learning and teaching languages; because it allows students to enrich their learning process and increase critical thinking.

- Extensive reading makes students better at writing and speaking skills and increases their self-confidence.

- Using extensive reading as a tool in improving reading comprehension as well as other skills will facilitate to both teachers and learners to be more engaged.

- The ability to read a wide range of text in English will help in building schematic knowledge.

- To further enhance comprehension, good readers also use strategies that help them retain, organize, and evaluate the information they are reading.

Conclusion

This chapter attempts to discuss the results and findings of both research tools namely the students' questionnaire and the teachers' interview. The researcher attempted to interpret and scrutinize the answers of both teachers and students wishing to find answers to the raised research questions and to test the validity of the hypotheses made at the beginning of the study. The findings of the present study have shown that to a great extent the implementation of teaching and learning activity using extensive reading activity has the possibility to successfully improve the students' reading comprehension. The present chapter is concluded by a few recommendations collected by the researcher to make the use of extensive reading more strategic and more effective.

Chapter Three :   <u>**Interview Analysis and Results' Discussions**</u>

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

As it is universally known, English has successfully created its own place on a global level. It is a fundamental key of personal and international communication presently; so, every educational system has implemented it and encourages studying it as a foreign language. As a way to master this English, learners went on the road of using extensive reading in order to master language skills. Extensive reading is the key for both effective and successful reading comprehension and communication. It is very vital to learn other skills namely the listening, the speaking and writing with equal measures.

However, EFL learners keep encountering continuous challenges while trying to achieve comprehension in order to solve tasks and grasp meaning. Scholars have put forward a set of learning strategies that may assist learners in their way to acquire English. Still, learners make use of extensive reading strategy which is effective to impact the process of developing one's reading comprehension and learning the target language.

The present research is an attempt to shed light and examine such issues. There is no doubt that extensive reading is regarded as one of the major factors that contribute to learners' efficient and successful language learning. In this respect, several researchers confirm that extensive reading plays an important role in learning any language; however, any language learning requires developing the reading skill along with the rest of skills too.

The present research attempted to analyze the effectiveness of extensive reading in achieving EFL learners' reading comprehension by introducing and exposing details about reading skill and its relation with extensive reading that facilitates improving and achieving comprehension. From the obtained results through qualitative and quantitative methods, it is revealed that learners' poor level of English as a Foreign Language is due to lack of reading, which implies that extensive reading has an impact on learners' academic achievements. Furthermore, there are some learners who used a number of strategies to improve their reading comprehension including extensive reading. Consequently, there comes the role of English teachers to raise learners' awareness of the importance of the use of extensive reading in both comprehension and communication which may lead them to be more motivated.

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Appendices

Student's Questionnaire

       The present questionnaire is a research tool for an academic investigation regarding enhancing learners' reading comprehension skill (understanding texts while reading) through extensive reading activity (reading a lot and for longer periods). I would be very thankful if you provide answers to the following questions truthfully with your justifications.

Section one: Personal Background.

1) How many years have you studied English? …..………………………….

2) How do you describe your level in English language now as a university student?

Satisfactory ☐   Good ☐   Average ☐   Low ☐   Very low ☐

3) Do you like reading?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

  Why?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

4) What do you like reading exactly?

……………………………………………………………………………………………
…………

Section two: Reading Comprehension

1) Which one of the four skills is important according to you?

Writing ☐   Reading ☐   Speaking ☐   Listening ☐

Why?

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

2) **Reading is considered as a source of knowledge?**

      Yes ☐   No ☐

How is that?

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

3) How do you describe your reading comprehension?

Very good ☐   Good ☐   Average ☐   Low ☐   Very Low ☐

4) Do you attempt to enhance your reading comprehension?

    Yes ☐   N☐

Why?.......................................……………………………………………………………
……..

5) **If yes, what strategies or techniques do you use to comprehend texts?**

By using the dictionary ☐   By stopping and thinking about what you are ☐
reading

By building background knowledge ☐   By taking notes ☐

Others……………………………………………………………..………………
………..

6) **The difficulty in understanding the text is due to**

Difficult vocabularies and expressions ☐

Unfamiliarity with reading texts ☐

Others
………………………………………………………………………………………
…

7) **Does vocabulary knowledge improve your reading comprehension?**

Yes ☐   No ☐

How?.......................………………………………………………………………………
…………

Section three: Extensive Reading

1) How often do you read in English?

Always ☐   Often ☐   Sometime ☐   Rarely ☐   Never ☐

2) **Your reason for reading is**

Reading for pleasure   ☐

Reading to learn   ☐

Reading for exams   ☐

All of them   ☐

3) In which setting do you prefer reading?

Inside the classroom   ☐

Outside the classroom   ☐

Why?

………………………..…………………………………………………………………………….

.

4) Do you like to read

What teachers ask you to read as a task [ ]

Self_ selected material (such as, short stories, articles, newspapers, etc.) [ ]

Both of them [ ]

5) While reading, do you try to get

The main ideas [ ]   detailed understand [ ]

General understanding [ ]

6) Would extensive reading promote your motivation to learn English more?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

Why?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

…

7) Extensive reading is a significant component in understanding the text?

Agree [ ]   Neutral [ ]   Disagree [ ]

Why?……………………………………………………………………………………………

……

Thank you!

Appendix 02

Teacher's Interview

I would like to thank you for accepting to answer this interview. The present interview is a research tool of an academic investigation attempting to achieve the main purpose which is investigating the improvement of reading comprehension(understanding texts while reading) through extensive reading(reading a lot and for longer periods) for English learners .I would be very thankful if you would accept to provide answers to the following questions.

Section one: Teaching Experience

1) How long have you been teaching English?

………………………………………………………………………………………….

2) How do you assess your learner's English level proficiency?

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

3) Which module do you teach?

………………………………………………………………………………………………

4) What kind of texts do you usually use?

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

Section Two: Reading Comprehension

1) What are the difficulties do your learners face while they are reading?

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

2) What are the techniques that you use in order to help your learners in enhance their reading skill?

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

3) How do you encourage your students to develop their reading comprehension?

………………………………………………………………………………………………

4) How important is reading comprehension in learning English language?

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

5) Do your learners appreciate reading skill?

………………………………………………………………………………………………

Why?

Section Three: Extensive Reading

1) If the students read with no purposes, how does the teacher interfere?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

2) How much reading should they do?

………………………………………………………………………………………….

Why?

3) If your student struggle with difficult passages to comprehend what should you do?

………………………………………………………………………………………….

4) Do you agree that extensive reading play essential role in improving English level of the learners?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

5) How do you keep your students motivated with their reading?

………………………………………………………………………………………….

Thank you