

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria  
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

Faculty of Arabic Language Arts &  
Foreign Languages  
Department of Foreign Languages  
Branch of English Studies



**Investigating Teachers' Attitudes toward the Adequacy of  
Teacher Training Programs and CBA-related Instructional  
Materials:  
A Case Study of the Algerian Intermediate School Teachers of  
English in the Region of Biskra**

*A Dissertation Submitted in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Doctorate Degree in Applied Linguistics*

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After perusal and close cross-examination of Mr. Ahmed Bachèr's PhD thesis entitled : *Investigating Teachers' Attitudes Toward the Adequacy of Teacher Training Programs and CBA-Related instructional Materials: A case of the Algerian Intermediate School Teachers in the Region of Biskra*, we, the undersigned, solemnly declare that it is defensible before a panel of experts in the discipline of Applied Linguistics. Moreover, we hereby certify that it is conform to the required format, content, and methodology of thesis rules and requirements in vigor in the Algerian universities.

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# *Declaration*

I hereby declare that this doctoral thesis entitled *Investigating Teachers' Attitudes Toward Teacher Training Programs and CBA-Related Instructional Materials: A Case Study of the Algerian Intermediate School Teachers in the Region of Biskra*, and supervised by Professor Ahmed Moumene of Mentouri University of Constantine is my own work and, to the best of my knowledge, all the sources that I have used and/ or quoted have duly been indicated and acknowledged by complete reference.

Mr. Ahmed BACHER  
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## *Declaration*

I hereby declare that this thesis has not previously been submitted and will not be, either in the same or different form, to this or any other university for the award of any degree.

*Signed:* Mr. Ahmed **Bacher**

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(Signature)

# Dedication

To my beloved mother, **Abla Bacher**.

To my beloved father, **Mohammed Larbi Bacher**.

To my brothers Farouk, M. Saleh, Adel, Lyès, and Tarek

To my cousin Samia Abid, M.D. & Soumia Bachèr

To my wife Habiba Gouacem

To my sons Mohamed Larbi & Imran

To my in-laws the *Gouacem* Family : Massood,

Tarek Souad, Sabrina, Hameeda, Awatef,

Afef and Hocein

## Acknowledgments

**S**O many believed in me and in what this work is really worth and for whom thanks can never be enough to express my deep appreciation. This section is my wish to acknowledge those many who have lent a hand of assistance and whispered a word of encouragement and have made this work possible.

As a devout Muslim, first and foremost praise be to Our Lord, Allah, as many as He has created, as large as the expansion of His Realm, and as heavy as the weight of His Throne, and as varied His blessings have been.

My deep appreciation goes to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Ahmed Moumene whose gentlemanlike manners and soft-spoken advice count for much of my motivation to work even harder. His insightful tips have been my stars and compass that guided me safely ashore.

I wish to record my deep sense of appreciation to the Mohammed Kheidher University and its top official who extended their hands to reach for the young researchers and whose unflagging assistance enabled this humble work to reach fruition.

I am also indebted to Mr Slimani Said, Mr. Boulougroune Adel, Mr Boukhama, Mr. Temagoult, Mrs. Hacina, Mrs. Rabhi, and Mrs. Salhi who have always believed in me.

I wish to thank Mr. Bashar Maamar, Mr. Sigueni Lamri, and Tourqui Barkat who encouraged me all along.

I wish to acknowledge Mr. Rahal Logby and his gentlemanlike support.

My thanks extend to some friends whose presence and faith helped me fight my “black dogs”: Ali Othmani, Khalid Jeddi, Salim Moaki-Benani, Mohammed Alloush, Mourad Jeffal.

A special thank you goes to my Master's 2 students (part. Prof. Boumerzougue, Meraf, Sebbahi, and Zebila, etc.) who have been supportive all along the writing of this thesis, and who prayed day and night for its completion.

I want also to express my gratitude to my family whose assistance and encouragements have urged me to complete this work. I can never thank them enough for their self-abnegation and their unflinching support.

Although any expression of acknowledgment will miss to fully capture the assistance and cooperation of middle school teachers of English who gladly and cheerfully answered the questionnaires piling thus insights upon insights.

A special thank you goes to Mr. and Mrs. Abdelbaki who willingly undertook to provide me with the necessary measurements of the middle school textbooks.

A debt of heartfelt appreciation needs to be settled and paid in full in favor of my "heroes in the shadows"; those people whose compelling books sparkled my inspiration and made me reach my knowledge nirvana.

## Abstract

The present, dual-focused descriptive-interpretive study purports itself to investigate the attitudes of the middle school teachers of English in the aftermath of the implementation of new school reforms that aim to introduce a new, interdisciplinary approach (*viz.*, Competency-Based Approach) as a medium of instruction. This research evolves from and revolves around a prevailing assertion: namely, that is the teaching-learning process has a firm attitudinal footing. Differently stated, the aim of the study is to explore teachers' attitudes and the extent to which these may affect their engagement in the teaching-learning process. It should be noted that teachers' attitudes, beliefs, cognition, emotions, and values appear to be customarily underexplored so much so that psychological aspects are assumed to be ancillary at best or non-existent at worst. The answers provided in the questionnaires (three in all), which are the linchpin of our investigation along with the unstructured interviews, sit well with the hypothetical framework, which is formulated as follows: If we rethink teacher education and training, improve teachers' socio-professional conditions, and involve teachers in decision making, we will significantly reduce teachers' negative attitudes. The targeted population of this study is the middle school teachers of English in the Region of Biskra of which seventy (70) teachers responded to the questionnaires and the unstructured interviews. The findings of the investigation disclose that the middle school teachers of English have developed negative attitudes toward four (04) major challenges: the management-related challenges, contextual-related challenges, teaching profession-related challenges, and working relationships-related challenges. Management-related challenges, which include teacher education and training programs, textbook design and writing, and organization of pedagogic activities, have affected teachers' unfavorable attitudes toward their very existence and roles in the teaching-learning process. Contextual challenges, such as old facilities, busy schedules, and especially class size, have sparked a record number of teachers' flurry grievances and negative attitudes. Teaching-related challenges (*i.e.*, the teachability of the self-contained textbooks,) have proved to frustrate teachers' attempt to attain the set objectives. As for the working relationships-related challenges, teachers seem to have developed unfavorable attitudes *vis-à-vis* the tense relations with other stakeholders (mainly inspectors and male students), limited prospects for promotion, and pecuniary incentives.

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## List of Abbreviations

<b>AEG</b>	Assessment and Evaluation Guide
<b>AKA</b>	Also Known As
<b>ALM</b>	Audio-lingual Method (aka The Army Method)
<b>AR</b>	Action Research
<b>AS</b>	Adoption States
<b>B. A.</b>	<i>Artium Baccalaureus Diploma</i> (equivalent to Licence Degree in Algeria)
<b>BBG</b>	Broadcasting Board of Governors (USA)
<b>BS</b>	British Spelling
<b>CALT</b>	Communicative Approach to Language Learning
<b>CBA</b>	Competency-Based Approach
<b>CBE</b>	Competency-Based Education
<b>CIL</b>	Constructed International Language (Esperanto)
<b>CBLT</b>	Competency-Based Language Teaching
<b>CEF</b>	Common European Framework
<b>CHA</b>	Commission d'Homologation et d'Approbation
<b>CM</b>	Coordination Meeting

**CNAPEST** Conseil National Autonome des Professeurs de l'Enseignement

Secondaire et Technique

**CNDP** Centre National de Documentation Pédagogique

**COE** Council of Europe

**CR** Criterion-Referenced (Assessment)

**CS** Commonwealth Spelling

**CSR** Computer Science Room

**EI** Emotional Intelligence

**EIL** English as an International Language

**ELL** English Language Learner(s)

**ENS** Ecole Normale Supérieure

**ETF** English Teaching Forum

**EU** European Union

**FL** Foreign Language(s)

**FLL** Foreign Language Learning

**GS** Grammar Syllabus

**GSD** Groupe spécialisé Didactique

**ILO** International Labour Office

**IM** Instructional Materials

<b>IQ</b>	Intelligence Quotient
<b>ITE</b>	Institut Technologique d'Education
<b>INRE</b>	Institut National de la Recherche en Education
<b>LC</b>	Local Culture
<b>L-LPS</b>	Loan and Loan-Purchase Scheme
<b>LS</b>	Learning Styles
<b>LT</b>	Language Teaching
<b>LTM</b>	Long Term Memory
<b>LTM</b>	Language Teaching Methodology
<b>LWC</b>	Language of Wider Communication
<b>ME</b>	Modern English
<b>MNE</b>	(The Algerian) Ministry of National Education
<b>MS</b>	Middle School
<b>NR</b>	Norm-Referenced (Assessment)
<b>NVC</b>	Nonverbal Communication
<b>ODD</b>	Open Doors Day
<b>OECD</b>	Organization of Cooperation & Development
<b>ONPS</b>	Office National des Publications Scolaires
<b>OTM</b>	<b><u>On the Move</u></b> (Textbook for 4th Year MS)

<b>ORS</b>	Oxford Referencing Style
<b>PC</b>	Personal Computer
<b>PBLT</b>	Performance-Based Language Teaching
<b>PDA</b>	Public Display of Affection
<b>RT</b>	Reflective Teaching
<b>SLL</b>	Second Language Learning
<b>SOE</b>	<b><u>Spotlight on English</u></b> (series for 1st, 2 <sup>nd</sup> , and 3rd Years MS)
<b>TBLT</b>	Task-Based Language Teaching
<b>TC</b>	Target Culture
<b>TG</b>	Teacher's Guide
<b>TL</b>	Target Language (English in our case)
<b>TRS</b>	Textbook Rental Scheme
<b>TM</b>	Teacher's Manual
<b>TR</b>	Teacher Research
<b>VA</b>	Visual Aids
<b>UGTA</b>	Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens (General Union of Algerian Workers)
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom (of Great Britain)
<b>USIA</b>	United States Information Agency
<b>WB</b>	World Bank
<b>ZPD</b>	Zone of Proximal Development (Lev Vygotsky, 's term in Russian, <i>зона ближайшего развития</i> )

*Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His Light is*

*as if there were a Niche and within it a lamp:*

*the Lamp enclosed in Glass: the glass as it were a brilliant star:*

*lit from a blessed Tree, an Olive, neither of the East nor of the West,*

*whose Oil is well-nigh luminous, though fire scarce touched it:*

*Light upon Light!*

*Allah doth guide whom He will to His Light.*

*Allah doth set forth Parables for men: and Allah doth know all things.*

*(Surat En-Nur verses 35)*

The way is long-

Let's go together.

The way is difficult-

Let's help each other.

The way is joyful-

Let's share it.

The way is ours alone-

Let's go in love.

The way grows

Before us-

Let's begin

(Zen invocation)

Those who educate children well are more  
to be honored than they who produce them;  
for these only gave them life, those the art of  
living well”.

Aristotle

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# General Introduction

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## General Introduction

It may appear paradoxical to put claim that recent learner-centered approaches to language teaching have downplayed the teacher and his/her role(s) to such an extent that the latter's presence has become auxiliary. Inversely, they have intentionally prioritized the learners and their roles as far as making them the exclusive concern of the teaching-learning process. A thorough glance at the specialized literature, one is struck by the few titles on the teacher's *soft side* and *hard side* to put it in Goleman's terminology. Basanta (1995: 95) observes that "in recent years two parallel processes have been at work, with the role of the learner being steadily upgraded and that of the teacher moving in the opposite direction". In comparison with the learner, the teacher's personality, beliefs, attitudes, emotions, feelings, creative talents, and autonomy, and so on are virtually effaced to make room to the learners' and what they stands for. An awkward situation appears to have resulted from this: Quality teaching has continued to lose ground to disruptive behavior and underachievement (on the learners' part). The 20th century witnessed the shift from the focus on teaching methodologies to the focus on the learner and instructional materials leaving out the teacher, who, *au fond*, represents the fulcrum of education.

Subsequently, our study *shall* investigate from social and psychological vantage point that particular instance: The deliberate alienation of the teacher's cognitive and emotional aspects from syllabus design, textbook writing, and to a lesser degree classroom practices. Woods (1996: 2) notices "An implicit neglect and disregard for what the individual teacher brings to the learning experiences of the students in the field of second and foreign language teaching". He later recognizes that "the role of the teacher has remained relatively peripheral component of language teaching research through the years, and of the current theories of second language acquisition" (*ibid*). In fact, the literature on the teacher as an overriding, and meaningful agent of change in any school reforms is a rare commodity, and therefore the teacher and what s/he represents is dramatically underexplored. In wide brief, our study is first and foremost teacher oriented in perspective.

## Background to the Research

Despite its stressful, daunting moments, teaching remains an engaging profession to both the heart and mind of those involved in the profession. It has long been recognized that learning has emotional and cognitive bases: Plato, on the one hand, connects learning to its *attitudinal* and *emotional* footing as he stipulates “Every learning has an emotional base”, while Aristotle, on the other hand, recognizes that he cannot teach anybody any thing, but can make them *think*. Hence, the cogent nature of cognition and emotions in the individual’s life may account for one’s choice to become a teacher. In this very sense, the profession of the teacher is either-or attempt to bring change through what it seems a meaningful experience; education is one’s way to keep up an excellent tradition in teaching, or to do away with an abhorring classroom malpractice, or to self-realize to feel good about one’s role in changing obsolete attitudes toward what one believes self-evident truths.

In the Algerian case, formal education has continuously failed the stakeholders: All that has been available to teachers were learners’ names and photos. Learners’ *intelligence quotient* (IQ), learning styles, needs, wants, expectations, beliefs, attitudes, emotions, feelings, cognitive abilities, and so on, have always been an abandoned ore. Monolithic avenues to instruct so many subjects and so many topics with little meaningful practice have made the intake of little value. Teaching for testing (i.e., washback) has always been the norm in overcrowded classes whose only common denominator was age. Attention has always been directed to students with certain abilities in numeracy and to very little extent to literacy. Intelligence, therefore, has as yet been connected to algebra and reading, the more quickly learners decipher words or calculate, the more intelligent they are labeled. Moreover, many teachers have become deskilled; they have lost their workmanship touch due to the grotesque rote teaching of obsolete textbook (socio)linguistic content. Teachers’ seniority, experience, and talent have overlapped with class overcrowdedness, busy schedules, low salaries, limited prospects for promotion, low self-esteem, and loss in social standing, which in turn has made teaching an extremely daunting task.

It is against this backdrop that we have chosen to be involved in teaching to discover the underlying, cogent reasons behind such failures to produce functional citizens and also to attempt to bring change through creative practices. In our M.A.

thesis, we hypothesized that *faulty textbooks were the direct causes of our teachers' and students' dysfunctionality both in formal settings and workplaces*. It was quite sobering, however, to conclude that our teaching community was dysfunctional because of the lack of quality teacher education and training. Also, it was staggering to notice that they were badly equipped to cope with new situations; all they pay attention to, when new reforms are undertaken and innovations launched, is the high quality of the format of textbooks rather than the inherent flaws in the rush-to-print textbooks. Their critical thinking, therefore, has been limited by their lack of perception. Goleman corroborates (1985) that “what we fail to notice and do is limited by what we fail to notice. And because we fail to notice what we fail to notice, there is little we can do to change until we notice how failing to notice shapes our thoughts and deeds”. It is within the range of the present research to attempt to make up for the failure to notice what we should have not failed to notice.

In a nutshell, the writing of the present PhD thesis is prompted by our “emotional” attitudes toward the preposterous malpractices which have been perpetuated for a long time, and also by our own self-awareness that the world has changed and so should our educational objectives and practices. It appears that teachers are unfortunately been alienated as leprous pariahs from decision-making as far as the curriculums, syllabuses, textbooks, and students are concerned ; they prove to be strangers to their own workplace and environment, which accentuates, thus, their aloofness, frustration, helplessness, hopelessness, and isolation. However, a large body of research has accumulated over the years indicating that quality teachers' inextricable link to closing the achievement gap is overarching. Our *modus operandi* in approaching a sensitive issue such as teachers' attitudes need be interrelated to modern-day demands of highly performing schools. It is widely accepted now that the 21st century requires different survival skills from those which have been highly esteemed and taught in schools in the past decades. As a concluding note, the third Millenium teachers are meant to play a pivotal role in education, and, therefore, they ought to be at the heart of the teaching-learning decision-making.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It is observed that teachers and their psychological dimensions appear to be overlooked prior and in the aftermath of school reforms, which frequently undermines

the implementation of school change and innovation. Despite being the second major direct influence on learners next to biology, teachers are usually taken for granted. This is particularly the case in learner-centered approaches, which concern themselves exclusively with learners and their learning styles. Hence, the current work undertakes to explore and explain the psychological grievances of the middle school teachers of English in the aftermath of the implementation of Competency-Based approach and the subsequent textbook series.

### **Research Questions**

The present study attempts to address a battery of questions which, as planned as well as expected, will give the whole work focus, drive and purpose. It should be noted, however, that the forthcoming questions are framed and arranged so as to reflect the two broad axes of our investigation: *Teachers' Beliefs-and-Attitudes Axis* and *Classroom Practices Axis*.

1. Who are our middle school English teachers?
2. How much do we know about them?
3. What do they think their profession is?
4. Where do their attitudes stem from?
5. To what extent do their beliefs and attitudes affect their professional expertise?
6. What are their strategies to overcome the challenges posed by the instructional materials and school environment?
7. What can research do to assist the middle school English teachers regain their sense of coherence?

To address the questions above, a series of questionnaires and unstructured interviews have been conducted with a view of obtaining verifiable data.

### **Hypotheses**

Hypothesis is by definition a supposition of the causes and effects of the phenomenon under investigation. The researcher is required to *identify* the problem,

*explore* it from different facets, *demonstrate* its worth and value, and eventually *propose* at best adequate solutions and at worse entail recommendations. It is noteworthy to put forward that hypotheses are not necessarily true all the time ; they may prove to be false, in which case they do not whatsoever denigrate the value and worth of the research. Along those lines, Bentley (2006: 26) considers academic hypothesis as a theory which requires evidence to prove or disprove it. At the crux of a sustainable doctoral thesis, therefore, are sound hypotheses around which the whole of the research revolves. We have painstakingly attempted, on several occasions, to frame workable hypotheses that are in total accordance with our identification of the middle school teachers of English ambivalent attitudes, beliefs, and mindsets toward their socio-professional environment and with a special reference to their stances toward their newly proposed instructional material that appear to dramatically stretch their efforts and in the long run would probably chip away at their commitment to their mission and vision of being teachers.

The current thesis counts three main hypotheses. *Hypothesis One* assumes that teachers are more committed to their job once they are involved; *Hypothesis Two* supposes that teachers' attitudes become more favorable according to the amount of improvement of their socio-professional conditions ; and *Hypothesis Three* attempts to account for the ways to empower teachers and ameliorate their attitudes and perceptions.

1.           **Hypothesis 1:** The teachers' commitment to their job depends considerably upon the involvement of the teachers in the development and accountability of the EFL course program, syllabus design, and instructional materials.
  
2.           **Hypothesis 2:** If the socio-professional circumstances are improved, teachers' attitudes vis-à-vis their socio-professional environment will improve accordingly.
  
3.           **Hypothesis 3:** If teachers' receive an adequate pre-service and in-service education, training, and professional counseling, the attitudes toward

their teaching behavior, teaching practices, and ELLs will be significantly more favorable.

## **Research Methodology and Design**

It is commonly acknowledged that various academic methodologies serve various goals and purposes of research. Lynch (1997: 14) urges those who intend to conduct research on a serious issue to be well aware of the two symbiotic perspectives. On the one hand, the **ontological** perspective (i.e., *what can be known ?*) and, on the other hand, the **epistemological** perspective (i.e., *how they know what they claim to know ?*). Differently stated, while the ontological perspective investigates the nature of the existing phenomena and eventually classifies them, the epistemological perspective seeks to determine the justifications thereof. A priori, these two basic perspectives define and guide the choice of the methodology and directly affect its process to attain the set objectives: identification of the issue of study and define its related components in a comprehensive framework. We have seriously taken these two yardsticks while investigating the attitudes of the middle school teachers of English. The premise is not only to identify teachers' positive and negative attitudes but also to account for the origins and impacts of these attitudes, beliefs, and values on teachers' commitment, engagement, and interplay with their overall socio-professional environment.

### **The Choice of the Method**

This research lends itself to investigating the attitudes of the middle school English teachers' toward the wide plethora of the socio-professional environment aspects with a special reference toward and emphasis on the Ministry of National Education-proposed competency-based-designed textbooks content, methodology, and objectives. The very nature of the investigation guided by Lynch's perspectives sets the choice and tone of the *descriptive-interpretive* method to achieve our objectives which are to fundamentally (a) explore and (b) explain the underlying reasons of the teachers' intricate attitudes vis-à-vis their socio-professional *milieu* as well as toward both the content and methodology of the instructional materials (adopted officially in 2003). This current study is consequently both descriptive and interpretive in nature, scope, and tone.

At the descriptive level, it attempts to illustrate the nature of the middle school English textbooks (*Spotlight on English 1, 2, and 3* and *On The Move Book 4*), the competency-based approach to foreign language teaching, as well as the challenges posed to the teachers in terms of objectives, methods, teacher guide, activities, content, projects, etc. The focus on these issues will surely pave the way to the second level of the study (namely, the interpretive). This perspective (*viz.*, interpretive) aims at providing an *emic* and *etic* understanding of the middle school English teachers' attitudes vis-à-vis their teaching context in general and the textbooks in particular. This aspect of inquiry is defined within the framework provided by educational research into the teachers' attitudes, beliefs, value systems and the fashion whereby these systems in question shape the teachers' instructional decisions and quality.

### **Research Tools**

Due to the nature of the current thesis, which is descriptive-interpretive, the reliance on a pair of research tools (i.e., Questionnaires and unstructured interviews) appears to be exclusive as we deem it to be a natural process to gather information on the targeted population. Three questionnaires have been administered to the middle school teachers of English in the region of Biskra (and some teachers in the Region of Oued Souf) each of which aims to lay out particular information. Two short questionnaires (the first one containing twenty-five items and the second one four items) have been administered to gauge teachers' needs and attitudes. Each questionnaire targets particular aspects that the other questionnaire has failed to address. It should be noted that the four-item questionnaire basically targets the attitudes of male teacher- female teacher and teacher-student attitudes. The outcomes of the two questionnaires have been included in the chapters of both the theoretical and practical part. This procedure is premised by a cogent reason: to give credit to the stated claims. The main questionnaire, which is a chapter in its own right, comes to encompass other aspects that have been postponed to later investigation; it is longer than the other two questionnaires as it contains thirty-five items that target teachers' attitudes toward different aspects of their profession and workplace. Unstructured interviews have been organized throughout the different phases of the research with the view of elucidating crucial points that cannot be gathered through questionnaires

(e.g., teachers' in-class practices, their attitudes toward licensure proceedings, and body language, etc.).

### **Delimitation of the Study**

This work is primarily about an investigation of middle school English teachers' attitudes toward the TEFL contexts, teacher training programs, and CBA textbooks in the region of Biskra. Therefore, it develops exclusively along the aforementioned lines. We mindfully purport to study a sample of the middle school teachers of English in the South-East of Algeria and more precisely in the Wilaya of Biskra. This Wilaya is bordered by (clockwise) Batna, Oued Souf, and M'Sila. It is worth of note to mention that a good number of the surveyed teachers studied in what was then known the *Technological Institute of Education* in Batna, which may mean that they have similar attitudes and teaching strategies with all the other middle school teachers of English from the aforementioned neighboring wilayas as they all have studied in the same institution. Investigating Biskri middle school English teachers may be a faithful representative sample of all the middle school teachers' attitudes in the surrounding wilayas. Besides, this region has its own singularity: weather, landscape, socio-economic status, linguistic properties, school organization, and students' behavior, etc. All these factors will certainly affect one way or another both the teachers' and students' perceptions, self-awareness, beliefs and attitudes vis-à-vis the whole teaching-learning process. Teachers usually feel significant work pressure and stress in inner-city schools of the North than in the cities and villages of the South.

### **Relevance of the Study**

We intend to make this PhD thesis *encyclopedic* (i.e., informative) in scope so that stakeholders from various fields of study (applied linguists, sociolinguists, psycholinguists, educationalists, cognitive scientists, and so on) and those directly involved in education (teachers, supervisors, headmasters, parents and students) benefit from its findings. We have listed down some reasons that advocate the inherent interest that this work bears and eventually raises:

1. This study targets all the clients engaged in education all along the spectrum of public education.
2. It provides conceptual and procedural tools that can prove invaluable to overcome teachers' deskilling, and demotivation.
3. It customizes our instruction to teachers' and students' abilities, needs, and expectations.
4. It sensitizes our teaching community to be aware of the change that is taking place in the world in order to meet what is expected from it in the information-driven society, and hence maximize its quality teaching.
5. It does not build a case against any one; it does not criticize for the sake of criticizing, nor does it accuse any one of shirking his/ her duty.

### **Definition of Key Terms (Title)**

The title of the current thesis contains certain terminology that necessarily requires definitions due to the special context wherein it has been utilized. Differently couched, we judged it essential to *contextualize* it so that confusion is ultimately dispelled.

*Attitudes*: Social psychologists consider “attitudes” *the* most important component of their area of research. The scholarly literature displays an enormous mentioning of the term attitude, which proves beyond doubt the focus and scope of this construct in people's lives. In formal terms, Gilbert *et al.* (1998: 269) define attitude as “... a *psychological tendency* that is expressed by *evaluating* particular entity with some degree of *favor or disfavor*” (*emphasis added*). According to Blankson (2005: 3) attitudes are composed of: feelings, beliefs, values, and disposition to act. Apparently, a shared agreement is running among social psychologists that attitudes are inferred rather than directly observed (Schlinger & Poling, 1998; Gilbert, Fiske & Lindzey, 1998; Oskamp & Schultz, 2005). The importance of attitudes as a theme of study lies in the fact that much of people's personality and many of their acts are modulated by

their attitudes. Moreover, the meaningful engagement in teaching-learning EFL course program appears to be finely tuned to both teachers' and students' positive (or negative) attitudes toward English.

*Adequacy*: Put more simply, adequacy refers to acceptability, satisfactoriness, and suitability. Since our overriding concern has been to investigate teachers' attitudes toward teaching training programs and instructional materials, the issue of the correlation between what they have been prepared for and what they have encountered both in their formative years and in-service career seems obvious to come within the boundaries of this research. Clearly, the gap between theory and monitored demonstrations in the *Institut Technologique d' Education* and *Ecoles Superieures* and real life experience is frequently quite significant. The inherent dissonance accompanying theory and real life experience almost always engenders confusion, concern, and losing faith in one's abilities, leading, hence, to unfavorable attitudes and eventually to teachers' disengagement.

*Intermediate Schools*: The school phase that comes between the primary school and the secondary/ high school is termed interchangeably intermediate or middle school. It is interesting to acknowledge that either term is utilized, never both. The Algerian intermediate/ middle school consists primarily of students (aka, pupils) aged 10 through 14 who proceed from *First Year* (Première Année-السنة الأولى) which is equivalent of the American *Grade 5* through *Fourth Year* (Quatrième Année- السنة الرابعة), otherwise known as *Grade 8* in the American educational system. Throughout the present work both terms are used interchangeably; a bias toward the use of middle school may be, however, sensed in many parts of this work but without a deliberate intention.

*Teacher Training Programs*: This concept is taken and utilized in its broadest terms to include pre-service and in-service education and training as well as induction period, licensure, workshops, seminars, and the surrounding socio-professional environment where teachers fulfill their different functions and tasks. From the first day to the day

of retirement, teachers are constantly training and trained to cope with the new challenges that crop up with every school year, new textbook, and every class. We judge it important to distinguish two concepts that have appeared as yet in this section: teacher education and teacher training. Teacher education is primarily concerned with a theory-oriented program in that it aims at developing teachers' competencies for a better assimilation of the socio-professional environment; this view is supported by Elliot (1991, cited in Husbands 1996: 16). As for teacher training, it refers to teachers' practical knowledge in real situations by coming to grips with the necessary know-how according to Salandanan (2009: 7). In short, in the current work, teacher education is inherent in the in-service teaching behavior in the Algerian middle and/ or intermediate schools.

*Teaching Materials:* It should be noted from the outset that teaching materials and instructional materials are used interchangeably throughout. In spite of the nuance and shades of meaning between teaching and instruction, which is out of the scope of this work, the preference has been that of appreciation. In Algeria, instructional/ teaching materials seem to be self-contained curriculums telescoped in the proposition of new textbooks. It has been customary to leave to teachers the opportunity to gather the relevant audio-visuals and realia that best fit the units or files. The middle school-proposed EFL course program is introduced through *Spotlight Books* 1+2+3 and *On the Move* (Book 4). This series of textbooks telescopes both student's book and workbook, and they are heavily relied upon in the presentation of the linguistic input.

### **Note on the Language**

Note-on-the-language section acknowledges the use of the diction and related mechanics rules that have been used as guidelines to accomplish this academic work. The springboard for such an attempt to shed light on the language has been from the onset to dissipate confusion in the potential readers' minds and to tolerate as well as put up with the differences with other usages.

As far as orthography is concerned, the American orthography and spelling have been utilized for a cogent reason: Most of the references are written and printed in the USA and our personal preferences of the orthography in question is mainly due to its “regularity”. Thus, for the sake of consistency and convenience, the American orthography and spelling have been fostered throughout.

Style reference that has been consistently adopted in this work is the one advocated by American Psychological Association (APA). It should be acknowledged, however, that Oxford Referencing Style (ORS) has been exceptionally used with (*ibid.*) for pragmatic reasons. As our theme borders with social psychology and cognitive sciences, this style seems to be a natural choice and process that adds to the consistency and convenience of the current work.

When it comes to terminology, the preference has virtually been in favor of the American terms. For instance, student (s) is consistently used rather than the British “pupil(s)”. Furthermore, the term *students* practically equates with *learners* and *English Language Learners*; *curriculum* sometimes equates with *syllabus* throughout this work.

Occasionally, the deliberate emphasis (thanks to *italics* or **boldtype**) has been used either next to a citation or even to emphasize particular terms to bring potential readers’ attention to the particular use and presence of such terms. This instance enables the readers in question to appreciate the intentions of the author(s), and hence makes meaning clear and the explanation to the point.

The American writing mechanics such as capitalization, double quotes, punctuation, the use of the definite article, and annotations have consistently been adopted.

Both *Active Voice* and *Passive voice* have judiciously been utilized for each conveys particular semantic nuances. Therefore, the preference is rather pragmatic than esthetic.

The choice of the *present tense* and more specifically the present perfect is also grounded in pragmatic reasons; we would like that the honorable Members of the Jury and potential readers to feel the *present-day* impact of the research and research findings as well as the analysis on their perception of teachers' attitudes and by the same token their own attitudes toward the teachers, teaching-learning process, and school innovations/ reforms. On score of that, the "prose" of this humble work is rendered more vivid and forceful.

Sexist language has been hedged whenever possible to bring a glimmer of hope of sex equality. For that specific reason, we usually opt for *he/ she* as a replacement for the generic word of "teacher" when the latter comes to be previously mentioned in the statements.

We have attempted to emulate the academic style that characterizes the cognitive and social sciences: simple, direct, bold (at times) if elegant. McKerrow (2011: 3) advises "State your facts as simply as possible, even boldly". This is done with a cogent reason: The theme of the present investigation lends itself to one of the most dominant themes in cognitive sciences and social psychology.

Finally, It should be noted that humble "we" is being utilized throughout this research not out of self-effacement. Rather, it is actually out of convincing arguments. Our supervisor has consistently urged us to adopt the humble "we" to reduce the exuberance of the ego, and eventually involve potential readers, increase their curiosity as well as interest, and induce their empathy-sympathy.

## **Structure of the Thesis**

This work is structured in a way that attempts to reflect the subject matter under investigation as well as the methodology adopted. Consequently, the very nature of this PhD thesis is twofold: theoretical and practical. The first part provides the conceptual framework of the investigation all the more reviewing the relevant literature, while the second part is a fieldwork survey and discussion of the various questionnaires and unstructured interviews conducted among the teaching-learning community.

**Chapter One:** It is within the scope of the current chapter to provide as thorough an overview as possible on the English teaching and learning context (EFL) in Algeria. We are absolutely mindful to the magnitude of the task. It is, however, prompted by a good number of premises most salient of which are : the corroboration of whether the Algerian context, in its past or present-day situations, compromises or promotes the implementation of new methodologies, and eventually come to the assistance of an otherwise less educated, less trained, and ill-prepared teaching community. In a perplexing situation such as the Algerian one, it is of an overriding importance to attempt to identify the various and oftentimes conflicting variables that have interplayed in molding a plethora of attitudes toward the Algerian school system in general and the teaching of English as the second foreign language in particular. We have every reason to maximize the importance of collecting possibly verifiable and reliable data on the EFL context in Algeria so that the challenges compromising the excellent implementation of novel approaches and materials are reduced while favorable, positive atmospheres are (re)created, encouraged and ultimately sustained. Throughout this chapter, we shall try to track down the complex and frequently delicate interweaving variables that control the teaching and learning context of foreign languages (i.e., English in our case) from different and multifarious facets.

**Chapter Two:** The upcoming chapter, as its title clearly indicates, attempts to survey the Algerian TEFL instructional materials from a quantitative vantage point of an insider. The premise behind such an attempt is to discover the underlying reasons for

the middle school English teachers' attitudes (positive and/ or negative) toward the proposed textbooks. Basically, textbooks are meant to provide a supportive instructional supplement material to the two agents of the teaching-learning process (namely, teachers and students). Paradoxically and despite the middle school textbooks designers' expectations and wishful thinking, the teachers of English have obviously developed a panoply of reactions which span all along the attitude spectrum and that range from excitement and motivation (to implement the material) to total resistance and/ or utter refusal to even consider the materials at hand. Different teachers come up with different reasons, and it is incumbent upon researchers to identify the *actual* reasons that have led to the emersion of such conflicting attitudes and mindsets. It falls within the scope of this study, therefore, to survey the middle school English teaching material package in order to firstly, set out whencefrom the teachers' attitudes emerged, and secondly, to probe the impact of such attitudes on the teachers' psychological perception(s) (i.e., affective and emotional) and eventually professional performances (i.e., teaching strategies and practices) in and outside their classrooms.

**Chapter Three:** The present chapter is undertaken with the view of surveying in a comprehensive framework the middle school EFL teacher profile. The springboard for such an attempt is to scan the ecological, psychological and professional aspects which clearly affect beyond measure teachers' output and commitment to their task, mission, and vision. The ultimate objective is to spot the incubating area of the diverse though conflicting attitudes nursed by the EFL teaching community vis-à-vis their instructional environment and more specifically the proposed middle school textbooks of English (*viz.*, *Spotlight on English* 1+2+3, and *On the Move*). By examining the physical contexts of the teachers (classroom setting, textbooks, and teacher's guides, etc.) so much valuable and pertinent information may be collected and eventually revealed of the controlling and patterned *attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and mindsets* that would, in turn, culminate in a better understanding of the teachers and their interaction with their surroundings. The corollary of that would be the provision of a productive quality teaching and a positive classroom management. For better or worse, teachers' surroundings have not been appropriately explored in our

Algerian teaching context. As this is attained, change and school reforms would to all likelihood be materialized and eventually productive.

**Chapter Four:** The following chapter attempts to explore the middle school English teachers' beliefs and attitudes and their effect on their classroom practice. Conversely, it is also within the scope of this chapter to highlight the effects of classroom inputs/resources on teachers' attitudes and beliefs. It has only recently been recognized that under the mask of the professional, there lies a (socio)emotional dimension that either advances or undermines teachers' efficiency as well as achievement in and outside the workplace. To the classroom, teachers bring whole panoply of cognitive and emotional processes such as attitudes, beliefs, anger, frustration, fear, optimism, and so on, which, in case they are positive, lead to job satisfaction, commitment as well as emotional understanding and emotional labor. This is directly reflected in the teachers' quality instruction and pastoral support provided to students, which would eventually thwart students' achievement. Contrariwise, the more negative emotions teachers nurse, the more likely they fail to create a supportive environment where meaningful engagement is set. This chapter therefore intends to achieve a better understanding of the middle school English teachers' attitudes toward their teaching context and more specifically toward their instructional materials.

**Fieldwork and Data Analysis:** The current section undertakes to analyze the questionnaires which have been specifically designed and administered to a large population of middle school teachers of English across the territory of the Wilaya of Biskra and even in the neighboring Wilayas. This approach is prompted by our determination to verify whether the attitudes nursed by the teachers in the Wilaya of Biskra are not related to the subculture of the population, relief of the geography, or the type of climate. We may confidently put forward that the questionnaires included and reflected both the dependent and independent variables appearing in the title, hypotheses and main questions of the current work. The unstructured interviews with some of the surveyed teachers seem to corroborate what most of the other respondents' feelings about their socio-professional environment as well as their attitudes toward the implemented instructional materials including the approach to

teaching English to beginner learners in their early and mid-adolescent years (i.e., formal operational stage according to Piagetian taxonomy). In wide brief, this section aims to capture the ambivalent shifts in the Algerian middle school teachers of English not only their socio-professional environment, but also the teaching methodology as well as the content of their CBA textbooks.

**Pedagogical Implications:** This section considers the implications of the findings of the present research on teaching, teaching act, teaching behavior, and teaching practices, which would come to the assistance of not only the experts in the field but also potential readers such as EFL students, teachers, and inspectors, etc. As one of the objectives of this research is to help both novice and senior teachers regain their sense of coherence, this section comes to accommodate that particular need. Equally essential to acknowledge is the attempt to guide the targeted population to foster certain strategies to overcome the challenges posed by the instructional materials and school environment by identifying teachers' attitudes and the socio-professional challenges facing them. The premise is that the outlining of the strengths and weaknesses of the instructional materials and contextual environment may lead teachers to handle their attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and values to improve their working conditions through minimizing stressful circumstances and maximizing their meaningful engagement in the teaching profession.

## **Chapter One: EFL Context in Algeria**

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# Chapter One: EFL Context in Algeria

## Introduction

It is within the scope of the current chapter to provide as thorough an overview as possible on the English teaching and learning context (EFL) in Algeria. We are absolutely mindful to the magnitude of the task. It is, however, prompted by a good number of premises most salient of which are : the corroboration of whether the Algerian context, in its past or present-day situations, compromises or promotes the implementation of new methodologies, and eventually come to the assistance of an otherwise less educated, less trained, and ill-prepared teaching community. In a perplexing situation such as the Algerian one, it is of an overriding importance to attempt to identify the various and oftentimes conflicting variables that have interplayed in molding a plethora of attitudes toward the Algerian school system in general and the teaching of English as the second foreign language in particular. We have every reason to maximize the importance of collecting possibly verifiable and reliable data on the EFL context in Algeria so that the challenges compromising the excellent implementation of novel approaches and materials are reduced while favorable, positive atmospheres are (re)created, encouraged and ultimately sustained. Throughout this chapter, we shall try to track down the complex and frequently delicate interweaving variables that control the teaching and learning context of foreign languages (i.e., English in our case) from different and multifarious facets.

## 1.1 Historical Context

The teaching of foreign languages in Algeria cannot whatsoever be taken out of its historical context. It has not been unduly claimed that the presence of foreign languages in the Algerian schools is that of one at the detriment of the other, *booty of war*<sup>1</sup> as against pragmatic interests, and of modernity as against identity. Differently stated, the whole issue cannot do away with the political implications which have stormed the country for the last fifty years or so. Consequently, foreign language

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<sup>1</sup> Kateb Yacine considers the French language *booty of the War* of Liberation (1954-1962).

teaching and learning in Algeria is a history of conflictual dominance ever since the country underwent one horrific type of a policy of dual foreign physical presence in 1830: French occupation as well as colonization. The French language came with the conquering French soldiers after the fly whisk incident wherein Hussein Dey of Algiers was reported to have used to strike the French Consul, Pierre Deval, for failing to provide a satisfactory answer with reference to the French debts to Algeria. Coercion in foreign politics was reflected in the coercive implementation of the conquerors' culture on the conquered population which was gradually and eventually reduced to mere ghosts on their fatherland. The French language policy in Algeria has been such coercive that it is still shaping the Algerians' attitudes and policies toward both national and foreign languages.

### **1.1.1 The Teaching of the French Language**

Once occupied, Algeria became home from home for hundreds of thousands of European colonizers who looked forward to new economic prospects from an otherwise crowded, cold, and conflicting nationalistic Europe. *L'Algerie française* was the label of the rich territories in North Africa and its local population *les indigènes*<sup>2</sup> whose backwardness needed the French civilizing and generous presence and intervention. The French authorities were well aware that they needed to create a new type of *indigène*: docile, obedient, and complacent with whatever little is given to him so that he never asks for more. Politics transpires from the policies put forward in colonized Algeria to reshape the locals to fit the French tastes and desires. Heggoy (1973: 18) succinctly outlines the colonial attempts to recreate and model up colonized Algerians:

The attempt by France to control Algerians through the assimilation of Algerians into French culture was no more clearly demonstrated than in the field of education. The imposition of French educational norms and the denial to the Algerian of his legitimate cultural identity through controls of language, curriculum, and methods of instruction reveal the

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<sup>2</sup> *Natives* in French. A French exonym which denotes derogatory nuances .

colonist policy in its most destructive. The French supplanted Arab educational values and moved to effect and maintain Algerian subordination through structural changes or precolonial education and implicit challenges to the spirit and direction of this education.

Furthermore, relying on a notable French historian report whose experience of French colonist policy in Algeria has been first hand, Hayane (1985: 15) recognizes that the teaching of foreign languages in Algeria and more specifically French was closely linked to political ends and implications rather than pedagogical. He quotes Ageron<sup>3</sup> who outlines the objectives of *the Ligue de l'Enseignement en Algérie* (LEA) :

... l'enseignement des indigènes était une œuvre politique plutôt qu'une œuvre scolaire... . Si l'on veut que l'indigène obéisse sans hésitation ... les enfants seront confiés non à des instituteurs munis de toutes sortes de brevet mais à des moniteurs indigènes ... ayant pour école des gourbis valant 150 ou 200 francs ... l'école française devrait sagement être limitée à un petit nombre où nous élevons les futurs propagateurs de notre influence.

The French colonial authorities, therefore, set for themselves in 1902 an aim that combines both racism toward and belittling of the local population whose sociopolitical rights had been virtually reduced to none. Racism in the sense that unlike the European *colons*' children who all had the opportunity to attend *l'école française*, only a tiny minority of the *indigènes*' (i.e., native) children had the opportunity to obtain French education, and on top of that only to find itself brainwashed (namely to become advocates of the French influence. Belittling the local population to mere *things* by providing them with cheap makeshifts made of canvas known in the locals' patois as *gourbis*. To achieve the ultimate aim of producing obedient indigenous population, the French colonial authorities planned three strategies: low quality teaching, hostile learning contexts, and élitism in its worst version.

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<sup>3</sup> Charles-Robert Ageron (1923-2008) is a French historian whose book *Les Algériens Musulmans et la France (1871-1919)* has had great impact on a wide range of readership.

Heggoy accurately observes that “... until France was about to abandon her domination of Algeria, the French never built enough schools to educate more than a small minority of school-age Algerian children” (*op.cit.*). The figures of Algerian students in comparison with the colons’ clearly reflect the policies of the French colonial authorities. By way of an illustration, in 1906, the overwhelming majority of students were European (86.6 %) whereas their Algerian counterparts did not exceed (3.85%). Needless to point out that the majority of those Algerian students were the children of the bourgeoisie and *goumis*<sup>4</sup>, whose tendencies and loyalty were to some extent (to say the least) to the colonial authorities. On the eve of the Independence (July 5th, 1962), the enrollment of the local population in education appears to be relatively better. Beer and Jacob (1985: 138) report that “ In 1962, only 14% of Muslim children were in schools. At the University of Algiers, there were only 557 Muslims to 4,548 Europeans”. Weil (2003 : 1) succinctly concludes “... les musulmans d’Algérie étaient des ressortissants d’une origine étrangère la plus indésirable, dont on laissait entrer les membres qu’au compte-goutte”. In sum, an anticipated form of *Apartheid* was already *de facto* in French Algeria.

The issue of substance as yet is that ever since the French Revolution, France’s attitudes toward languages, dialects, and *patois* other than French has always been of total eradication both within the borders of the *Hexagon* and elsewhere. Actually, France has made it *its raison d’être* to unify France’s dominion politically, economically, socially, culturally, and linguistically. Ager (2001: 18) observes that “The identity of France ... becomes all embracing : one language, one culture, one territory, one political conception. There is no room for ‘particularism’ of other identities ... not for any language other than that which unites”. To achieve this aspiring objective, a centralized education seems the most appropriate means. Ager states that “France had no problem applying the same centralised linguistic policy ... During the height of the colonial period (1880-1960), the same education was provided for (some) children in Africa as for those in Lille” (*ibid.*, 18). However distant and diverse France’s children and the privileged children of colonized peoples

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<sup>4</sup> *Goumi* was the head of a tribe. It has a derogatory nuance in Algerian Arabic.

received the same kind of education, textbooks, cultural references, and the same examples with the view of keeping the French empire unified.

In conjunction with the mindsets of the 18th and 19th centuries, European powers sought to dominate the world and control it through the imposition of their languages, cultures, and way of life. The great powers of the time Great Britain and France took to the idea of a manifest destiny to civilize savages in Africa and Asia. They created therefore a halo of myths about their cultures, languages, and civilizations. Both French and English languages were considered agents of civilization: Maccauley is reported to have said that “English is the most important agent of civilization for the coloured of the colonies” (Ashby 1966, quoted in Phillipson 2006: 15). In like manner, France propagated a myth about the French language and its positive impact on others. Schiffman (1996: 124) states “The myth involves such metaphors as ‘brilliance’ and ‘radiance’, and the French language is supposed to be seen radiating its brilliance out from the centre, illuminating other languages, idioms, patois ...” . Phillipson (*op.cit.* 15) succinctly summarizes both policies:

The hegemony of the dominant colonial languages was buttressed by a linguistic ideology in both empires. Whereas the French more actively propagated a discourse of linguistic supremacy, the British, though apparently more pragmatic, and *laissez faire*, had fundamentally similar attitude to the virtues of English and failings of other languages.

Idiosyncrasies of the colonial powers such as supremacy, hegemony, dominance, civilizing the savages, linguisticism, and occupation may account, for instance, for the low rate school-age children in colonized Algeria (*mentioned above*). We have every reason to claim that the scant education provided to some children during colonial periods was a means to perpetuate total subjugation to the colonizers’ rules. Low quality teaching, the creation of hostile learning contexts, linguisticism, and racism were only meant to hermitically clamp the yoke of servitude rather than civilize those poor souls of ‘*oultre-mer*’ dominions. Phillipson quotes Colonna (1975: 12):

According to French government sources, when the French arrived to ‘civilize’ Algeria, the literacy rate in urban Algeria

was 40% - far higher than in France at the time. When the French left 130 years of colonization, the literacy rate among Algerians was according to an optimistic reckoning, 10-15% .

We may put forward that the implementation of colonial languages in general and the French language in particular and its linguistic tone in colonial Algeria was meant to put the whole people – to use Malek Haddad's observation- in exile, by not being able to put their language to function. Hence, an alienation from one's cultural heritage is created, and foreign hegemony is instored. Djité (1992), quoted in Baldauf and Kaplan (2004: 7), points out : “ Nowhere else in Africa has the language issue been so central in the fight against colonialism as Algeria”. The linguistic policy of the French colonial authorities in Algeria still has its effects on the country's language planning and language policy as well as on its social cohesion. Beer and Jacob (1985: 139) recognize that “Algeria ... continues to face problems of national cohesion and cultural identity, but to date, social and cultural fissures in Algeria are minimal threat to national integrity”. In post-independence Algeria, the teaching of French continued but attenuated through the years as the country launched a new policy in education, Arabization (i.e., scientific and literary school subjects are henceforth taught in the national and official language, Arabic).

However, with the sweeping victory in the 1997 presidential elections (*viz.*, 73.8% of the votes), the fifth president, Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, rekindled the public use of French domestically and abroad. The sudden reappearance of French thanks to a top official such as the President, who was supposed to use and promote the use of the constitutionally-approved national and official language, Arabic, caused an outrage among many circles. In the summer of 1999, Bouteflika declared “Algeria does not belong to Francophonie<sup>5</sup>, but there is no reason for us to have a frozen attitude towards the French language which taught us so many things and which, at any rate, opened (for us) the windows of the French culture (cited by Cherrad-Benchefra & Derradji; in Baldauf and Kaplan, *op.cit.* 10). Clearly, the President exclusively

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<sup>5</sup> The *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* (OIF) comprises 77 states who share the use of and/ or interest in the French language. Recently, OIF scope englobes not only cultural values but also economic development.

acknowledges the pragmatic usefulness of the French language rather than the French people. The nuance, despite being clear-cut in the President's mind, may not be so for others who still nurture pathetic nostalgia to the colonizer's language and lifestyle. The latter are usually referred to as *The Party of France* (حزب فرنسا).

### 1.1.2 The Teaching of English

The decision of foreign languages teaching in Algeria appears to have, for better or worse, an intense emotional base. The theme of bilingualism, linguicism, national and foreign languages policy and planning needs, therefore, belaboring from different perspectives in order to come to grips with its multi-faceted manifestation and ultimate understanding of its implications on the current state of affairs. The linguistic situation in Algeria, which some would appreciate to publicize as the *Tower of Babel*, is basically the amalgam of the historical conflicts of foreign languages policies with the very existence of the nation, the identity of a once proud people and culture. The impetus for including the following paragraphs is to demonstrate that irrational tendency to adopt linguicism can lead to intolerance toward specific languages as well as the status of the languages in question from the addition of richness and color to a situation of what might be called reversible nationalistic linguicism wherein the imposed language is fiercely demoted from public and educational settings. Baker (2006: 82) observes that “as one instrument of social control, languages can be components of social conflict”. Differently couched, when a foreign language is imposed on an indigenous people for political reasons (i.e., to substitute the indigenous language), it is highly probable that the foreign language can be the issue of contention.

The French linguicist policy in Algeria, which aimed at substituting Arabic with French, was meant to control and ultimately subdue the country. Poddar *et al.* (2008: 124) quote Ruscio who reports Pierre Foncin<sup>6</sup>'s prediction “we will never be the masters of Algeria until Algeria speaks French”. This blunt linguicist policy brought

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<sup>6</sup> Pierre Foncin (1841-1916) was a teacher of geography and later promoted to the post of Inspector - General for Public Instruction (1890). He was known for his advocacy in favor of colonial policy.

about what linguists call subtractive bilingualism. Baker (*ibid.* 74) identifies this concept as follows: “When the second language and culture are acquired with pressure to replace or demote the first language, a subtractive form of bilingualism”. The exile whereto the colonial authorities wanted to send the Algerian people is now reversed: The French users, though still powerful, have grown less and less in control of the linguistic landscape in Algeria. Mazrui (2004: 27) quotes Crystal who underscores that “Algeria is of course, one of the countries hitherto regarded as Francophone. In 1996, however, it opted to make English the chief foreign language in schools” (1997). In the same breath, he observes that “with militant Islam on the ascendancy, however, the Arabization policy may be at the expense of both French and English. But in the final analysis, it is French that has been the real loser” (*ibid.*). All in all, the shift from one foreign language (i.e., French) to another (i.e., English) seems to be a reaction to an undesirable manner of French imperial linguicism.

It may appear paradoxical that the Algerians’ attitude toward English and Britain and/ or USA. Both nations (namely, the UK and USA) happen to be yet other Western imperial powers with imperial linguicist policies. In his august book *Linguistic Imperialism*, Phillipson (2000: 12) attempts to elicit the differences in conception of linguicist policies of the two most powerful European empires in the *Periphery*<sup>7</sup>. He states “The overall goals of the colonial powers were conceived differently, the French aiming at *la France outre-mer* and ultimate union with metropolitan France, the British accepting the principle of trusteeship, leading ultimately to self-government and independence”. This core difference appears to be plausible, but by no means the sole exigency to the different attitudes that Algerians nurse toward the UK and English. It is a common knowledge that Algerians as well as other Arabs for that matter conceive the British policies as innocuous as far as the language is concerned. This reason may account for the growing numbers of Arab-owned all-English language channels, the ever-increasing numbers of students of English in both Algerian and Arab universities, and finally the partnerships with the prestigious Anglo-American universities.

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<sup>7</sup> *Overseas* dominions in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Polynesia.

A posteriori, English language does not appear to be associated with colonialism and linguisticism in the Arab world. On score of that, it may be rightfully claimed that it enjoys a most favorable kind of additive bilingualism. Baker (*op.cit.*) quotes Lambert's (1980) definition of additive bilingualism that reads "an additive bilingualism is where the addition of a second language and culture is unlikely to replace or displace the language and culture" of the local population. The positive attitudes surrounding the English language may be the springboard for the immersion of all of the Arab governments and more specifically the Arab youth in the enrollment in English teaching and learning. Differently stated, English seems to come the Arab governments' way in that they want, for better or worse, to reestablish their Arab identity and culture long robbed from them, and also to be a part of the developed world by modernizing their countries. As for the Arab youth going global by being able to understand Hollywood movies, popular songs, and discuss global issues such as global warming, economic crises, internet, fashion, and so on, English is there to meet their personal gratification. In wide brief, English does not appear a threat to much-sought Arab culture and language.

*Au fond*, the incorporation of the English language in Post-independence Algeria is emotionally-packed. Whidden (nd) observes that "Curricula were remodeled to foster 'authentic' Arab and Islamic national identity to counter the effect of the 'civilizing mission', which had made the language of government English or French, rather than Arabic"(quoted in Shillington 2006: 397). Not only the English language represented a powerful tool to stand up French language dominance, but it also stands for an opportunity to be a full member of the international community and a key player on the international scene specifically in mediation between conflicting nations. What is more, the English language has turned out a trusted tool and key to the modernization of the economy, which was left in shambles after seven and half years of fierce combat with the French colonial army. Rubdy and Saraceni (2006: 117) quote Kachru (1986) who states that "knowing English is like possessing the fabled Aladdin's lamp, which permits one to open, as it were, the linguistic gates to international business, technology, science and travel. In short, English provides linguistic power". English, therefore, empowers.

This inspired empowerment is more or less soberly reflected in the aims and goals expressed by the Algerian political class, when the decision to implement English as a compulsory subject in the Algerian curriculum was taken. The inclusion of English in the middle schools and high schools was carried out on instrumental (i.e., pragmatic) and visceral grounds. Rubdy and Saraceni state that “... many language learners today are studying English not because they have been coerced to do so by English speakers of the Inner Circle countries, but rather because of the benefits which knowledge of English brings” (*ibid.* 118). In knowledge-based societies and market-driven economies, English has proved its *passe-partout* language which fills many world roles that no other language can do. Building on Dhamija’s (1994) long list of English world roles, Tomlinson (2005: 139) outlines the world roles English plays, which ultimately contributed to its wide use the world over. The following tables juxtapose the two lists of English world lists:

Dhamija’s list of English world roles	Tomlinson’s list of English world roles
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. English as link language</li> <li>2. Medium of literacy and creativity</li> <li>3. Medium of science and technology</li> <li>4. Language of reference and research</li> <li>5. A source language or media language</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. English as a conference language</li> <li>2. English as an academic language</li> <li>3. English as Internet language</li> <li>4. English as business language</li> <li>5. English as commercial language</li> <li>6. English as industrial language</li> <li>7. The language of air and sea control</li> <li>8. A language of social intercourse</li> <li>9. English as diplomatic language</li> <li>10. A language of sports,</li> </ol>

	entertainment, and popular songs  11. English as travel language, migration, and holidays  12. English as an access language of news and views  13. English as a language of self-expression.
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**Table 1:** English world roles and functions (*drawn upon Dhamija's and Tomlinson's lists*)

All these functions are more or less represented in the *Ordonnance* of April 16th, 1976 that outlines the goals of teaching foreign languages in the Algerian schools. The teaching of English has witnessed ups and downs: it started as from the third year middle school (i.e., 3<sup>e</sup> année moyenne and up using textbooks that were aimed at teaching English in France; then in the seventies textbooks from England were used (namely, *Success with English* and *Practice and Progress*); later, Algerian-conceived and printed textbooks were introduced. The time allotted to the teaching of English was around 10 % of the total teaching time. Teachers were supposed to compensate the lack of audio-visual aids by bringing their own materials and use them to the best of their knowledge and means available at the time. All these issues will be discussed at some length in the upcoming sections and chapters so that a better understanding of the teaching of English in Algeria is attained and eventually mindful conception of and insight into the intricacies of the middle schools English teachers' attitudes are attained and positively handled.

## 1.2 The Political Context

In the mainstream discussion, connecting education to politics may appear derisible. In the popular mind, education is the field of the teachers, and if they fail, students fail. This attitude seems to be rather simplistic. Common sense indicates that

politics transpires profusely when it comes to education, and the teaching- learning contexts. Giroux (2001: 3-4) cites Johnson who professes the view that:

Teaching and learning are profoundly political at every moment of the circuit: in the conditions of production (who produces knowledge? For whom?), in the knowledges and knowledge forms themselves (knowledge to what agenda? Used for what?), their publication, circulation, and accessibility, their professional and popular uses, and their impacts on daily life.

All the questions mentioned above are of political order that require a heartfelt involvement of the political class in providing clear answers and attainable outcomes. This is also with conjunction with Van Else's (1994) emphasis on "a number of questions of political order need to be addressed beforehand in any language policy statements" (quoted in Riche 2000: 30). The questions range from the identification of would-be taught languages (Which languages?), their number and ordinal arrangement (How many languages? And in what order?), the competencies or skills to be targeted and the pedagogic level or grade (what skills to be taught? And at what level?). The political contribution in the designing and planning of a national curriculum is, therefore, heavily connected to the political leadership and its political agenda.

In the upcoming section, a detailed discussion is conducted with the premise that if an articulation of viable and achievable goals of political footing is offered to individual teachers and institutions, an active involvement of the pedagogic community is assured to attain those goals with a minimized ratio of frustration and maximized self-esteem.

### **1.2.1 Foreign Language Teaching Policy in Algeria**

In a world that has proved itself a global village, the teaching and learning of foreign languages has become a necessity that cannot be overlooked or delayed. To be part of a world of common political interests, trade exchanges in billions of dollars,

knowledge transfer through internet and books, art and cinematographic entertainment, ecological challenges, health issues, world sport competitions, research and study investment and mobility, and many more require a good command of at least one foreign language that would facilitate the integration in global issues. In a world on the verge of, what the American philosopher Samuel Huntington calls, “the Clash of Civilization”, the teaching and learning of foreign languages help build bridges of appeasement and *entente*. Furthermore, foreign languages appear to empower people so that they may attain what they aspire. Baker (2006: 1) postulates that “Bilingualism is to intelligence as food is to fitness”. Knowing a foreign language is of personal reward: It enriches the intellect and thaws age-old negative stereotypes, which would culminate in boosting up healthy self-esteem and positive attitudes.

It is against this backdrop that nations articulate their goals concerning the incorporation of foreign languages in their official curriculums. In like manner, Algeria has never ceased to aspire to implement foreign languages in her educational system, which is itself in conjunction with the overall policy of the nation to rebuild the country after 132 years of French colonization. The number of foreign languages in the Algerian middle and high schools counts four languages: English, French, German, and Spanish (alphabetical order). It is worth of note that the two first foreign languages are more popular and hence more widespread, whereas the second pair (namely, German and Spanish) is being taught in some high schools either in the west of the country or in Algiers. In the tertiary phase, two more languages are made part of the curriculum: Italian and Russian. In the *Ordonnance* of April 1976, five goals<sup>8</sup> come to be articulated in the following terms:

1. To communicate with the different parts of the world ;
2. To have access to top modern sciences and technologies ;

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<sup>8</sup> In this section *goals* and *aims* are interchangeable. In strictly political terms, goals are the commonest term in use.

3. To encourage pupils' creativity in its universal dimension ;
4. To make pupils autonomous and self-sufficient in exploiting and exploring material having relation with their field of study.
5. To successfully sit for examinations. (Chibani 2003: 188).

These goals are in correlation with the very spirit of the *National Chart* of 1976, which was promulgated during the presidency of Houari Boumediene. Lakhdar-Barka (2002) quotes from the *National Chart* this much :

... tout en nous **ouvrant**<sup>9</sup> sur les autres et en maîtrisant ... la connaissance des langues étrangères qui nous faciliteraient la constante communication avec l'extérieur, c'est-à-dire avec **les sciences et les techniques modernes**<sup>10</sup> et l'esprit créateur dans sa dimension universelle la plus féconde (**emphasis added**).

Two dimensions appear salient in this statement even though taken in one package: (1) openness to the out world and (2) access to modern sciences and technologies. Differently stated, the primary goals of the Algerian decision-makers are to promote the connection between Algeria, which belongs to two global phenomena<sup>11</sup> \_ the Arab and Muslim nations\_ and the other civilizations worldwide. In the same vein, they consider the empowerment of the Algerian students by being able to creatively exploit and explore scientific and technological materials. Both ends earnestly require a good command of critical need foreign languages such as English, French, German, and Spanish. By definition, critical need languages are languages whose learning affects personal, social, economic, and political needs of the nation. As an afterthought, learning a foreign language proves to be exceptionally instrumental in nature as the language functions as a tool to achieve an inspired and cherished goal.

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<sup>9</sup> **Bold type** ours

<sup>10</sup> **Bold type** ours

<sup>11</sup> This term is borrowed from Professor Mohammed Dahbi of Al-Akhawein University, Morocco.

It is judiciously thought to classify the goals stated in the National Chart of 1976 in a table that establishes their orientation. This is prompted by the fact that all curriculums produced by curriculum designers and textbooks writers ought to reflect and eventually attain these goals.

Openness-targeted goals of the National Chart (1976)	Science-and-Technology-targeted goals of the National chart (1976)
<p>1. To communicate with the different parts of the world.</p> <p>4. To make pupils autonomous and self-sufficient in exploiting and exploring material having relation with their field of study.</p> <p>5. to successfully sit for examinations.</p>	<p>2. To have access to top sciences and technologies.</p> <p>3. To encourage pupils' creativity in its universal dimension.</p>

**Table 2:** Classification of the National Chart Goals (1976).

The articulation and scope of the aforementioned goals may be alleged to be the outcome of a whole process that we think it should be diligently tracked down. It is within the scope of this investigation to demonstrate whether consultation is top-down or down-top, and to what extent it affects the attitudes of the middle school teachers of English. As many as four criteria are henceforth explored with a deliberate intention to establish the connection(s) to the critical need of the country to the inclusion of foreign languages in the national curriculum in order to be functional in a world that continues to develop into a global village, and whose motto reads : “*think globally, act locally*”<sup>12</sup>”. With the advent of technologies, the intertwining of international relations, economic dependence, flow of peoples and goods, and common challenges (global warming, international terrorism, and trafficking, etc.), nations need not think of themselves as separate islands. Local decisions come to be

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<sup>12</sup> This statement was first said by a Scotsman by the name of Patrick Geddes (1854-1932), and who was an architect by calling. In the field of education Stuart R. Graur, PhD, an American educator is claimed to have been the first advocator.

influenced by international scene; international relations are manipulated by local decisions.

### **1.3 Curricular Criteria for FL Inclusion**

The inclusion of foreign languages in the national curriculums needs to take seriously a number of criteria into consideration. The latter vary in the degree of importance from one country to another, and yet, they are overarching and indelible part in the language planning in general and national education in particular.

#### **1.3.1 The Political Need Factor**

The second half of the 20th century witnessed a world which turned, for better or worse, international after a bitter war in Europe, Africa, and Asia. In other words, the nations of the world had made it their point to institutionalize their disputes and concerns for an enduring as well as equitable peace. Disputes, challenges, and concerns were believed to be better handled in international institutions far from unilateral actions that might lead to major incidents causing casualties and destruction beyond repair. This wise move was a hard-learned lesson from an antagonistic world interests and conflicts that had become absolutely haphazard and volatile. International institutions before 1945 were arguably few, built on sand, and with loose commitment from member states. *The League of Nations* was actually an international forum where nations of the world could hardly communicate their aspirations and inspirations, let alone seeking an equitable solution. The corollary of such a failure in sincere communication was the renewal of an outbreak of hostilities that brought about unprecedented and above all unspeakable atrocities. In wide brief, world peace and security require, therefore, ethical, legal, and equitable institutions where communication cannot fail.

For as long as the French occupation of Algeria spanned, Algerians could neither communicate with the world, nor be communicated with except with an imposed French voice. On the eve of the Independence (July 5th, 1963), Algerians regained

their full voice and means to be a full member of the international community, where they aspired to play a decisive role. Subsequently, Algeria signed membership to many international institutions such as the Arab League (AL), The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the Organization of the African Union (OAU), Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), The United Nations Organization (UNO) and all its offshoots, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB). Algeria ratified also numerous international protocols such as Kyoto Protocol, and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). In all these institutions, to be able to communicate with more than one foreign language is of an overriding importance as it makes all the difference; the ratification of a binding protocol requires a good command of foreign languages just as well.

More than in any other domain, Algeria's excellence seems to have reached its zenith in foreign policy and more specifically in fair mediation and the readily proposition of good offices to diffuse international tensions that continue to pest world peace and security. Sick (2001: xxi) maintains that "Algeria was exceptionally equipped to play the role of mediator". His reference goes back to two crises that the Algerian diplomacy dexterity and constructively intervened to resolve. He explains (*ibid.*) "It had brokered the original 1975 border agreement between Iran and Iraq, and it had enhanced its credibility in January 1981 by negotiating the release of US hostages from Iran". Algerian's good offices enhanced what came to be called Algiers Accords in 1975 between Iraq and Iran over the delineation of the borders over Shott-Al-Arab. The *coup de maître* of the Algerian diplomacy was when the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, the late Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahya<sup>13</sup>, doggedly pursued his peaceful mission to free US hostages in Teheran in January 1980. For 444 days, pro-Islamic Revolution students held 52 American personnel of the US Embassy hostage with the objective of putting pressure on the US government to free Iranian assets in the USA.

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<sup>13</sup> Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahya (1932-1982), one of the most outstanding Algerian diplomats, brokered Iran-Iraq Algiers Accords (1975) and the release of US hostages (1980). He died in a mysterious plane crash while attempting to conclude peace talks between Iran-Iraq in 1982.

Mediation and good offices were Algeria's manner to tell the world that she has a key role in the international arena. Their total success in the 1970s amply implemented Algeria's reputation and influence in world affairs. Merrills (2005: 30) asserts that "... mediation can provide small and middle-rank states with the opportunity to improve relations with larger states while also safeguarding other interests". He (*ibid.* 30-31) later assesses the benefits Algeria gained from such mediation "The settlement not only enhanced Algeria's reputation in the eyes of Americans, but, more importantly, resolved a crisis which have led to a war between a Super-Power and a Muslim state". In various occasions, Warren Christopher<sup>14</sup> qualified the Algerian diplomacy role in US-Iran crisis as "outstanding". In the same vein, Farber (2005) quotes the latter who declares that

The Algerians served an indispensable function in interpreting two widely disparate cultures and reasoning processes to each other ... . All in all, no one performed with more energy, skill, commitment or honor than did members of the Algerian team.

It should come as no surprise to anyone to mention that the Algerian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Ben Yahya, was fluent in three languages: Arabic, French, and English. His knowledge of foreign languages and their cultures helped him discard what would have been a military clash not only between two countries, but also- it may be interpreted- as a clash of civilizations. This is clearly couched in Mr. Christopher's aforementioned statement. Therefore, it could be arguably hypothesized that at the fulcrum of international politics is a good command of foreign languages and cultures. The implementation of foreign languages in national curriculums and the investment in them has, decidedly, a long-run effect: dispelling political and cultural misunderstanding, and in the process promoting opportunities to support the country's interests and standing. The inclusion of foreign languages should not be limited to a foggy clause in an official document that organizes its teaching and learning. Foreign languages should be taken seriously and on the same footing with other exact sciences

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<sup>14</sup> Warren Minor Christopher (b. 1925) occupied various posts in Jimmy Carter's and Bill Clinton's Administrations. During the US-Iran hostage crisis, he was the Deputy Secretary of State.

subjects. Not only politics could be positively affected by foreign languages teaching and learning, economy, too, needs these crutches to stand up.

### **1.3.2 The Economic Need Factor**

The 21st century is a watershed between two important eras in human history. The world has gone out of the *industrialization era* only to find itself in a subsequent *information era*. The former was inclined to transform raw materials into products and very often than not relied on blue collar workers, while the latter tend to appreciate novel ideas that could be transitioned worldwide. This world phenomenon has come to be called “globalization” wherein novel, and creative ideas have become highly valued commodities. Globalization therefore has marked a dramatic shift from resource-based into knowledge-based world economies. Mok and Chan (2006: 9) meticulously quote the Singaporean Education Commission report which sustains that :

Society is undergoing fundamental changes. As it transforms from an industrial society into an information society and as .. economy shifts its emphasis from manufacturing to knowledge-based activities, knowledge has become an essential element of our daily lives and our economy. Knowledge is being created all the time. The new knowledge continues to emerge as existing knowledge becomes obsolete.

With respect to such “fundamental changes”, developing countries in general and Algeria in particular ought to readjust themselves to cope with the requirements of globalization.

Despite its outstanding geographical position, mineralogical wealth, fertility of its lands, youth of its population, and tolerable infrastructure, Algeria’s economy could not afford to cope with both industrial- and knowledge-based eras. A mere study of statistics provided by international institutions such as UNO, UNESCO, and the World Bank clearly demonstrate that the Algerian economy is lagging behind economies of even less privileged countries. History is revealing in this case as it

advances theories and facts that have as yet led to a debilitating economic situation. On the eve of Independence (5 July, 1962), the literate population did not exceed 10-15% at best, failed crops in the late fifties, and as Stora *et al.* (2004: 123) explain “In fact, in 1962 Algeria was heir to an outward-directed economy set up in relation to the metropolis, and existed as a function of the million Europeans living there”. They (*ibid.*) further conclude that “... in 1962, Algeria was still an overwhelmingly rural society”. In wide brief, Algeria was in what archeologists and anthropologist would term “Neolithic Revolution” or “Agriculture Revolution” that occurred some 10,000 years BCE. It is worth of note to mention that oil reserves were discovered in the South-East of the country in 1956 but totally exploited by the French companies.

Rebuilding the nation’s economy was by all accounts a daunting task. All sectors needed an urgent intervention of the newly appointed governments whose experience in the management of State-related issues was also recent. The real boost came on 24 February, 1972 when the then president Mr. Houari Boumedienne <sup>15</sup> nationalized the hydrocarbons. In an official speech, he states : “Nous avons voulu posséder 51% des parts pour contrôler nous-même notre destin” (Grimaud 1984: 1). The objective is a priori manifest- to afford to plan to meet the country’s needs from rebuilding an otherwise ill-prepared economy during the colonial period. The French oil companies, however, still possess a considerable share of the Algerian oil production. Again, the President makes it explicit that “Mais nous n’avons jamais oublié les intérêts français : avec 49% des parts, les compagnies françaises sont assurées de continuer à percevoir de substantiels bénéfices” (*ibid.*). He wittingly observes that the difference between the country’s shares and the French companies’ shares were the independence-related: “Il n’y a entre elles et nous que 2%, mais se sont les 2% de l’indépendance” (*ibid.*). All in all, the modernization of the country needed the revenues of oil, and oilfields needed companies to be discovered and produced.

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<sup>15</sup> Mohammed BenBrahim Boukharrouba, aka Houari Boumedienne, (August 23, 1932-december 27, 1978) was the second Algerian president from 1965 to the date of his death.

To date, an estimated 198 oil companies from many countries of the world are engaged in the exploration and drilling of hydrocarbons in Algeria<sup>16</sup>. The potential of gas and oil reserves has attracted companies from countries as far as Australia and as small as Jordan. Lloyd (2003: 26) notes that “Major gas and oil exploration has involved major US companies including ARCO, EXXON, ORYX, MOBIL, ANADARKO and SUN OIL and the Texas company EL PASO”. More than any other company, ANADARKO seems most fortunate as it “has significant exploration ventures .. and since 1991, they have recently discovered 12 fields with some 2.8 billion of oil in the Sahara” (*ibid.*). What is more, American companies have limited their fields of interests to oil only, they have also extended their activities to construction projects investing thus hundreds of millions of dollars. “The US construction firm BECHTEL built 600 km In- Salah - Hassi-Massoud pipeline for BP-SONATRACH” (*ibid.*). Many Algerians from all walks of life have also joined these companies to work in various positions from clerks, to manual workers, to translators, to security guards to foremen. The corollary of that is these companies have become a source for the reduction of unemployment that has ravaged the Algerian youth since the late 1980s.

Beside hydrocarbons, Algeria has a potential of inestimable wealth, which is telescoped into tourism. Yet, this “gold ore” is not fully developed due to the unawareness of the leadership to the benefits that this sector represents for the socioeconomic growth of the country. Lundberg *et al.* (1995: 3) advocate that “Tourism is an economic activity involving billions of dollars exchanged each month..”. What is more, globalization has turned human activities into commodities ready for exchange, and one such commodity that has developed rapidly over the last decade is tourism. “According to several estimates ... tourism has become the world’s largest business enterprise, overtaking the defense, manufacturing, oil, and agriculture industries” (*ibid.*). According to Hashimoto (2002: 202), tourism is *the* choice for modernization “In the pursuit to modernise and promote development within a country, tourism has become the preferred growth mechanism of choice for many developing countries”. Besides providing the countries of destination with

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<sup>16</sup> We have counted all the oil companies listed on Wikipedia.

foreign currency, employment, and income, it affects to a reasonable degree education in general and foreign languages teaching and learning in particular. Sharpley (2002: 11) observes “Tourism is, without doubt, one of the major social and economic phenomena of modern times”. As a concluding note, until very recently, Algeria was a favored tourist destination with its sharp relief, architecture, traditions contrasts.

With a growing body of evidence, research has amply demonstrated that there is a strong correlation between good education and economic growth. Symonds (2005: 120) states that the US became the world’s largest economy due to the key part education had played. In knowledge-based societies and market-driven economies, being competent in core subjects such as languages, mathematics, and sciences is more than a luxury; it is an inevitable necessity. More than anything else languages have proved to be a cherished commodity as multinational companies have infested the world. Block and Cameron (2002: 7) explain that “This related to another consequence of globalization, the tendency to treat language as economic commodities”. The ability to communicate with different people whose cultures are different from our own is a key to promote economic ties and mutual understanding. “bilingualism itself becomes a commodity: individuals who command two languages are attractive to business competing multiple, or multilingual, markets” (*ibid.*). A priori, Algeria which has decided to invest billions of dollars for the modernization of the country needs to put the teaching and learning of foreign languages at the heart of the national curriculum. In wide brief, being competent in foreign languages is not a choice but a perennial necessity.

### **1.3.3 National Security Need Factor**

National security may not be whatsoever considered a parochial issue discussed in inner circles any more. When it comes to the teaching and learning of foreign languages, national security issues come so naturally to the fore of the debate. In the same vein, Muslims oftentimes quote Prophet Muhammed (PBUH<sup>17</sup>) who is reported

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<sup>17</sup> Peace Be Upon Him is often the English translation for (صلى الله عليه و سلم)

to have said ‘‘He who learns other people’s language, he has spared himself their harm’’<sup>18</sup>. This is even more useful in our troubled world where so many challenges have risen to threaten the very existence of a good number of states, and with no tone of exaggeration meant, the whole world. While it is out of the scope of this short section to discuss security matters at length, it is judicious to spell out some common threats that have swept the world in the last decade such as: cross-border terrorism, technological terrorism, proliferation of nuclear armament, drug trafficking, human organs trafficking, prostitution, weapons and drug cartels, organized crime, global warming, militarism, and high seas piracy, etc. Along those lines, Dr. David Chu <sup>19</sup>(2004: 3) states his belief:

I believe that we are now faced with a more fundamental need for permanent change in our approach to the peoples and cultures of the rest of the world. National security and national interest could once be discussed in terms of physical borders and cultural boundaries. It is indisputably no longer so. National security concerns have taken us from the streets of Manhattan to the mountains of Afghanistan and to the resort cities of Bali. Our economy has brought workers here to America and sent jobs to a hundred countries around the world. Within one generation, we have become integrated into a world as never before.

National security is the requirement to maintain the survival of the nation-state through the use of different strategies and tactics such as economic, military, and political power and exercise of diplomacy<sup>20</sup>. In the same breath, Paul and Ripsman (2010: 10) sustain that ‘‘... although states have other purposes, such as providing domestic order and welfare, national security takes over all others in the hierarchy of state interests because without territorial security, all national security values would suffer’’. Differently stated, the survival of the nation depends on its ability to keep all its moral and physical values intact of any threats through the good use of its

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<sup>18</sup> "من تعلم لغة قوم أمن شرهم" (حديث شريف)

<sup>19</sup> Dr. David Chu was the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness in Bush, Jr. Administration

<sup>20</sup> (Wikipedia).

resources: economy, diplomacy, and military power, etc. When the threats are imminent, many state-nations would sacrifice some of their democratic assets to maintain the sovereignty of the state. “... (National security states) would be willing to subvert economic advantages, civil liberties, and virtually all other values to the provision of security” (*ibid.* 11). Obviously, national security issues are no longer the state’s concern only, but also the concern of individual citizens whose survival in a world of fierce competition and rivalry depends on the survival of the institutions of the state-nation. One way to preserve national security of the state-nation is by providing a sound education to all the citizens.

The Algerian national security has always been challenged one way or another. The legacy of 132 years of colonization was, by all accounts, beyond measure: the literate population did not exceed a tiny proportion; diseases were widespread; malnutrition was common, the majority of the population was under poverty line; the institutions of the state virtually non-existent; and an economy in shambles. The building of the nation, for better or worse reflected those daunting challenges: In the rush to build a modern country, the Algerian leadership made thoughtless blunders which accentuated the suffering of an otherwise ailing society. The real threats, however, loomed in the mid- eighties, when the prices of hydrocarbons started to stoop and the state debts started to rise. Coupled with a stifling economic crisis, a political crisis was on the verge of plunging the whole country in a decade of blood, tears, and hopelessness. Stora *et al.* (2004: 213) succinctly postulate:

The countries of the Maghreb which possessed raw materials but not technological initiative, found themselves suddenly confronted with the abrasive dynamics of democracy, the irruption of identity movements, and the market economy. But the Islamist fever in Algeria and short-sighted calculations of the Maghrebian leaders distanced the prospect of building a coherent whole on the eastern (*sic*) side of the Mediterranean.

The security crisis of the 1990s urged the Algerian leadership to promote partnership with many countries, and more specifically the USA for military assistance. Lloyd

(2003: 27) estimates that in 1997 the US military aid to the Algerian government increased to \$32 million contract for Gulfstream Aerospace to sell radar surveillance aircraft. Furthermore, and according to the same source, in November 2002, the Export-Import Bank approved further loan guarantees of \$ 195 million for the Algerian Ministry of Defense to buy surveillance aircraft. Military state-of-the-art technology has also been sought in the Republic of South Africa (RSA). Algeria, whose unflinching support for the African National Congress (ANC) and its charismatic leader Nelson Mandela <sup>21</sup> in their fight against the Afrikaner's Apartheid régime, finally found an old friend with genuine willingness to assist rearm her People's National Army (ANP). Post-Apartheid South Africa has demonstrated a sincere commitment not only rise to the social, economic, and health challenges of the Continent, but also to stand by old allies in their fight to reestablish their sovereignty and national security. Until very recently, SA military advisors have been assigned to Algeria to assist Algerian military personnel to train and master the use of SA weaponry.

Foreign languages teaching and learning is the flip of the coin in national security issues. Talks, protocols, arm deals, personnel training, the purposeful use of military and intelligence devices all require a good command of foreign languages. A linguistic barrier may lead to misunderstanding at best and catastrophic incidents at worse. The need for “crash courses” in foreign languages and more specifically in critical need languages such as English (in our case) have come to be called ESP (English for Specific Purposes) with a clear goal to empower the military personnel handle military and intelligence highly sophisticated equipments. The overriding importance of personnel, knowledgeable and conversant in foreign languages in general and critical need language (CNL), ought not be ignored if national security and interests are to be secured. It should be accentuated at this stage to argue that a deficit in foreign language teaching and learning negatively affects diplomacy, law enforcement, intelligence, national security, and national interests. As a final note, the

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<sup>21</sup> Nelson Mandela (18 July, 1918) lawyer and leader of the ANC. He served the longest term in the Apartheid prison (27 years). He is Nobel Peace Laureate and the first 'Black' president of RSA.

inclusion of foreign languages in national curriculums especially in our globalized era has proved itself more than a choice, or imitation of others, but a critical necessity.

#### **1.3.4 Geographical Need Factor**

It is no short of amazing to notice that geography has molded beyond measure peoples' policies, economies, cultures, and mores over the years and centuries. For some nations, it has presented a great deal of opportunities for progress and expansion; for some other nations, however, it has imposed crippling limitations threatening their very existence and, thus, generating their vulnerability. Sempa (2009 : 5) claims "Geography of a state ... presents opportunities and imposes limitations on the state. For that reason, geography conditions the perspectives of a state's leaders or rulers and, thereby, affects their decision-making ...". Proximity in geography has either led to friendships and coalitions or to enmity and conflicts. Sempa (*ibid.*) corroborates that "throughout history, geography has been the stage on which nations and empires have collided". Collision, it should be noted, does not always mean conflicts; it may mean also a meeting of people's in a region where economic and cultural exchanges would take place. By way of an example, the different peoples of the Mediterranean basin have constantly had the opportunity to exchange not only goods, but also languages, cultures, myths, legends, mores, and even gods. As a final observation, Sempa (*ibid.*) concludes "Geography is the most fundamental factor ... because it is the most permanent". In wide brief, geography is indelible.

A priori, geography influences and actually shapes our perceptions, needs, policies and eventually our decision making. Foreign policies are defined according to geopolitics of that part of the world in question; economic plans and policies are outlined according to the geographical landscape of the country; education appears also to be one way or another resembling the country's neighboring state-nations' school systems and structures, and the corollary of that is that language planning and policies ought to reflect an insightful perspective of the geographical dimension. Therefore, by being fully aware of the geographical dimension leads to a better

identification and definition of the country's goals and interests. In a world that has proved itself to be a global village, a society that identifies itself in terms of knowledge, and economy that is driven by free markets, it is inevitable to take the country's geographical position into account while building the appropriate strategies to meet the challenges of the 21st century. According to Sempa (*ibid.*) "Globalization, economic interdependence, and information revolution will affect how nations interact in this century". It is incumbent upon decision makers in general and educators in particular to reorient educational goals and strategies to reflect those challenges.

One such challenge is the choice of the critical need languages to be included in the national curriculums. The geographical vicinity and economic importance of the neighboring countries redirect which language (s) is/ are to be part of the curriculum. Riche (2003: 31) quotes Van Else Theo (1991) who underlines "Geography dictates that is desirable to make provision for the languages spoken in neighboring countries, independent of the international status of these countries and languages". Differently stated, being closer in the geographical space is quite sufficient a reason to include the language of the neighboring country in the national curriculum regardless of the status of the neighboring country in question. It is of critical need, therefore, in many regions of the world, where international borders are no more than virtual lines, to include the languages in the periphery for socio-economic justifications. The inclusion of the language (s) of the state-nations in the geographical periphery appears to promote tolerance (namely in case of ethnic minorities on either side of the borders), understanding, mutual respect, economic exchanges, and the preservation of national security and interests. In short, the inclusion of foreign languages in the national curriculums and the investment in them is of an overriding importance for all.

Although, Algeria has a privileged geographical position, she has not seriously invested much of her energy and efforts in foreign languages. Algeria is the only country in North Africa which binds as many as six countries, and without her, they are geographically disconnected. In linguistic terms, Arabic is the only well established national and official language of the United Arab Magreb (UAM) that is

made up of four (04) Arab countries: (clockwise) Tunisia, Libya, Mauritania, and Morocco. In the Sub-Saharan countries of Niger and Mali, which are situated to the south of Algeria, several tribal uncoded languages of Bambara, Peul, and Hausa, etc. French is the official language in both countries and in the other neighboring countries of Chad, Burkina-Faso and Senegal. English is only used officially in Gambia or as foreign language in the countries of UAM. In the same breath, it should be noted that Berber or *Tamazight* has recently gained officialdom in both Algeria and Morocco, but still faltering in numbers of learners outside some restricted regions where it is the mother tongue. Northward, Algeria faces important European countries of the European Union (EU) whose languages are more or less present in the national curriculum. French seems to take the lion's share due to historical reasons; it is then followed by Spanish (*viz.*, Castilian) German and Italian.

In spite of the fact that the physical presence of Great Britain is not in the immediate context of Algeria, English appears to be the second in importance and presence in Algerian schools after French. Geographically speaking, however, the UK is only present in a small portion of the Iberian Mediterranean coast, Gibraltar, and that since the eighteenth century. Pragmatism rather than geography has been the springboard to the inclusion of English in the Algerian curriculum. The Third Millennium has brought with it dramatic sea-changes as well as challenges with unparalleled abruptness. And more than ever, the critical need for English is unprecedented not only in Algeria but across the world, especially as the technological boom of the late twentieth century, interdependent economies, and the heavy presence of the USA with its limitless resources has made English *the* global phenomenon *par excellence*. Globalization surpasses national borders, on score of that, geography appears with little elbow room to dictate which culture or language to incorporate in the national curriculum. Internet with its services (i.e., chat rooms, YouTube, downloadable materials, and twitter) along with the boom in telecommunications and media, English seems imposing itself without an apparent linguistic policy.

### 1.3.5 Social Need Factor

Language is vital to both individuals and societies. It is hard to imagine social cohesion or technological achievements without language. Timothy and Osborn (2008 : xi) maintain that “language is at the core and heart of the human experience. It is not only what makes us unique among fellow beings in our planet, but it is arguably the single most important tool we use to maintain human societies”. Human societies owe enormously to language as the latter binds the individuals of the society together preserving their identity and culture, and of course, passing on their experience and achievement to the next generations. “It is, in fact, the glue that holds virtually everything else that we value together. Without language, there could be little technology, only rudimentary human relationships, and at best incredibly limited cultures” (*ibid.*). Language has always been present in intra-societal as well as in inter-societal activities; language is virtually present everywhere from religious rituals, to social ceremonies and gatherings, to political talks, and trade deals. Allman (1990) notes that “(Language) is the palette from which people color their lives and culture” (quoted in Nieto 2002: 96). Last but not least, language reflects the degree of civility and/ or primitiveness of societies, their education, influence, and power.

Roughly speaking, modern societies are either composed of monolinguals such as the case of Germany or multilinguals such is case of the vast majority of the world societies. History proves that languages in a specific geographical area struggled either to impose domination or exclusion, whereas in modern times where geopolitics, economy, interests, and common concerns prevail, languages no longer seek to impose their status but rather exchange roles which are ultimately defined by interests and privileges<sup>22</sup>. It may seem paradoxical and to some degree bitterly ironical to note that neither society feels satisfied with their linguistic status. There exists every reason to argue that monolingualism excludes and alienates and multilingualism dissents and struggles. By way of an example, despite their booming economy, the

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<sup>22</sup> Willy Brandt (1913-1992), former Chancellor of the old Federal Republic of Germany once said: “If you wish to buy from us you can talk any language you like, for we shall try to understand you. If you want to sell *dann müssen Sie Deutsch sprechen* (then you must speak German)”. (quoted in Baker, 2006 and others)

Japanese struggle to learn foreign languages, while Canada struggles to maintain its territorial unity as the French-speaking *Québécois* aspire to have their own state. Differently stated, as monolingual states seek openness by encouraging their citizens to learn other (*viz.*, foreign) languages, multilingual states strive to keep their territorial unity by encouraging their citizens to use one unifying language. In sum, in our globalized times, teaching and/ or learning foreign languages for whatever reason, seem common claims by both societies.

The 21st century societies need to teach and learn foreign languages- whether critical or not- as much as they need to use their national languages. The myth of *lingua franca* no longer appears to be promoting complacency in a world that defines itself in terms of economic and technological competition. Truly enough, languages of wider communication (LWC) such as English, French and Spanish are still very important, but critical need languages (CNL) such as Arabic, Japanese, and Mandarin are continuously attracting attention and gaining importance. What is more, Baker (2006: 434) reports Nieffield Languages Inquiry report that states:

English is not enough. We are fortunate to speak a global language but, in a smart and competitive world, exclusive reliance on English leaves the UK vulnerable and dependent on the linguistic competence and the good will of others... young people from the UK are a growing disadvantage in the recruitment market : the UK workforce suffers from chronic shortage of people at all levels with usable language skills ... Mobility of employment is i danger of becoming the preserve of people from other countries.

Societies whose workforce possesses workable skills in foreign languages decidedly appear to have better opportunities for better economic presence on world stage.

The attitudes of the societies in the positive receptiveness or the resistance to certain languages are critical in the choice of which language(s) to be considered an integral part of the curriculums. The society's inclination to give value to a culture,

language, people, and/ or ideology may account for their readiness to cooperate or resist. The more positive the attitudes are, the more the society in question appears prompt to be responsive, and the more negative the attitudes are, the more it takes counterproductive stances. (In)tolerance vis-à-vis certain foreign languages stems from various historical, cultural, economic, political, and even civilizational factors. Policy-makers and curriculum developers do arguably face a daunting task when it comes to the implementation of a foreign language whose antipathy puts off the society. Baker (1990: 12) quotes Lewis (1981) who advises “Any policy for language, especially in the system of education, has to take account of the attitude of those likely to be affected”. The success of language policy needs to achieve certain prerequisites or conditions : “ In the long run, no policy will succeed which does not do three things : conform to the attitudes of those involved; persuade those who express negative attitudes about the rightness of the policy, or seek to remove the causes of the disagreement” (*ibid.*). Stakeholders need, therefore, to uproot the causes of discontent before deciding on the foreign language to include in the national curriculum.

A priori, the society’s need for foreign languages is perennial, especially as the winds of global change are felt more than ever. The 21st century citizen is different from that of the previous century in that he finds himself in a new type of society and an economy that has done away with the requirements of the Industrial Revolution era. Global issues such as democracy, global warming, cross-border terrorism, internet, student mobility, poverty, diseases, illiteracy, and many more issues are constantly imposing new challenges and requirements. The fittest society of the new Millennium shall prove to be the societies that make provisions for quality education. It may be arguably claimed that foreign languages are at the heart of quality education. McColl (2005: 22) cites Davis (2004) who observes that “language learning is a powerful tool for building tolerant, peaceful, and inclusive multicultural societies. The experience of learning a new language helps develop openness to other cultures and acceptance of different ways of life and beliefs”. Foreign language learning is the global society’s need for more understanding, tolerance, and cooperation for a better world.

## 1.4 School Context

Basically, schools are the physical realization of the socio-political and socio-economic needs of state-nations to generalize education to their citizens as it has been amply demonstrated in the foregoing section. Nonetheless, more than any other institution in charge of instructing young minds, schools come under criticism for any failures whereto the state policy or the society lead. Nelson and Polonski (2004: 2) note “But schools are usually at the center of public arguments about education since schools are the social organization that take on the formalized task of educating”. Schools are being criticized not only because they undertake the frustrating task of educating young citizens, but also because they concretize the contradictory views and practices of different stakeholders as well as the conflicting philosophies of different civilizations and eras. Despite its enduring importance, the school context appears to be underexplored: Researchers have attempted to study discrete points in isolation instead of trying to identify the hidden forces that interplay and ultimately drive the school context. It is worth of not to observe that schools are usually looked upon from top to bottom but very rarely from within. Goodlad (2004: 29) advocates that “... they (i.e., schools) are better understood as a little village in which individuals interact on a part- time basis within a relatively constrained and confining environment”. Hence, schools are the whole society in miniature.

The upcoming section undertakes to investigate an otherwise underexplored Algerian school context in its whole rather than its discrete points in space and time. Besides, we rest convinced that an understanding of the bases of the driving forces in our school context makes provision for a better evaluation of our educational system and eventually assists in taking informed decisions for future reforms.

### 1.4.1 The School Facility

It may appear somewhat ironical to claim that, by and large, Algerians have a *dictionary definition* of their schools. According to their lights, schools are merely physical descriptions of what schools *are*, not what schools *should be and do*. The outward perception of learning institutions is *au fond* revealing as to the Algerians

attitudes toward institutions of such an overriding importance that come to be called *public schools*. What is more, it may seem paradoxical to note that both laypeople and teachers seem to share this attitude. Loughlin and Suina (1982: 1) observe that “teachers considered the learning environment as a kind of scenery for teaching and learning, a pleasant yet inert background for classroom life”. This shallow stance somewhat coincides with the literal meaning of the word *school*, where it refers in ancient Greek <sup>23</sup>to *leisure*. An architectural edifice that is pleasurable to the senses, and that adds to the skyline of the city where the schoolchildren play for their leisure. Even students tend to consider schools an index and a companion of their biological evolution. Goodlad (*op.cit.*) decidedly recognizes that “(Students) go to school as part of growing up. There is no choice”. Clearly, the aforementioned stakeholders appear to take the school environment for granted; they never seem to inquire about its scopes and limitations.

As public schools are built and shaped, so are certain stakeholders’ behaviors. McLuhan <sup>24</sup>(nd) is reported to have stipulated that “We shape our tools, and thereafter our tools shape us”. The interaction between the space and its users accounts to a great extent for the behavior of the people involved. A compelling body of research has accumulated over the years supporting the argument advocated so far. The teaching-learning environment may induce better instruction and learning as it may deter the whole teaching and learning process. Loughlin and Suina (*op.cit.* 4) sustain that “the learning environment can be a powerful teaching instrument at the disposal of the teacher, or it can be an undirected and unrecognized influence on the behaviors of both teachers and children”. School population comes under the influence of the architectural and organizational environment, and much of teaching and learning is regulated by the way the space is conceived and shared. Skutch and Hamlin (1971, quoted in Loughlin and Suina) state (*ibid.* 10) “Many different classroom events are caused by materials arrangement, some related to management

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<sup>23</sup> The English word “school” is derived from Latin “schola”, which is itself derived from ancient Greek word “skholé” meaning “leisure”.

<sup>24</sup> Marshall McLuhan (1911 -1980), a leading Canadian philosopher, educator, sociologist, English professor, and communication theoretician.

behavior and others to the breadth and depth of learning in the environment”. Attitudinal, Cognitive, and pedagogical events, for instance, may be directly influenced by the arrangement of the teaching-learning environment. “Attention span, the variety of skills elicited by the environment, and the materials most used or most ignored are all influenced by materials arrangement” (*ibid.*). Thus, it is absolutely necessary to reconsider the design schools to accommodate learners’ learning needs.

Schools can no longer be simply considered well-decorated and lavishly furnished architectural structures, nor can they be considered *stalags*<sup>25</sup> where people are rounded up and overcrowded. “The learning environment is more than a building, arrangements of furniture, or collections of interest centers” (*ibid.*, 4). Building as many schools as possible all the more replicating the same architectural and arrangement designs may not be helpful, in the long run, to implement the values and set of socially acceptable behaviors. The flip of the coin is “Architectural facilities are designed in terms of a generalized prediction of behaviors, activities, functioning levels of students, teaching purposes, and teaching styles associated with the planned curriculum” (*ibid.*). All these criteria are as important as the decision to build schools, hire teachers, and write textbooks. Failure to take these criteria seriously will simply perpetuate the vicious cycle of implementing “cot-dead” reforms. Goodlad (*op.cit.* 29) claims that “teachers ... are conditioned by the circumstances of schools”. True enough, “Schools are first for students. But to ignore the fact that students are influenced by teachers, who are in turn influenced by their workplace, would be to lead us once again to simplistic diagnoses and inadequate proposals for school improvement” (*ibid.*). It is, therefore, high time Algerians rethought their school building policies.

All formal education occurs in a school of some sort. In the same vein, all formal instruction occurs in a school of some sort. Consequently, it could be *boldly* claimed that the schools are the springboard of the learning environment where the teachers’

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<sup>25</sup> Nazi concentration camp during World War II (1939-1945).

and students' biological, cognitive, emotional, experiential, and intellectual needs come to be met. Loughlin and Suina (*op.cit.* 4) claim “The architectural is the beginning of the learning environment, forming the framework within which the teacher establishes the arrangement environment”. Moreover, “It must be complemented by the continuous work provisioning and organizing space and materials for learners in response to their growth” (*ibid.*). It is no short of revealing to propound that the architectural, esthetic, and facility arrangement aspects of public schools may contribute to optimal learning and teaching as they may compromise the very essence of the task of instructing young minds. Again, Loughlin and Suina (*ibid.*, 1) strongly support this view outlining that “the physical learning environment has two major elements, the architectural facility and arranged environment. These contribute to strengthen or limit the environment’s contributions to children’s learning”. Prompted by the enduring virtues of the physical aspects of the educational settings in the advancement of the teaching-learning process, the following table, wherein are juxtaposed some attributes of the architectural facility, is drawn.

The architectural facility	Attributes
Provides	The setting for all the interactions among people and materials that occur in the learning process.
Establishes	The basic space of the environment and organizes access to external spaces and resources.
Determines	Basic conditions of light, sound, temperature, and instruction or separation between groups of people.
Provides	Qualities like color, texture, level, or softness or hardness to the spaces that can be arranged for children’s learning.

**Table 3:** School context attributes (drawn upon Loughlin and Suina (1982: 12).

As the teaching learning process ought to be necessarily in schools, it is incumbent upon these institutions to undertake to impart the nation-states' values to the young stakeholders. Mourad (2001) comments "organized education has been viewed as a key component and instrument of the just civil state from the time of Plato" (quoted in Nelson and Polonski, *op.cit.* 3). The role of schools is, therefore, not new ; what seems to be revolutionary, however, is the schools need to cope with the new, but pressing, challenges of globalization. Every reason exists to maximize the claim that the global issues that have arisen in the Third Millennium have shaken the very justification of what schools are, and what they aspire to achieve. Everard and Wilson (2004: 10) sustain that "the *raison d'être* of a school is to promote its pupils' learning, within a curriculum acceptable to its stakeholders, or as prescribed by law". The obsolete role of schools of being baby-sitters and joblessness rate absorbents compromises the very foundations of schools in the 21st century. Both local and global stakeholders require new yardsticks and standards to fill the need of the Information Age, whose two main facets are knowledge-based societies and market-driven economies. According to Shapiro and Purpel (1998: 2) "Schools ... are cultural sites that attempt to socialize children in the reigning values, beliefs, meanings, and knowledge required to live and work in this kind of society". Schools are henceforth required to induce highly qualified experts and functional citizens in democratic societies according to the 21st century standards.

As a final note, the issue of schools and their precious and beyond-any-shadow-of-doubt benign role in the advancement of knowledge-based societies and market-driven economies, all the more as research constantly supports and sustains its beneficial contributions, requires to be labored repeatedly. Zbar and Power (2007: viii) estimate that "schools account for around 5-10 % of the variance of achievement". Although, the percentage may appear low, it is of such high importance especially as in case it is sensibly coupled with the effects of the other variables (namely, teachers, home, and peers). Schools are therefore linchpins in the machinery of the teaching-learning process without which all of the system breaks loose. According to Hanushek (1994: xvii), schools "produce huge benefits ..." for any society. It is not an exaggeration to claim that thanks to schools that the civilization, culture, dignity, and prosperous economy of nations are preserved.

Drawing upon his argumentation, a table has been drawn to elicit the benefits of schools for both the individual and society. Of course, the table could be drawn longer as the benefits are numerous and touch upon all the departments of human existence. It is, however, out of the scope of this section to outline the malign by-products of unfavorable school environment.

Stakeholders/ Beneficiaries	School Benefits
Individuals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increases learning power.</li> <li>2. Helps (students) obtain intangible goods (health and power).</li> </ol>
Society	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fosters the productivity improvement that drives economic growth.</li> <li>2. Informs the dialog of democracy.</li> <li>3. Reduces the gaps of understanding and income dividing the members of the society.</li> </ol>

**Table 4:** The benefits of schools for individuals and society. (Drawn upon Hanushek, 1994: 1).

In addition to the school facility, the issue of school management needs mindful consideration. School effectiveness depends heavily on school management, which in turn, rests on democratic and expert leadership that undertakes the management of the facilities and resources dexterily. Beside all the other completing variables (mentioned in the foregoing section), school management either induces optimal instructional and learning environment or frustrates the whole process altogether. Effective school management seems unfortunately underexplored in Algeria all the

more so as the tutor (i.e., Ministry of National Education) usually maintains a top-down relationship with the tutees (i.e., schools), and practically never bottom-up. This one way relationship may compromise in the long run the whole teaching-learning process.

The upcoming heading attempts to call the concerned stakeholders' attention to seriously reconsider the issue of school management in a comprehensive framework so that the pre-set objectives are satisfactorily met and as equally important duly. Arguably, the only constant variable in the globalized world is the fast-paced change, which necessarily requires fast-paced policies to keep ahead in these uncertain times.

#### **1.4.2 School Management**

In all Algerian schools, the person in charge of leading the school administrative, managerial and financial activities comes to be called *the director*<sup>26</sup>. A position inherited, among other things, from the previous French colonial school system heritage. The director is a former teacher with many seniority years and certain other qualities such as university qualifications and/ or being the offspring of a *shaheed*<sup>27</sup>. In the early years after the Independence (July 5th, 1962), many directors were former *mujahideen*<sup>28</sup> who preferred civilian life than to proceed with contingent military careers. As the school director is supposed to manage, in most of cases, the school paperwork then being a real leader, s/he has not been educated and trained to assume other responsibilities. After all, the director in Algeria is no more than a functionary who is required to apply the regulations that s/he receives from the regional directorates of education. The director is rewarded for being servile and subdued by the intimidating force of the legislation in vigor. The director executes decrees sent down from higher authorities and does not interfere with the conception or later annulment of laws. The Present-day director is almost similar in every way to the

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<sup>26</sup> The term for “director” in English is “principal”, a term interchangeably used in the present work.

<sup>27</sup> Arabic for “martyr”.

<sup>28</sup> The patriots who waged liberation war against the French colonial forces (1954-1962).

early ones ; it may be even ventured the claim that they have not gained any more management privileges other than their predecessors already had. In wide brief, school management in Algeria is rigorously centralized, leaving practically very little elbow room for leadership.

The centralization of the school management has arguably limited and ultimately damaged to a great extent the effectiveness of the Algerian schools. It should be noted from the very onset that the Algerian school principals/ directors do not have an association of their own, instead they are members of the teachers' unions, with little or no freedom to engage in strikes if social grievances happen to arise. Furthermore, it is almost next to a miracle to find a book authored by acting or a former principal/ director throughout the country. It appears that the Algerian principals/ directors are constantly kept occupied by mundane paperwork drudgery. On score of that most principals/ directors do not engage in serious research to meet the managerial and/ or pedagogic challenges. Their readings do not exceed the daily newspapers and/ or decrees sent down by "the tutorship" authorities, in this case the regional directorates of education. In the periodic meetings, the principals convey the visions of the higher authorities and stress that both principals and the pedagogic staff to faithfully adhere. They usually expect the teaching staff to be amenable to the decisions taken by the tutorship; the discussions are, therefore, about the execution of the orders to the best of their abilities. Teachers' attitudes toward the decrees and practices are no more than opinions expressed to diffuse a sense of democracy and to help them readjust to the demands of the decrees.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, such a bleak account of the state of school management in Algeria is not promising to say the least. Every reason exists to maximize an urgent reconsideration of the nature of school management. The Algerian principal/ director cannot play the sole role of the chief of the school who manages autocratically the day-to-day school bureaucratic practices. Harber and Davies (2002: 60) recognize that "... power relations in schools in developing countries are largely authoritarian and bureaucratic, and that is both an ineffective way of educating for peace and democracy, and ... means that schools operate in an ineffective manner". It appears

fair to claim that the good school management may account for better teaching and learning environment. “In day-to-day management terms at school level the headteacher/ or principal is identified as a crucial factor in school improvement and school effectiveness” (*ibid.*). According to Raub (2009), school management “includes not only school economy proper, but also school government and school ethics”. In the same breath, effective school management requires that the principal/ director engages in effective leadership. Genck and Klingenberg (1991: 208) list the features of the effective schools recognized by the US Department of Education:

The most important characteristics of effective schools are strong instructional leadership, safe and orderly climate, schoolwide emphasis on basic skills, high teacher expectations for student achievement, and continuous assessment of pupils’ progress (What Works: Research About Teaching and Learning, US Department of Education, 1986).

Today’s challenges reject yesterday’s solutions, and therefore 21st century schools cannot be managed by pre-*Information Age* policies, practices, mindsets, and complacency. The Algerian principal/ director need to provide the fuel for an effective school rather than to cower in his/ her old functions that do not rise to the challenges posed by knowledge-based societies and market-driven economies. According to the authors of the *New School Management Approaches* (2001), 21st century principals “need to be able to take on a wide variety of roles : managing teaching staff and in-service needs, fostering good relations with surrounding communities, defining the distinctive ethos of the school, promoting good teaching, and leading educational change”. It is worth of note to mention that English teachers have a great deal of grievances when it comes to the way principals/ directors handle their claims. One such grievance is their timetables which seem crowded and irrationally distributed; most of the English classes are scheduled at the ends of the timetables (i.e., early mornings, late mornings or late afternoons). Over the years, English teachers have developed negative attitudes toward the unfair treatment they have received from the principal/ director. A quick glance at the distribution of classes, subjects, and teachers reveal that English teachers and classes are victims of prejudice and bias.

The effective school management necessarily requires being fully aware of the new fundamental roles that the principal/ director needs to conscientiously assume. Besides being an effective administrator and resources distributor, the principal/ director needs to invest time and energy to promote his/ her enduring role of leadership, a role which is clearly significantly demanding in its own right. S/he ought to apply his/ her know-how, expertise, emotional and intellectual intelligence, and “connections” to promote the school effectiveness, optimal teaching-learning process, create an inducing atmosphere, and establish excellent rapport among all the agents within the “household” of his/ her jurisdiction. According to Everard *et al.* (*op.cit.* 4) three “things” are required of an institution (and its leader for that matter) “(1) integrate its resources in the effective pursuit of its goals; (2) be the effective agents of change; and (3) maintain and develop its resources”. Differently stated, the principal/ director is supposed to manage his/ her human and material resources in the most favorable atmospheres to attain the goals set by the different stakeholders. Basically, these new roles are definitely not honorary titles but demanding responsibilities as they represent the mores as much as the demands of the globalization era. The following table displays the principal/ director new roles in the knowledge-based societies and market-driven economies.

Manager	Roles
The principal/ director	Administrator- care provider- good communicator-counselor- decision-maker- expert (in psychology and sociology)- facilitator- inspector-mediator- human and material manager-missionary- law and order maintainer-talent “excavator”- in loco parentis tutor- visionary.

**Table 5:** The new roles the principal in the knowledge-based societies and market-driven economies.

In an era characterized by the confusion of goals and diverse if limited resources, challenges such as class size and class density accentuates beyond measure the principal's/ director's already daunting mission. This work discloses that class sizes represents a fearsome, discouraging, disappointing factor for most middle school teachers of English.

### **1.4.3 Class Size**

To put it mildly and far from ironical tones, overcrowded classes are the norm in the Algerian schools. The Algerian classes count in many cases more than forty (40) students, the number appears to be accentuated by the number of the students repeating the year(s) as it is duly required by the law as well as the State's policy to fight relentlessly early dropout. In the same vein, it appears fair to mention that this is in no way an exclusive Algerian feature. A casual consultation of the literature on the issue in question reveals that even in some classes in certain industrialized countries, class density can be rated high. According to one Brazilian study, the average number of students in Brazil counts forty (40) students, and paradoxically, the same figure appears to characterize some classes in Japan. Classroom density, a priori, seems to stem, on the one hand, from the disequilibrium between birth rate increase and the limited resources, on the other hand. In the same breath, the mismanagement of the available resources is yet another factor that may account for classroom density. Arguably, the increase in classroom density at the detriment of the accommodating setting and the spatial utilization patterns may be counterproductive to the effectiveness of the school management, teaching-learning process and eventually to the students' performance and achievement.

Class size and density is a critical issue that is often raised by many Algerian circles, academic and otherwise, in open debates on the underlying reasons for the students' low achievement in standardized tests and the dysfunctional educational system. The attitude that smaller classes are more inducing, and conversely, bigger classes are more frustrating is equally shared by esoteric experts and laypeople alike. Molnar (2002: 43) states "Reduced-size classes provide the opportunity for improved

instruction and for increased learning”. Similarly, Blatchford (2003: 3) also notes that “In visits to schools, it was clear that the overwhelming professional judgment of teachers was that the smaller classes allow more effective and flexible teaching and the potential for more effective learning”. In their *World Development Report*, the World Bank authors (1980: 52) estimated that “reducing an elementary school class from 40 to 15 can be expected to improve average achievement by only 5% points ... a modest increase from 35 to 40 pupils might reduce achievement by a single percent point”. In other words, students’ achievement in standardized tests (namely, BEM and Baccalauréat) seems closely related to the number of the class; the more the density increases, the less the students achieve, and conversely, the more the density decreases, the more the students achieve.

The interplay between the accommodating space of the classroom and the class demographics proves to be an essential factor in providing physical and psychological backgrounds for instruction and learning to occur. A growing body of research has accumulated in recent years that warn from taking for granted the classroom color, capacity, and arrangement of furniture on the class demographics. The agency of these factors may contribute in the creation of favorable interactions between the two stakeholders (i.e., teachers and students) in attaining optimal instruction and learning. The classroom surface needs to be so designed to provide a proximal space where each and every student is able to have his share of spatial freedom to move around without encroaching another classmate’s. The table below provides the occupation of classroom space by a typical Algerian class. What is more, the choice of the color of the classroom needs to be chosen on scientific grounds. According to Raub (2009: 42), the ideal classroom color should be green because “... green seems least tiresome to the eye”. Spencer and Blades (2006: 102) confirm that from a medical standpoint “... color can either increase or lower blood pressure”. From an insider’s view, the Algerian classrooms come to be painted in light yellow, light blue or light green colors depending on the signed contact between the Ministry of National Education (MNE) and the contractor.

	Floor Surface	Number of Students
Schoolroom	20 x 24 (feet)	30 to 48
	24 x 30 (feet)	48 to 72
Air Space	20 x 24 x 10 (feet)	120 cubic feet/ every student
	24 x 30 x 12 (feet)	60 pupils and 144 cubic feet/ every student.
Actual Algerian Schoolroom	9 x 7 (m) (32.14 x 25 feet)	(average) 40 students = 1.57 student/ m <sup>2</sup>
Actual Algerian Schoolroom Air Space	9 x 6 x 3.8 (m) (32.14 x 25 x 10.72 feet)	4.88 students/ cubic meter

**Table 6:** Classroom size and density (drawn upon Raub).

For better or worse, the space devoted to the teaching-learning process influences the behavior of both teachers and students. On the one hand, less social behavior seems to characterize low density classrooms wherein students find themselves isolated in terms of floor surface and air space according to one study. Pelligrini and Bjorklund (1998: 32) sustain that “when children have more space, they engage in less social interaction with their peers”. On the other hands, less social social behavior seems ubiquitous in high density classrooms wherein individual students lack privacy and freedom of movement. Disruptive behavior, noise, and rowdiness are three features that Algerian teachers readily mentioned in our structured interviews. A priori, teachers’ preference for smaller classes originates from their attitude that “... it cuts down on noise and aggressive acts” (*ibid.*). Spencer and Blades (*op.cit.* 102) allege that “Physical settings affect both teacher and student behavior (such as attendance and concentration) and attitudes (such as motivation and self-esteem)”. Thus, some industrialized nations have attempted to reduce class size to encourage

student achievement. Blatchford (*op.cit.* 6) states that in UK the policy is to limit class size to thirty (30) students in KS1, and in the USA, projects aiming at reducing class size to average 18 students have been launched with the investment of \$ 2.5 million over two years in a row.

As a final comment, despite the better equipment (PCs, fans, gas furnaces, and in some rare cases air conditioner appliances) and furniture (new desks and chairs, and whiteboards), the Algerian classes are still overcrowded. It appears that decision-makers are apprehensive at the idea of reducing class size for fear of the investment of larger budgets. In recent years, the policy of the Government has been to increase the minimum salaries/ wages of the teachers as a part of meeting their social grievances and claims. Job -Satisfaction-wise, the teachers are still unhappy and uncomfortable with the conditions in which they work: long hours, many pedagogical groups, and overcrowded classes. It is noteworthy to point out that the teachers' salary increase should not be confused with the incentives targeting engaging meaningfully both teachers and students in the teaching-learning process. Human and financial resources that target to improve instruction and students' achievement are essentially meant to improve the professional, psychological, emotional, cognitive, and the learning environment conditions of the educational settings. Raub (*op.cit.* 18) states "Neither beauty nor comfort necessarily makes the schoolhouse more expensive". All things considered, investment in making educational settings better and stakeholders (teachers and students) more receptive and responsive is the first step to meet globalization demands.

#### **1.4.4 Teaching-Learning Agents**

The teaching-learning agents throughout this section are the teachers and students who are otherwise and elsewhere juxtaposed as being two separate entities in perpetual conflict of power and influence. By and large, teaching and learning are inseparable processes because they are symbiotic. Writing on these two agents under the same heading is prompted by the fact that, in Algeria, teachers and students lack substance; they are mere shadows. It may appear paradoxical to note that all that is

known about them is their names, dates of birth, places of birth, addresses, and some educational degrees. When it comes to their teaching and learning styles, thinking styles, intellectual and emotional intelligence, attitudes, beliefs, values, mindsets, intellectual growth, medical records, socio-economic status, needs and wants, expectations, motivation, perceptions, self-esteem, job satisfaction, and individual differences, they are incognito. It is so sobering to realize how little stakeholders know of one another. Apart from ID facts, teachers and students are practically complete strangers who are supposed to endure one another's differences for long periods of time in confined spaces. This awkward situation appears to orient itself quite in opposite direction of the *raison d'être* of what education and schools are. Mortimer (1998 : 2) points out "Schools are the arenas in which expectations, socializing influences, talents and motivation combine and influence the individual educational outcomes of children" and teachers for that matter.

In the Algerian middle schools, teachers receive early adolescent students. The transition of students from primary schools into middle schools relies primarily on two factors: age and achievement. In fact, it is the age factor more than the demonstration of certain skills which determines whether the students fail or pass to the next phase. As it is the policy of the Government, the vast majority of primary school students pass the Primary Education Certificate (CEP), and consequently, they are transferred to middle schools. This may justify the underlying reason why most Algerian pedagogical groups are made up of crowded classes and mixed-ability students. Hence, teachers face a daunting task of teaching students who have practically one thing in common (namely, age). It is worth of note to point out that teachers' understanding of early adolescence is telescoped in biological evolution and most importantly behavioral change. According to our questionnaire, which was administered to the middle school teachers of English, the respondents' attitudes toward the students are double-edged: female students' behavior is controllable while male student's behavior is a real challenge. They attribute the change in male students' unsocial behavior to the fact that parental education at home is quasi-absent. In conjunction with these attitudes is the lack of scientific knowledge of what it means to be adolescent in school. As Peeters (2005: 13) observes "On s'habitue à tout sauf

à un adolescent’’<sup>29</sup>. A new approach to understanding teenagers appears to absolutely necessary to minimize bad behavior.

Teachers do not understand that adolescence is not particularly troublesome for otherwise gentle children. Adolescence cannot be exclusively associated with rowdy behavior, resistance to learning, and rejection of authority and discipline. Peeters (*op.cit.* 14) estimate that 75% of the adolescents get along with their fathers, while 90% have good relations with their mothers, and three quarters of them admit to agree with rules of discipline and sanctions imposed by their parents. Coleman and Hagell (2007: 3) corroborate “By and large, the empirical research has concluded that most adolescents navigate this stage of life with relatively little major trauma”. Teachers’ attitudes toward their students need not be built on unfounded myths that middle school students have a tendency for delinquency and disruptive behavior. This “potentially problematic age”- to put it in Coleman and Hegell’s terms- marks the transition from childhood into adulthood with all its subsequent biological, cognitive, emotional, social changes. Four features appear to characterize “this phase” according to Coleman and Hegell: feeling of anticipation of what is ahead, a sense of regret for the stage that has been lost, anxiety about the future, a major psychological readjustment, and a degree of ambiguity of status during transitions (*ibid.*). Teachers’ attitudes are prone for change if teacher-student rapport is created and sustained.

Excellent teacher-student rapport soon reveals that teacher-student misunderstanding may lie in the differences between the teacher’s learning styles<sup>30</sup> and teaching strategies, on the one hand, and the learner’s learning styles, on the other hand. Oftentimes, teachers fall prey to the constraints such as length of the curriculum, limited time, and apprehension from the principal/ director or the inspector, and instead of establishing excellent rapport with their students, they teach the subject matter at the detriment of the students. Moreover, it appears that teachers

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<sup>29</sup> “We get used to everything except to a teenager”.

<sup>30</sup> “All students have strengths and abilities, but each student may have a preferred way of using these abilities” Ryan and Cooper (2010 :72).

are the perpetrators of the way they themselves have been taught (Cuban, 1993; Abell, 2001; Tedick, 2005). In a learning styles questionnaire administered to both teachers and students (2005), we found that 70.42 % of the middle school teachers of English to be visual learners, 14.26 % of them to be auditory learners, and 14.26 % of them to be kinesthetic learners. As for the middle school students, the figures are interestingly different. Students seem to be equally visual and auditory learners as they represent 45% for each respectively; and only 10% of them to be kinesthetic learners. These estimations are actually telling of the cognitive differences between teachers and students which explain why rapport fails if awareness of these differences are ignored or not considered altogether.

It may not be an exaggeration to claim that no methodology of teaching is amenable to the pedagogical staff if they already nurse unfavorable attitudes toward everything in their teaching-learning environment including their self-images. The forthcoming section undertakes to explore the new teaching methodology that has been implemented for almost a decade now. Competency-based approach and/ or education (CBA/E) characterizes teaching-learning in pre-tertiary grades, and whose tenets and objectives seem to be elusive to many stakeholders. The emulation of the experience of CBA/E with practically no regard for teachers' awareness, infusion of resources, and needs analysis, the three prerequisites for reforms, may jeopardize the contingent nature of the methodology in question in its Algerian version.

### **1.5 ELT Methodological Context**

Teaching methodologies are inherent parts of school reforms. It is practically a regular and recurrent pattern that accompanies each school reform or new approach to teaching. A synergy of socio-political, socio-economic factors and educational focus combine to create a sense of urgency in supplementing previous methodologies. The shift appears to manifest itself as abrupt, urgent, the state-of-the art development, and the final solution to the ills of inert learning. Moreover, each methodology capitalizes on the flaws of the previous one and expects hopefully-guaranteed outcomes. More than anybody else, teachers always seem to be taken aback by these swift turns and

prove to be lost between the idealistic goals and the common achievements. After all, they (i.e., the teachers) usually end up being the causes of failure, the perpetrators of the achievement gap and mediocrity. A priori, the implementation of new teaching methodologies leaves teachers in two minds: happy for the change and apprehensive from the change. Competency-Based Approach to teaching is one such methodology that it is irksome to many stakeholders. So far, it is to be the last in a long series of methodologies: Direct Method, Audio-lingual Method, Functional-Notional, and Communicative Approach.

Various methodologies have mirrored the historical eras wherein a teaching methodology was at its zenith. Audio-lingual Method (ALM) was the trademark of the 60s and 70s, the Notional-Functional Approach (NFA) the early 80s, the Communicative Approach in the mid-80s. In 2003, Competency-Based Approach (CBA) ascended as the legal heir to the previous ones. All that was known of this approach was the newly printed textbooks and the rich content that represented CBA curriculum. In spite of its high quality paper printing and color photos, these textbooks and their contents started to pose challenges which seemed insurmountable for an otherwise teaching community deskilled over the decades by the previous textbooks that were less than challenging. Classroom practices are still the same; teachers seem overworked, and students engage in projects that are done for them (thanks to the internet). Under the followings headings, we shall explore CBA and how it affects the teachers' attitudes and their classroom practices.

### **1.5.1 The Nature of CBE/T**

This approach to teaching and learning is chameleon-like in nature as it appears as a substitute to an otherwise known approach or attributed various and colorful labels. A simple review of literature reveals that various stakeholders utilize different labels to designate an approach to pedagogy that takes learners' abilities and skills as the target of the teaching-learning process. We may count: Competency-based Education (CBE), Competency-Based Education and Training (CBE/T), Competency-Based Approach (CBA), Competency-Based learning (CBL), Competency-Based Instruction

(CBI), Competency-Based Programs (CBP), and Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT). What is more, an insightful review of literature discloses that at least in its North American version, CBA may be used interchangeably and synonymously with the Performance- Based Approach (PBA) or Outcome-Based Approach (OBA). At times, it is categorized as an offshoot of the aforementioned umbrella terms. Burke (1990: 10) notes that “Early US sources show Performance Based Education in some cases as an alternative to CBE”. As a tentative conclusion, we may endeavor to claim that there are two versions of Competency-Based Education and Training (CBL/T): the Continental European (all except UK) and the Anglo-Saxon (Australian, UK, USA, Canada, and New Zealand).

We deem necessary to track back in history the emergence of CBE/T in the aforementioned spheres: Continental Europe and the English-speaking world. We are prompted by the fact that CBE/T emerged in these two spheres as a result of two different needs and expectations. Some scholars claim that that CBE/T stems in the first quarter of the 20th century. According to Burke, the origins of CBE/T “can ... be traced further back to the 1920s, to the ideas of educational reform linked to industrial/business models centered on specification of outcomes in behavioural objectives form” (*ibid.* 11). The dates above stand for dramatic political and economic changes for the first time in the world. World War I has proved that nations with resources and uninterrupted heavy industries are prone to win great conflicts. Moreover, rebuilding nations and countries’ infra-structures seem to be the prerequisites for future challenges. In Europe, CBE/T appears to stem from vocational education goals especially as skilled blue-collar workers were necessitated to operate machines of all sorts. As for North America and English-speaking Oceania, CBE/T seems to originate from the flow of emigrants from different nations, languages, and denominations whose main objective was the “pursuit of happiness”. Their functional proficiency in the host language was not reliable and an earnest need to learn the language to integrate fully in the host society was *sine qua non*.

This divergence in the perception of educational reform in connection with industry/ business led to a plethora of concepts that overlap at best and stand out at

worse. Equivocal concepts such as *competence-competency* appear to have caused dispute due to their inherent semantic elasticity and coverage. Besides, concepts such as “performance”, “outcome”, “standard”, “behavioral objective”, “competence”, and “competency” are often pitched and yawed: They stand synonymous at times and antonymous at others. A priori, *competency* derives from *competence*; on score of that, Bowden (2003) considers *competency* as a diminutive of *competence*. Anema and McCoy (2010: 5) refer to Eraut’s (1998) distinction between *competence* and *competency*. For him, *competency* is a set of skills whereas *competence* means an individual’s general capability to carry out his/ her job (*ibid.*). As for Xu *et al* (2001), *competence* is taken to refer to job-related and refers to the person’s ability to meet those requirements; *competency*, however, is person-related and refers to person’s knowledge, skills, and abilities that make it possible to effectively function in job (*ibid.*). Moreover, they point out White’s (1994) distinction of *competence-performance*: *Competence* is concerned with perceived skills and cannot be directly measured while *performance* relates to specific behaviors that are measurable and can reflect what workers actually do (*ibid.*). In sum, the difference between competence and performance attests to be instrumental to stakeholders.

CBE capitalizes on the failure of the previous methodologies to concentrate on *content* and *outcomes* as the primary concern for preparing youth to be proficient in their jobs. Burke quotes Nicholson (1989) who states that “the debate on education and training ... has too often been concerned with structures and delivery and too little concerned with content and outcomes” (*op.cit.*). Differently stated, previous methodologies were concerned with the methods of delivering lessons at the expense of the standards (i.e., skills and/ or outcomes). Consequently, CBE/ T puts the acquisition of measurable skills at the fore of education with a view of empowering them in their workplace. McAshan (1981: 45) defines competencies as “the knowledge, skills and abilities or capabilities that a person achieves, *which become part of his or her being to the extent he/ she can satisfactorily perform particular cognitive, affective, or psychomotor behaviors*<sup>31</sup>.” Moreover, competencies

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<sup>31</sup> *Italics ours*. The premise is to draw the attention to the behavioristic nature of competencies according to this definition.

“represent the instructional intents of a program and stated as specific goals to be achieved” (*ibid.*). In light of this definition, competencies appear stemming from *behaviorial* tradition, which conceptualizes that learning is the outcome of repetition to form desired habits or behaviors. As the very nature of CBE is employability-directed, it attempts at developing certain work habits that fit the demands of the 21st century jobs.

CBE seems, therefore, more focused on the outcomes rather than the teaching-learning process. It appears to attempt to develop learners’ abilities, knowledge, and skills with the view of becoming proficient in the workplace. Joyner (1996: 249) identifies CBE as “a systematic learning process in which the primary concern is the learner’s attainment of the knowledge and skills relevant to his/ her selected occupational goals”. CBE, to all likelihood, attempts to meet both the wants of the students, would-be job-seekers and professionals, and the job market demands. Jessup (1990: ix) recognizes “There is a need for a quantum leap in the education and training of young people to meet both their aspirations and the needs of the economy in an increasingly competitive world”. The benefits of outcome-oriented programs seem to fill the gaps in previous programs and engage all sectors in the economic dynamics:

They see focusing on outcomes rather than learning processes as providing a clarity and orientation to the programmes which is currently lacking in many forms of provision ... by specifying the competences independently of the learning process access to learning though any mode becomes possible. Along with credits and credits accumulation continuing education and training will be made available to sectors of the population which have never participated in the formal system (*ibid.*).

All things considered, the demonstration of the students’ abilities, knowledge, performance, and skills have been the major concern of educationalists and more recently of business and industry. The involvement of the latter has accentuated the need for more proficient professional whose skills and capabilities are second to none

particularly more so in a fiercely competitive world. In market-driven economies, it is imperative that the gap between book knowledge and the demands of the workplace be narrowed to the minimum in a world of business anxious for competitiveness and efficiency. The 21st century educational reforms may be said to be in the process of being reshaped by globalization in order to form individual who can fit in a digital era and survive job competition, economic crises, and cultural shocks. In the following section more insights on the nature of the objectives of CBE will be elicited. It is against this backcloth that our study of the teachers' attitudes toward their instructional materials will be studied in depth in the upcoming chapters. In their rush to keep up with the administrative pressures, middle school teachers of English appear more focused on the objectives of individual lessons rather than the overall objectives of CBE as though they were in oblivion of the underlying assumptions of this approach to pedagogy.

### **1.5.2 Objectives of CBE/ T**

CBE/ T advocates observe that defining explicit and precise goals is the first step in the implementation of CBE/ T curriculum. Richard and Rodgers (2001: 141) couch the purposes of this approach as follows : “(CBE/T) is an educational movement that advocates defining educational goals in terms of precise measurable descriptions of knowledge, skills, and behaviors students should possess at the end of a course of study”. In the same breath, Bowden (2004: 4) notifies that *explicitness* and *precision* in the identification of the CBE/ T outcomes are prerequisites. In other words, the identification of the explicit, precise, measureable outcomes and/ or standards that is to be attained by individual students represent the roadmap to preparing them to a successful career. Assessing individual students' progress may not, therefore, be the only criterion for success, but also what they can do with the knowledge acquired and how well they apply it. In wide brief, CBE/ T undertakes to empower individual students for better job opportunities either in their societies and/ or host societies. The objectives of this methodology seem to be very much imbibed in vocational education and the integration of emigrants in host countries. By and large, students come to be seen as emigrants and job-seekers, and, therefore, need to receive an education that helps them survive in world in perennial change.

It has been previously claimed that CBE/ T (see the previous page) was born out of the behavioral (objectives) traditions. It appears interesting to labor this point to avoid confusing “behavioral” with “behavioristic”. Nunan (2002: 1) asserts that Performance-Based Approaches (PBA) – CBE/ T among others—emerged within behavioral paradigm not behavioristic paradigm. He quotes Mager (1984), who for short of a better term coined “the behavioral objectives”, in defense of his choice:

During the early ‘60s, we talked about behavior rather than performance. This turned out to be an unfortunate choice of term. As a number of people were put off by the word, thinking that objectives necessarily had to do with behaviorism and behaviorists. Not so. Objectives describe performance, or behavior, because as objective is specific rather than broad or general and because performance, or behavior, is what we can be specific about.

By virtue of being reminiscent of the severely-criticized approach (i.e., Behaviorism), many scholars turned away from an otherwise specific, observable, and measurable term. Again, our claim that CBE/ T seems to be emerging from behavioral tradition meant precisely what has been discussed above.

As far as foreign language teaching-learning process is concerned, the most thorough attempt at materializing the aims of CBE/ T into manageable units (namely, objectives) has been conducted by the Council of Europe (COE). Van Ek (1977) explains the underlying ideology in the following terms:

Performance-Based Approach (PBA) tries to specify foreign language ability as a skill rather knowledge. It analyzes what the learner will have to be able to do in the FL and determines only in second place what language forms (words, structures, etc.) the learner will have to be able to handle in order to do all that has been specified. In accordance with the nature of verbal communication as a form of behavior, the objectives defined by the means of (our) model are therefore behavioral objectives (*ibid.*).

In different wording, only once students' needs and wants are identified then the choice of the syllabus is designed and written along behavioral objectives.

In 2001, the Council of Europe (COE) issued the Common European Framework (CEF) stating the behavioral objectives that need to be achieved by European students in order to satisfy the European Union (EU) educational and professional standards. In the following passage the authors thereof outline the main characteristics of CEF:

It provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe. It describes in a comprehensive way what language learners have to learn to do in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop so as to be able to act effectively. The description also covers the cultural context in which the language is set. The framework also defines levels of proficiency which allow learners' progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis (*ibid.* 6).

As it can be noted, the CEF outlines different levels of learners' proficiency. Lower levels target beginners' who need to express themselves subjectively (they talk about themselves) and higher level where proficient learners engage in more objectively complex situations (write papers, discuss global issues, etc.)

<b>Proficient User (C2)</b>	Can understand with virtually anything heard or read. Can summarize information from different spoken or written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, fluently and precisely, differentiating different shades of meaning even in more complex
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	situations.
<b>Proficient User (C1)</b>	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognize implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibility for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
<b>Independent User (B1)</b>	Can understand main ideas of a complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization. Can interact with the degree of fluency and spontaneity that make regular interaction with native speakers quite possible for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a topical issue giving the advantages of various options.
<b>Independent User (B2)</b>	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling where language is spoken. Can produce simple connected texts on topics which are

	familiar and/ or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
<b>Basic User (A1)</b>	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g., very basic and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
<b>Basic User (2)</b>	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where s/he lives, people s/he knows and things s/he has. Can interact in simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

**Table 7:** The main characteristics of the Common European Framework (CEF).

As a final note, a CBE/ T objective describes what learners need to develop as skills, abilities, capabilities, and knowledge to be effective and above all survive in their autochthonous or host societies and 21st C workplaces. Conversely, teachers also ought to cope with their new teaching paradigm and the ever more pressing roles. In

like manner, teachers need to survive in their age-old homes (namely, classrooms) the new challenges imposed by the instructional materials, which they have never been fully trained to come to grips with their overworking and daunting tasks. Piaget (1969) observes “... d’une manière générale, plus on cherche à perfectionner l’école, plus la tâche du maître est lourde ; et meilleures sont les méthodes, plus elles sont difficiles à appliquées” (quoted in Riche 2001: 35). And, the more they are difficult to apply and implement, the less favorable the attitudes seem to be.

### 1.5.3 Features of CBE/T

CBE/ T is different from the traditional paradigms in a number of ways. According to Dennison (1996: 24), CBE/ T appears to be characterized by its self-paced, learner-centered, and task- specific nature. On score of that, students are supposed to be sufficiently motivated to engage in learning where they are to be responsible not only of their success but also of their failure. In the following table, he juxtaposes the divergent nature of the conventional/ Traditional education and CBE.

Process or Issue	Conventional/ Traditional	CB/ Non-Traditional
Admission	Once a year	Any time during the year
Registration	Once a year in some cases biannual	Once a month prior to the start of the program
Scheduling	Fixed starting date for all students. Regid schedule to be maintained throughout the semester. Schedules set by school	Flexible schedule based on the availability of facilities and instructors. Students must maintain a minimum rate of progress throughout the program
Teaching	Teacher-centred/ lecture	Student-focused. The

Methodology	method to large group of students. Students copy notes written the board by the instructor. Quality of learning largely depends on the quality and commitment of the teacher. Demonstration of practice skills may be effectively seen by few students in teaching large classes	teacher serves as a resource when students require clarification of learning materials. Demonstration of skills. Quality instructional materials provide basis for student learning; individual or small groups of students receive assistance from the teacher when such help is required.
Evaluation	Normative according to class averages and group performance. Regardless of evaluation results, the teacher proceeds to the next topic in the program.	Objective criteria-based written examinations. Demonstrated competence. Students must prove competency in each module before proceeding to new learning.
Certification	Awarded annually to successful students	Awarded when students complete all competency requirements for the program.

**Table 8:** Conventional/ traditional education vs. non -traditional/CBE  
(Dennison 1996: 250)

As it has mentioned on several occasions, the CBE/ T resembles – to put it mildly- much the Outcome-Based Approach (OBA) and Performance-Based Approach (PBA), on score of that, it draws upon the features of both approaches. The tripartite features of the CBE/ T are henceforth elicited in a succinct style all the more drawing upon Bowden’s interpretations. A detailed table to illustrate the different features of

the CBE/ T is purposefully drawn with the view of collecting the details in one comprehensive framework.

CBLT Focus	Features
The Outcomes	-The specification and assessment of outcomes which are relevant to employment.
Greater Workplace	-Bridging the gap between book knowledge (i.e., theory) and actual application (i.e., practice in the workplace). This phase is subsequent to a thorough analysis and identification of workplace competencies and classification into sets of competency standards for occupation.
Observable Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Clear expression of better communication needs, redefinition and communication of education programs.</li> <li>-Assessment as judgment of competence.</li> <li>-Improved skills</li> <li>-Improved articulation and credit transfer.</li> </ul>

**Table 9:** Features of the CBLT (drawn upon Bowden 2003).

CBLT intends, therefore, to concern itself with the individual learner's accretion rather than with the attainment of a specified learning, hence, it is arguably a criterion-referenced approach. Nunan (2002: 4) quotes the New South Wales Migrant Education Service (1993) defining the focus of CBLT as :

... Concerned with the attainment and demonstration of specified skills, knowledge, and application to minimum specified standards rather than individual's achievement relative to that of others in group. It is 'criterion-oriented' rather than 'norm-oriented'.

In wide brief, CBE/ T is a personalized educational paradigm that attempts to capitalize on the students' potential to help them reach a stage where they can be survive in their societies and proficient in their workplaces.

#### 1.5.4 Key Areas in CBLT

The CBE/ T curriculum develops along some learning and competency areas that decidedly need to be identified beforehand. Relying on the Australian literature on the key areas that are required to be included in the CBE/ T curriculum, a table that combines school subjects that are part of the Australian and Algerian school system is drawn. The premise is to help visualize common subjects that need to be included in the CBE/T curriculum in order to achieve the pre-set objectives of the curriculum.

CBLT Curriculum Areas	School Subjects
<b>Key Learning Areas</b>	The Arts, English, Health and Physical Education, LOTE (Languages Other Than English : Arabic, French, Berber, Spanish, and German), Mathematics, Sciences, Study of Society and Environment, Technology, History and Geography, Religious Education
<b>Key Competency Areas</b>	-Language and Communication (four skills)  -Mathematics (computation,

	measurement, ...) -Scientific and technological understanding -Cultural understanding -Problem solving -Personal and interpersonal (self-esteem, ...)
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**Table 10:** Key learning and competency areas in CBA Curriculum. (Drawn upon *Finn report (1991)*)

As it could be noted, the Australian version of CBE/ T curriculum recognizes key learning areas that deal with the 21st century issues such as environmental challenges, societal issues, and health challenges. Not only cognitive growth is sought, but also emotional aspects of the learners are involved in the teaching-learning process by meeting individual learners' needs, wants, and expectations.

## **Conclusion**

In the foregoing chapter, the attempt has been to explore the multifarious and often elusive context wherein the teaching-learning context in general and the teaching-learning of the second foreign language context (English, in our case) in particular. Equally important has been to track down –implicitly though deliberately– the origins of the teachers' attitudes toward not only their “breadwinning” profession and their socio-economic status, but also their teaching-learning environment and those social, economic, historical, political, and psychological aspects characterizing that environment in question. It appears that the Algerians teachers, by and large, have developed unfavorable attitudes toward their teaching-learning context due to those oftentimes conflicting factors that have accumulated over decades of tumultuous socio- historical and socio-political dramatic events. In conjunction with these uncontrollable, convulsive, mutually exclusive factors, the world has gone dramatic changes with remarkable twists and turns together with

subsequent whirlpool of (re)shaping of goals, organizations and resources. The roles of the teachers and learners have undergone changes in accordance with the world changes; sometimes the changes happen to be such rapid, close, and, more perplexing than ever, exclusive that these stakeholders have striven to make sense of them. In wide brief, the tumultuous socio-political and socio-historical events may be claimed to have had a direct impact on the teachers' unfavorable attitudes toward their socio-professional context.

## **Chapter Two: The Nature of EFL Instructional Material**

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## **Chapter Two: ELT Middle School Instructional Material: Quantitative Survey**

### **Introduction**

The upcoming chapter, as its title clearly indicates, attempts to survey the Algerian TEFL instructional materials from a quantitative vantage point of an insider. The premise behind such an attempt is to discover the underlying reasons for the middle school English teachers' attitudes (positive and/ or negative) toward the proposed textbooks. Basically, textbooks are meant to provide a supportive instructional supplement material to the two agents of the teaching-learning process (namely, teachers and students). Paradoxically and despite the middle school textbooks designers' expectations and wishful thinking, the teachers of English have obviously developed a panoply of reactions which span all along the attitude spectrum and that range from excitement and motivation (to implement the material) to total resistance and/ or utter refusal to even consider the materials at hand. Different teachers come up with different reasons, and it is incumbent upon researchers to identify the *actual* reasons that have led to the emersion of such conflicting attitudes and mindsets. It falls within the scope of this study, therefore, to survey the middle school English teaching material package in order to firstly, set out whencefrom the teachers' attitudes emerged, and secondly, to probe the impact of such attitudes on the teachers' psychological perception(s) (i.e., affective and emotional) and eventually professional performances (i.e., teaching strategies and practices) in and outside their classrooms.

### **2.1 The Nature of EFL Instructional Material**

School textbooks are essential components of formal instruction worldwide. They are ubiquitous in the teaching-learning process, and ironically enough, they even give credit to the whole task of educating young generations especially if they are well designed and produced. We even may lay claim that as long as teachers and schoolchildren carry schoolbags that appear all the more looming large and bulging,

the guesswork is correct- textbooks weigh heavily in there. Aston University Bayne (2002) also concludes that “a more concrete and widely used item they carry with them is a textbook.” Basically, school textbooks form an extricable part of the total interaction and communication in the classrooms. In his doctoral thesis summary, Sigurgeirsson<sup>1</sup>(1992) estimates that in most Icelandic classrooms between 50 and 80 percent of instructional time is spent on direct work with materials. And nonetheless, textbooks are taken for granted. A recent French report (nd: 5) reiterates that the textbook “... est un personnage si familier du théâtre de la classe, un outil si usuel qu'on oublie parfois de réfléchir à sa nature et à sa fonction”. Oftentimes, it is the presence of this new *stage character* in the classrooms not only signifies new curriculums but also new reforms. Still, it is assumed, by and large to be there without the slightest question.

To all likelihood, *textbook* is a misnomer: It is not a book exclusively devoted to texts of some sort. Actually, it has come to be denoted by different people with different and colorful terms which seem to fit and meet their conception and expectations of what a textbook is. A quick scanning of the literature reveals an interesting observation: There are those who are optimistic and therefore hold a positive view of textbooks, and those whose metaphoric view holds that textbooks are a kind of yoke that enslaves both teachers and students. On the optimistic side, some see textbooks as *Aladdin's pot* from which wonders can be performed; others still qualify it as *toolbox* wherefrom the right instruments that assist people to work are arranged, while some others consider it an open source of knowledge which enriches stakeholders' knowledge as well as experience. On the pessimistic side, however, another group deems textbooks *landmines* that frustrate the teachers' and students' creativity and natural progress in the teaching-learning process. From this vantage point, textbooks seem to cripple teachers' and students' abilities and talents through the total adherence to their structure, format, type of tasks, and knowledge imposed. Both teachers and students are, therefore, restricted for as long as the textbooks in

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<sup>11</sup> Sigurgeirsson, Ingvar. (1992). *The Role, Use and Impact of Curriculum Material in Intermediate Level Icelandic Classroom*. DPhil thesis submitted in February 1992 to the University of Sussex, England.

question are in vigor; thus, both teachers and students are discouraged from initiative, improvisation, and innovation. Henceforth, there appears opposing views, multifarious definitions, and of course, different attitudes toward the conception and content of textbooks.

In fact, from a pure pedagogical stance, there seems to be a consensus among laypeople as well as specialists on the “*what*” of textbooks. Still, Tanner (2009) wonders on the textbook *raison d’être* and questions the reasons why all this cacophony of voiced views. Anyway, simple and layman’s definition would seem so obvious: *It is that printed and bound artifact with which one was provided, or which one had to buy, for each year and course of study. It contained all the core content and all sorts of exercises and study questions at the end of each section or chapter.* To this view, professors Bayne and Tomlinson appear to adhere but with more accurate additions agents-wise, subject-wise and objectives-wise. Professor Bayne (1998) defines textbooks as “all forms of printed EFL instructional materials, commercial or non-commercial, bound or loose-leaf, and whole or part of a textbook, and which include coursebooks, self-access materials, supplementary materials and workbooks” (cited in Bayne, 2002: 1). Differently couched, whatever is used as a supplement to instruction may come to be classified as a textbook. Tomlinson (1998) calls textbooks materials and identifies them as “anything which is used by teachers and learners to facilitate the learning of a language” and “anything which is deliberately used to increase the learners’ knowledge and/ or experience of the language” (*ibid.*). Tomlinson’s definition is basically similar to Bayne’s if it clearly recognizes the intellectual and experiential growth of the stakeholders that these textbooks need to target.

It should be noted from the very onset that textbooks have a long historical tradition in religious and later secular instruction. Tanner (2009: 1) observes that “historical records indicate that for as long as systems of writing and formal schools have existed... textbooks, in one form or another, have also existed. Differently stated, ancient civilizations in China, Egypt, Mesopotamia, and India used what was

available to them, and once they invented writing systems- to pass on their values and codes to the next generations. We can imagine them writing on animal skin and on “tablets, scrolls; bound sheets of papyrus, vellum, or parchment” (*ibid.*). A priori, all these can be claimed to be a form of textbooks of some sort not only utilized for the record but also for the transfer of knowledge to posterity. The real though shy appearance of the early textbooks- as we know them in the present day- came as a by-product of the German Johannes Gutenberg<sup>2</sup>’s invention of the movable type printing machine in 1450. The inception of this type of printing was less expensive and less time consuming, and which ultimately led to the dissemination of books and knowledge in a record time. As for instructional textbooks, the credit seems to go, according to Matos (2000), to the Czech educator Jan Amos Komensky<sup>3</sup> who was the first ever to publish the precursor of modern-day pedagogical support in 1658. From a linguistic standpoint, however, the first occurrence of the word *textbook* in English, according to Random House Webster’s College Dictionary (1997), can be traced as far back as the years 1770-1780 (*ibid.*). Overall, textbooks have been omnipresent in religious and secular settings as a medium of preaching and instruction for over 300 years.

History of the coinage of terms seems all the more capricious when it comes to instructional materials. Actually, the conflict of terms clearly overshadows the legal adoption of the term causing contention. Very often, the euphonic aspects of the term and/ or visual esthetics are the ones which determine the use and usage of the term, not its precision or practicality. In many cases, however, it is the nomenclature of the terminology sought that accounts for the preference for the required term. As for school manuals in English-speaking schools, five terms are counted: school book,

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<sup>2</sup> Johannes Gensfleisch zur Laden zum Gutenberg (c. 1398 – February 3, 1468) was a German goldsmith, printer and publisher who introduced modern book printing. His invention of mechanical movable type printing started the Printing Revolution and is widely regarded as the most important event of the modern period (Wikipedia)

<sup>3</sup> In 1657, he published the *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* considered by many to be probably the most renowned and most widely circulated of school textbooks (adapted from Wikipedia).

schoolbook, text book, textbook, and course book. Marsden (2001: 7) assumes that “... the nomenclature of textbooks, text book, textbook has meant different things to different people at different times”. He (*ibid.*) further quotes Stray who conducted a probe on the issue:

Stray drew attention to the fine distinctions between school books, schoolbooks, textbooks and text books. The school book, he claimed was an appellation emerging in the 17<sup>th</sup> c, and a commonly used item in the 18<sup>th</sup>. Textbooks under that heading appeared in the 1830s, but text books were of much earlier vintage and denoted texts usually in Latin or Greek, used for instruction. Stray defined textbooks as authoritative pedagogic versions of an area of knowledge, and schoolbooks as books appended notes to assist understanding, as for example, school editions of Shakespeare’s works.

Other scholars such as Michael (1999) also consider the English language books intended to teach English grammar, orthography, literature, and so on were taken to be textbooks in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century- England. Marsden states that “Michael (1999) regularly referred to pre-19<sup>th</sup> c texts related to English teaching as textbooks, noting that early grammars and rhetoric were in some cases written by schoolmasters and were intended as school textbooks” (*ibid.*). In America, it seems that course books are taken to mean textbooks according to Hall Quest (*ibid.*). In different terms, the books that contain the content of the curriculum (i.e., set of lessons or lectures) are termed course books mainly in the UK.

## **2.2 Varieties of Textbooks**

As it has been amply demonstrated in the foregoing section, textbooks have been with us from the dawn of history, which is no short of awe-inspiring. At every stage of their development and utilization, different natural materials (namely, clay, leather, papyrus, and wood, etc.) as well as technologies have been sought in designing, circulating and implementing them in some way across cultures, civilizations, and geography. It also needs to be mentioned *en passant* that textbooks have served

various purposes (i.e., liturgical, pedagogical, religious, social, and historical as to record gloriously-won battles, etc.), perhaps this accounts for the various types of textbooks. Decidedly, there exists no reason not lay claim that textbook production will continue to astonish us all the more as state-of-the-art printing technological appliances are made more efficient and easily available worldwide, and a competitive if all-wide open market that attempts to reach for people's wildest whims is constantly growing and expanding beyond geographical borders. With the mind-boggling advent of technology even more new concepts of textbooks have made their appearance, and thus the choice for choosing and using any one or all of them seems really difficult. In a nutshell, textbooks come in different shapes, quality, and prices as much as they come in different conceptions, designs, and contents from one discipline, subject to another as within the same subject.

With special reference to school instructional materials, they may be classified in three different categories according to the following criterion\_ *physical realization*. Textbooks are either printed on paper, or published online, or produced in audio-visuals (animation, CD ROMs, DVDs, and audio-visual tapes or cassettes). The printed textbooks have dominated the educational settings for a long time, and still they are considerably used worldwide enjoying a privileged position. Whether in developed or developing nations, the printed textbooks represent choice number one in presence and utilization. Affluent societies appear to invest beyond measure on the production of quality instructional materials on quality paper with high definition pictures and appealing typefaces. The format and layout are designed by knowledgeable personnel and sophisticated means, while the objectives and content are painstakingly formulated, collected, developed, and constantly reviewed. What is more, textbook package is made to contain other books such as workbooks, teacher's guides/ manuals, audio-visual aids, and multimedia items. This generous investment in textbooks proves the crucial roles these instructional materials play in the intellectual growth of the young minds. It also corroborates the fact that textbooks make up for teachers' inability to provide quality education to learners under their tutelage.

The teaching literature is obviously replete with terms denoting some kind of instructional materials. A priori, apart from specialists very few people- even among the teaching community- can differentiate between such confusing terms: coursebooks, e-books, handbooks, textbooks, and workbooks. The following section attempts to identify and examine the nature of different types of instructional materials as they come to be utilized in developing countries of North America and Britain. It should be noted, however, that developing countries such as Algeria eschew at best to include other supplements to school textbooks for fear of higher costs and low revenues. In the same vein, it may be rightfully claimed that most writers of instructional materials are not specialists in textbook writing and editing. As a point in case, all the writers of the *Spotlight on English 1,2,3* and *On the Move* (Book 4) are either university teachers-researchers or teacher-trainers who have not received formal training in the development of instructional materials.

### **2.2.1 Coursebooks**

It is worth emphasizing from the onset that this term is spelled in two slightly different ways: the two syllables are split and hyphenated *course-book* and in one word *coursebook*. Throughout this work, no clear preference is professed and, therefore, both forms are used interchangeably. By definition, coursebooks are books that contain courses or lessons intended for instruction in formal settings; they stand for school textbooks in Great Britain. It appears that British pupils use their coursebooks instead of their textbooks as part of their instruction in the curriculum subjects. Longman Online Dictionary defines coursebook as “A book that students use regularly during a set of lessons on a particular subject”. It also specifies that it is British English and an equivalent of textbook. Another online dictionary<sup>4</sup> identifies coursebook as “A book that is used by students and teachers as the basis of a course of study”. Unlike the previous definition, the latter definition includes both agents, i.e., teachers and students, as users of coursebooks in schools. As an educated guess, all the school subjects in Britain have their own coursebooks as an integral part of the

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.publishingdictionary.com/definition/course-book.html/>

curriculum. As there are twelve (12) school subjects (including three core subjects)<sup>5</sup>, there are at least one coursebook for each subject.

In Algeria, coursebooks are generally termed books or school books. All the Arabic-taught subjects such as Arabic, geography, sciences of nature and life, and mathematics among others in the middle schools have *Kitab Madrassi*, or more specifically *Kitab Al-Lugha Al-Arabiya*. Algerian textbooks of French language are called *livres*, or more precisely *livre de français*. The Algerian writers of English textbooks use the more generic term of *book*; the textbook used in the final (fourth) year middle school is entitled *On the Move, Book Four*. Obviously, Algerians do not seem to bother themselves with the different appellations of their school textbooks. Nor do they seem to be embarrassed by producing one book that telescopes a wide range of core and supplement books. The idea may appear practical though short-sighted in the long run. Using the same book repeatedly may prove to be boring and unchallenging for younger generations that take innovations for granted. As for the teachers after a few years they grow tired and end up demotivated and deskilled because of the use and overuse of the same book over the years. While the new Algerian school textbooks are better produced than the previous ones, they still demonstrate inconsistency and weaknesses at various levels of realization. They are never reviewed or properly edited.

### **2.2.2 Handbooks**

Course-books (or textbooks, for that matter) provide a rich content of a lesson or a series of lessons; handbooks, however, are meant for a quick reference in order to refresh students' minds. Besides the term "handbooks", they are also known by the Latin name of *vade mecum* or *vade-mecum*, which means *come with me*. These reference books are, therefore, intended to be carried all the time in students'

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<sup>5</sup> In the British schools, core curriculum counts English, Mathematics, and Science. The other subjects are Art & Design, Citizenship, Design & Technology, Geography, History, Information & Communication Technology, Modern Foreign Languages, Music, Physical Education.

schoolbags or in case they are small-sized they may be slipped in the pockets to come “handy” in necessity. In French, handbooks are called “aide-mémoire” denoting, thus, their use in refreshing students’ minds. In Arabic, handbooks have colorful, imaginative titles according to handbook writers’ intentions or publishers’ requirements. Libraries and bookshops display on their shelves a wide variety of handbooks such as: النجيب قي العلوم, الميسر في الرياضيات, etc. Littlefield (1904: 187) lays claim that the first edition of an English *vade-mecum*<sup>6</sup> was published in London in 1681. Handbooks are primarily produced to meet two objectives: easy consultation and quick, ready answers to particular questions. While handbooks cannot replace course-books (or textbooks), they are clearly very popular among students particularly those who are at the final years in schools. Students seem to feel confident when they acquire more and more of handbooks despite the high prices.

Handbooks are common worldwide as supplements for textbooks. They are concise manuals or reference books which provide specific information or instruction about a subject or place. Bickman and Rog (1998: ix) define handbooks in the following passage by eliciting their qualities:

A handbook is typically compiled to provide a comprehensive representation of the work in a particular area. It is intended to summarize and synthesize major topics and issues. Designed with broad perspectives, a handbook directs the reader to additional resources for more in-depth treatment of any topic or issue. Thus, a handbook serves a “handy” reference guide, covering key yet often diverse themes and development in a given area.

As a case in point, the table below draws on Sorenson (2010) qualities of her *Webster’s New World Student Writing Handbook* to elucidate the concept of

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<sup>6</sup> The title of this handbook or vade mecum was : *The Young Man’s Companion : or, The Several Branches of Useful Learning made perfectly easy*. It was authored by W. Mather.

handbook. We are prompted at this stage by the fact that most, if not all Algerian middle school teachers of English are not familiar with what is meant by handbooks.

Situations	Qualities
<i>Academic</i>	It offers guidance for writing assignments across the curriculum from accounting to zoology.
<i>Personal</i>	Would help with resumes and letters as well as scholarship, college, and job application.
<i>Professional</i>	Would include all kinds of writing, creative and technical, formal or informal. It would address all problems, no matter whether writers need to study a model, find a quick definition, and example in a glossary, solve grammar, usage, or mechanics problem, or follow an extended step-by-step explanation from the text.

**Table 11:** Qualities of *Webster’s New World Student Writing Handbook* (drawn upon Sorenson, 2010: 1).

The *Groupe Spécialisé Didactique (anglais)* (GSD) has produced a handbook for the middle school teachers of English. *Teacher’s Handbook -1<sup>st</sup> Year Middle School* was made available in the school year 2003-4 by the National Authority for School Publications (ONPS). The *Handbook* is authored by a former middle school inspector Mr. Khelifa Achour (2003: 3) in which he specifies “The main aim of the teacher’s handbook is to serve as a reference document to be consulted by teachers”. For convenience’ sake, the other four aims are listed in the table below. It should be noted, however, that some key words –not in the original text- have been deliberately italicized to be verified in this work.

Handbook Aims	Specifications
Aim 2	The handbook contains <i>information</i> about the syllabus and its <i>accompanying documents</i> <sup>7</sup> .
Aim 3	The handbook draws <i>broad</i> lines of the new textbook and describes the way it is organized together with its contents.
Aim 4	The handbook even supplies information about various aspects of methodology and class life and class management.
Aim 5	The handbook <i>suggests</i> a few ways and procedures to conduct the routines of everyday class.

**Table 12:** Aims of the Teacher’s Handbook -1<sup>st</sup> Year Middle School (drawn upon Achour 2003:3)

Essentially, Mr. Achour is “tipping” the teaching community on broad principles of teaching. In the conclusion section of the Handbook, he recognizes “These *brief notes* are meant to help colleagues tackle some of the daily routine involved by their work. They are to be considered as *advisory* and to be consulted if and when necessary” (p.16). Perhaps one of the weaknesses of the Handbook is that the author has made some assumptions that can prove erroneous. Achour assumes “The newly appointed teachers will perhaps find these notes useful while experienced ones may feel they can do without them, as their experience is considered as an advantage to processing any innovations in the pedagogical field” (*ibid.*). It emerges that reality is otherwise: many teachers (senior and experienced more than anyone else) feel taken aback by the prompt reforms and confused by their demanding new roles. As a concluding note,

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<sup>7</sup> To the best of our knowledge, these are mostly “lip service” and unfulfilled promises. After almost a decade the accompanying pedagogical tools are not made available.

*GSD (anglais)* has provided middle school teachers of English with introductory notes rather than a ‘‘dyed-in-the-wool’’ handbook.

### 2.2.3 Workbooks

In the pedagogical nomenclature, workbooks are meant for exercises and drills, which students are supposed to carry out either in the classroom or at home. Workbooks feature as booklets that contain activities, exercises, and problems which allow students to write directly on the pages. Thus, booklets are, in essence, written practice books designed specifically for learners whereon they try to solve problems, provide tentative answers to exercises, and design the required geometrical or artistic shapes. As a general rule, Algerian students are urged to use drafts, *exercise copybooks*, and/ or *trial copybooks*<sup>8</sup> as they come to be called in Algeria in their attempt to answer the proposed tasks. Wikipedia authors claim that workbooks in the American educational system are cheap, paperback textbooks, issued to students. What is more, they put forward:

Workbooks are usually filled with practice problems, where the answers can be written directly in the book. Workbooks are often used in schools for younger students, either in middle school or elementary school. They are favored because students can work directly in their books, eliminating the need for loose-leaf and copying questions from a textbook. In industry, they may be customized interactive manuals which are used to help provide structure to an otherwise complex problem.

Workbooks seem to be very advantageous for both teachers and students. Their worth and value cannot whatsoever be denigrated due to their nature, i.e., they are entirely devoted to written practice. For both agents, workbooks are inevitable supplement

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<sup>8</sup> The copybook that the students use in their attempt to find solutions to the proposed exercises are often called *بكراس المحاولات*. At the beginning of the school year, some teachers require that every child must have one.

pedagogical materials. They provide various types of ready-made tasks, which help primarily teachers gain valuable time in the preparation of lessons. Tasks in most workbooks are graded, and therefore, students move with ease from affordable tasks to more complex ones, sparing teachers time and energy to re-explain instructions and/ or input. Workbooks layout and content draw upon those of the textbooks, which represent an opportunity for revision. Workbooks are furnished with keys to the proposed tasks, an exceptional chance for autonomy, personal reliance and feedback. Workbooks are less expensive than the other pedagogical materials, especially as they are produced in cheap paperback. Again, the Wikipedia authors believe that workbooks also hold an advantage because they are usually smaller and lighter than textbooks, which equates to less trouble when the student brings the book home to complete their homework. To conclude, workbooks are basically time-and effort-gaining for teachers, and a second chance for the students to review the input seen in class and an opportunity to optimize intake as well as output.

Workbooks appear to be essential components of the teaching-learning materials; all western publishers do not miss to produce them at the same time they produce textbooks. Additionally, they publicize the qualities of the workbooks as much as they do with textbooks. That amply demonstrates the important position that workbooks enjoy as part and parcel of educational materials. As a point in case, Graves and Rein (1988) introduce the workbook for *East-West 1*<sup>9</sup> by establishing its qualities: “The workbook provides *written reinforcement* of the oral skills practiced in the Student’s Book as well as *controlled writing exercises* that expand these skills” (*emphasis added*). Richards *et al.* (2005: iii) feature their New Interchange workbook in the following terms

The workbook provides a **variety of reading, writing, and spelling exercises to reinforce the grammar, vocabulary** taught in the Student’s Book. Each six-page unit follows the

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<sup>9</sup> *East-West 1*, an English language teaching package, written by Kathleen Graves and David P. Rein. The full package includes the Student Book, Teacher’s Book, Workbook, and cassettes. It was published by Oxford University Press on 15 December, 1988.

same teaching sequence as the Student's Book; **some exercises recycle teaching points from previous units in the context of the new topic.** The workbook can be used for classwork or homework (**emphasis added**).

In wide brief, workbooks are intended as *written reinforcements* of the instructional input to maximize students' intake and output. In essence, workbooks bridge the gap between the class work and homework.

In Algeria, workbooks are never separate books. Instead, they are integrated as part of the textbooks. Both teachers and students utilize the textbooks for teaching and learning the instructional input as well as correcting the activities or exercises proposed by the textbooks writers. Some teachers require that their students be equipped with trial copybooks or exercise copybooks in which they copy exercise instructions, and then they attempt to solve problems. Students are often instructed to keep their textbooks clean or they will be sanctioned. Many students, however, do write on their textbooks directly, and very often they are not chastised. Textbooks with the "false-starts" and false answers come to be resold secondhand in weekly markets, flea markets, and/ or on the pavements of city-streets. Errors are, thus, perpetuated by potential buyers without their future teachers being aware of this dangerous, unwanted "inheritance" or transaction. The absence of workbooks as separate books from official textbooks may reduce costs in developing countries, but in the long run they may undermine the teaching-learning process through error fossilization. Wetzorke (2010:12) warns "A fossilized error is the most aggravated form of an error ...". As a final note, although the development of workbooks as separate items may prove to be relatively costly, but they contribute to motivate the teaching-learning agents; they save time, and reduce potential threats.

### 2.2.4 E-books

With the advent of the Information Age, books, which are the by-product of the Industrial Revolution Age, have turned digital. It is therefore no short of a revolution in its own right to turn alphabet-written-and-typed books into another kind of virtual and digitized books available for a much wider audience at lower costs. According to Polanka (2010: 3) “The first internet e-book was created in 1971” by University of Illinois genius Michael Stern Hart. Project Gutenberg (PG) was meant to digitize paper books and offer them free online. In 2004, Michael S. Hart stated “The mission of Project Gutenberg is simple: *To encourage the creation and distribution of ebooks*”. Although e-books might at first sight appear to represent serious potential threats, they have proved over the years to be an obedient servant of printed books. In many households and formal institutions, both versions (i.e., digitized and printed) do co-exist. Clearly, each version serves certain objectives and satisfies certain functions and needs. Thanks to e-books, teachers have opportunities to vary their sources in writing their lectures, students have access to a wealth of information in innumerable fields of studies, and books as well as interactive courses are constantly downloaded. In wide brief, digitize books have led to easy access to knowledge.

E-books have many advantages. In the following tables both debts and credits of e-books come to be deliberately juxtaposed. The premise is to raise stakeholders’ awareness as to the importance of publishing school textbook package online in order to come to the assistance of an otherwise confused teaching-learning community as to the shortage of instructional materials or reluctance in supply and/ or delivery.

Advantages	Disadvantages
1. Technology allows a student to carry many books, references, resources in a single hardware, which may weight as little as a pound (Cavanaugh, 2005)	1. Copyright is pirated. 2. Users will shirk research because everything is done for them, and therefore plagiarism becomes common. 3. Addiction to screen

<p>2. According to one e-book company, a gigabyte memory could contain more than 200 illustrated college reference books, or 30 legal volumes, or about 2 500 600-page novels in PDF format Munyan, 1998 qtd in Cavanaugh, 2005).</p> <p>3. Students have access to interactive dictionaries and web hyperlinks, it is even possible to have books read aloud (ibid.)</p> <p>4. These tools provide scaffolding that can student learning.</p> <p>5. Many books are downloaded free.</p> <p>6. E-books may be deleted at will once no more needed.</p> <p>7. E-books are abundant and accessible.</p> <p>8. E-books may be a motivating source for research; they are plentiful and in all fields.</p>	<p>4. No possibility to write on the margin or underline important information.</p> <p>5. E-books are stored in whole.</p> <p>6. E-books may be lost in split second because of viruses.</p> <p>7. E-books are only read once the battery of the PC is full.</p>
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**Table 13:** Debts and credits of e-Books (drawn upon Cavanaugh 2005:2-4)

The Information Age with its subsequent technology has made access to knowledge affordable in a record time. It is incumbent upon individuals and communities to make most of it.

School textbooks in Algeria are not as yet officially digitized. It is worth emphasizing that there is so much at stake: Many thousands of workers in public and

private sectors would be laid off or even licensed. Moreover, the budget to produce, print and supply schools with school textbooks counts billions of Algerian Dinars. Finally, the Internet services in Algeria do not live up to the international standards. Notwithstanding, some private websites do invite internet users to download Algerian school textbooks. This free service does not appear to have many fans; Algerian schoolchildren are not accustomed to see or use digital versions of their textbooks. Most Algerian middle schools are equipped with PCs and internet connected, but the service is poor. Students are admitted to what is called *Computer Science Room* (CSR<sup>10</sup>) only under supervision and for specific purposes. In essence, these sessions are primarily to introduce students to the use of PCs rather than assist them conduct research. For better or worse, students are not encouraged to access websites for fear they access forbidden websites. In CSR, students, therefore, cannot consult with the digital-format of their school textbooks. E-book technology may offer a unique opportunity for middle school teachers and students to link both classwork to homework.

### 2.3 Reliance on Textbooks

We judge it essential at this stage to point out not only to the differences between the perception and production of school textbooks in both developed and developing countries but also to the degree of the reliance of both spheres on textbooks as a source for instruction. Unlike affluent societies in developed nations, developing countries-by and large- appear to share the same shortage of resources (both financial and human) and lack of adequate infrastructure. In his book *textbooks in Kaleidoscope*, the Norwegian scholar Egil Borre Johnsen <sup>11</sup> (2001: np) claims “One common problem in Third World countries is a lack of schools and teachers, a situation which magnifies the importance of textbooks”. Thus, it would be counter-intuitive not to claim that the reliance on textbooks clearly characterizes classroom

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<sup>10</sup> This room is commonly known as حجرة الإعلام الآلي

<sup>11</sup> *The English version of the book is published online without the enumeration of pages on the following website address : [http :www-bib.hive.no/tekstet/kaleidoscope/chapter5.html](http://www-bib.hive.no/tekstet/kaleidoscope/chapter5.html). It was translated from Norse in 2001 by Linda Sivesind.*

practices in developing nations. He further states “In theory the influence of textbooks is potentially greater in developing countries than industrial ones” (*ibid.*). In the same vein, Podeh and Greenwood (2000: 7) maintain “While in the West, the textbook constitutes only one socialization instrument, the textbook in the Third World is considered overwhelmingly important and its influence is potentially greater than in the West”. However, it is no short of amazing to notice that in some Western countries, the production of quality school textbooks are meant to compensate for the poor quality of teaching.

High quality textbooks that characterize the instructional material in Western countries do not frequently indicate quality classroom instruction. Apple (1991: 9) quotes a critic of the American incompetent teachers “The poorer the teacher, the better the textbook need to be” (in Altbach 1991). Conversely, poor quality textbooks in developing countries do not imply that instruction is equally poor. Altbach notes “In the Third World, however, the choices in design and composition dramatically affect the cost of production” (*ibid.*). In different terms, with the view produce massively school textbooks to accommodate the growing numbers of schoolchildren, developing countries cut the “extra” expenses: glossy graphics, quality paper, binding that resists tear, thickness of the textbooks, and highly sophisticated artwork. Although, quality textbooks may turn to be appealing and motivating to stakeholders or constituencies,<sup>12</sup> it will have little effect if they are badly crafted. Altbach echoes “Regardless of the quality of production or number of pictures in a book, if it is written poorly it will not be an effective tool” (*ibid.*). Ironically, many developing countries produce poor quality and poorly written school textbooks. A case in point is *SOE 1*, which is the epitome of lack of reviewing and editing.

#### **2.4 Roles of the Textbooks/ Instructional Materials<sup>13</sup>**

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<sup>12</sup> Ebert and Cuyler (2001: 10) identify constituencies as “The groups of people to whom educators are responsible. They include students, parents, the community in general, the school administrators, and their colleagues.

<sup>13</sup> Instructional Materials are used interchangeably with textbooks.

Although textbooks are primarily and fundamentally meant for formal literacy and instruction, they cannot escape being the embodiment of much of nations' political, social, historical, cultural, and even psychological identities. Santos (2009: 1) assures that "textbooks are always value-laden and reflect worldviews particular to certain social groups. They are also effective tools in the reproduction and legitimization of these values and beliefs". Both the use and content give the textbook its overriding importance. Morrain (nd: 86) argues, "Le manuel scolaire est l'actant important dans la situation éducative, par son usage, mais aussi par son contenu". The roles of the textbook in education cannot be denigrated; it largely shapes the teaching-learning process beyond quantification. Rivers (1968: 475) states "The importance of textbook cannot be overestimated. It will inevitably determine the major part the classroom teaching and students' out-of-learning". It is no surprise, therefore, that the frequency of textbook use in today's classroom as well as in the past has not wavered the slightest. Again, we deem it of an overriding importance to reiterate Segueirsson (1992) who estimates that in the majority classrooms a rate as high as 50 to 80% of instructional time appears to be spent on direct work with materials. In the same vein, Thompson (2005: 264) reports:

In a recent survey of students' usage of textbooks in the US, the student respondents report that 94 percent of their classes require a textbook, 72 percent of classroom reading assignments are from textbook, and 70 percent of typical college exams come from a textbook, and the most important factors influencing the decision to buy a textbook are the extent to which class exams and class assignments are based on the material in the book.

The figures above amply demonstrate the importance accredited to textbooks in schools throughout the world.

The following table opposes the debts and credits of the perspectives of the roles of the textbooks. It may seem fair to not that despite the equal number of debts and credits, working with well-designed textbooks shape classroom interaction beyond measure.

Credits Roles	Debts Roles
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Textbooks promote the attitudes beliefs, values of the society.</li> <li>2. Textbooks fairly homogenize teaching and learning in educational settings.</li> <li>3. Textbooks provide for much of the information presented to teachers and learners.</li> <li>4. Textbooks direct, guide, and facilitate teaching and learning.</li> <li>5. Textbooks organize and systemize input delivery.</li> <li>6. Textbooks motivate both teachers and learners.</li> <li>7. Textbooks –if well designed and written- adds to the cognitive experience of both teachers and learners.</li> <li>8. Textbooks insure meaningful and reliable environment (Hassan and Raddatz, 2008).</li> <li>9. Textbooks may function as a suppliment to the teacher’s instruction (Abdul Samad and Noordin).</li> <li>10. Textbooks provide the foundation for the content lessons, balance of skills</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Too much reliance on the textbook will lead teachers to “deskilling”.</li> <li>2. Avoidance of critically studying textbooks causes “reification”.</li> <li>3. Imposed textbooks from authorities control and ban teachers’ creativity and autonomy</li> <li>4. If not updated in time, textbooks seem then to represent outmoded language and themes.</li> <li>5. Long use of textbooks may increase teachers’ frustration and boredom.</li> <li>6. Global textbooks may offend local culture.</li> <li>7. Local textbooks may promote personality cult (especially in non democratic societies).</li> <li>8. Local textbooks may present inauthentic sociolinguistic content.</li> <li>9. Textbooks may present stereotypes (racial, sexist or otherwise).</li> <li>10. Textbooks idealize life and individuals.</li> </ol>

taught, and language practice (idem).	
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**Table 14:** Roles of textbooks

Even with the advent of technology, textbooks are still a crucial element in EFL classes without which very little can be learned.

## 2.5 Textbook Industry Production

Globalization and technological revolution have combined to unite what the actual American administration calls the *community of nations*<sup>14</sup> for better or for worse. In a world very much different from the one left in the previous Millennium, this one seems to take advantage of every opportunity such as media, free trade, and cultural cooperation to make money. One such area of competition is the classrooms, which offer with their perennial need for up-to-date instructional resources an occasion to compete for privileges. On score of that, different inputs which come in different shapes, colors, contents, and utility are offered. As English has become the lingua franca of sciences and technology, it represents a precious opportunity to developing countries in particular to be part of global issues raised by English. Classroom textbooks have come to reflect that spirit: to enable learners from discussing global issues such as: development, environment, (migratory) pollution, global warming, AIDS, Swine Flu (namely H1N1), international terrorism, and international trade in that language. Therefore, English language learners (ELLs) are the target of textbooks either locally produced or globally produced.

Two terms are nowadays used to identify the two types of textbooks available in the market: *local textbooks* and *global textbooks*. As far as English teaching-learning is concerned, Britain and the USA have developed a thriving industry in textbook production for an international audience. Grin (nd: 7) estimates that “le Royaume Uni gagne, à titre net, au minimum 10 milliard d’Euros par année du fait de la dominance

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<sup>14</sup> A term coined by the sitting Nobel Prize awarded president of USA, Barack H. Obama, as an alternative for his predecessor’s (i.e., George W. Bush, Jr.) preferred term *international community*.

actuelle de l'anglais". Therefore, ELT textbook production is big business in Britain and the USA. Global textbooks are printed in quality paper and contain glossy pictures as well as audio-visual artifacts to lure diverse audience. They are developed along the following lines: general themes, different settings, different nationalities; situations come to be idealized to avoid racial, cultural, religious, sexist prejudice and/or offence, and the focus is often on survival skills in secular and liberal contexts. Global textbooks are particularly popular among private schools. In *New Interchange* (Student's Book), the authors propose in Unit 1, page two entitled "This is what friends are for", a dialog between two school friends or neighbors Chris and Kim. The dialog is about finding a date for a party. Kim seems to be an Anglo-American blonde, in her mid- or late teens, while Chris looks Asian-American. They are sitting on a wooden bench in a park and apparently, they have been jogging.

Chris: Do you have a date for the party yet?

Kim: Actually, I don't ... Do you think you could help me find one?

Chris: Hmm. What kind of guys do you like?

Kim: Oh, I like guys who aren't too serious and who have a good sense of humor. You know .. like you.

Chris: OK. What else?

Kim: Well, I'd prefer someone I have something in common with –who I can talk to easily.

Chris: I think I know just the guy for you. Bob Branson. Do you know him?

Kim: No, I don't think so.

Chris: Let me arrange for you to meet him, and you can tell me what you think.

This sequence can be extremely annoying in Arab and Islamic countries, where gender relationships and social values different from those of the West.

Many countries such as Algeria and Germany, whose sense of identity seems sufficiently sharp due to either foreign occupation or self-directed reasons, still favor locally-produced textbooks. It should be noted, however, that in post-independence Algeria, *global textbooks* were introduced and used as means of foreign language

(FL) instruction in Algerian schools. The first Algerian-made ELT textbook was written and disseminated in the early 1980s under the aegis of the late English Inspector-General Hocine Menasseri<sup>15</sup>. *Andy in Algeria* introduces Algerian third-year- middle- school students to an English reporter, Andy Parker, who has come to Algeria to visit an Algerian friend, Omar. Overall, the textbook was such a sensational instructional material especially as it compared local and FL cultures in a subtle way, it had soon been followed by a fourth year middle school entitled *Majid in England*. This time, an Algerian student, Majid, leaves for England where Algerian students are introduced to life in the UK. Unlike global textbooks, local textbooks are arguably more local context sensitive despite the many deficiencies. All in all, FL instruction in Algeria is primarily through locally produced textbooks, whereas some private schools allow global textbooks as part of their curriculum.

## 2.6 Objectives of the MS Textbooks/ Instructional Materials

School courses and subjects are structured around textbooks. The latter represents as Levin and Lockheed (1993: 22) denote “key ingredients in learning”. The claim that education and textbooks are practically symbiotic is intuitive and even may rise to being axiomatic. Furthermore, education and its subsequent products – schools and instructional materials- are value-laden, or to put in Goodlad’s words (2004: 30) “... schools implicitly teach values”. This assumption is also echoed by Cavender and Kahane (2009: 353) who substantiate that “The ultimate purpose of public schools is to educate the young to fit into the adult world. Textbooks are intended to provide students with knowledge they will need to be productive citizens and to inculcate the values, customs, and attitudes of the society as a whole”. In many classrooms around the world, textbooks are the linchpin of education. According to Ebert and Culyer (2011: 189) “... a textbook is supposed to provide depth and stimulate intellectual growth”. To achieve the intended requirements, clear-cut objectives must be first articulated, and only then curriculums designed and textbooks authored. Ideally, the

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<sup>15</sup> Mr. Hocine Menasseri was the first inspector-general of English teaching in Algeria in the aftermath of the Independence (July 5th, 1962).

positive interplay between resources (financial and human) and objectives of education and textbooks enhances better opportunities for optimal learning.

Levin and Lockheed (1993: 22) state “Learning materials that are known to enhance student achievement are textbooks, teacher’s guide, and other software”. School textbooks serve as tools to achieve the aims of education, the goals of the curriculum, and the objectives of the authors. They provide “information, organize the presentation of information in terms of scope and sequence, and provide students with opportunities to use what they learned” (*ibid.*). The following expands the *raison d’être* of textbooks:

Justifications of textbooks
<p>Textbooks serve as supportive pedagogical materials;</p> <p>They are facilitators of learning;</p> <p>They can enhance both the teachers’ and students’ motivation;</p> <p>They represent an opportunity for the gradability, learnability, and teachability of input;</p> <p>They informative as they provide a wealth of information;</p> <p>They are assessors and evaluators of the progress made (i.e., in learning);</p> <p>They are transmitters of values;</p>

**Table 15:** Justifications of school textbooks

Clearly, textbooks serve more objectives than one. On score of that, they are usually the cause of much passionate debates and contentions.

At a more micro-level, textbooks and the other instructional materials (IM) outline and embody the objectives of each school subject. Frequently, school subject textbooks telescope the entire curriculum and, therefore, the only opportunity to interact with, say, the native speakers of English. Chambliss and Calfee (1998:1) claim “The textbook is both the subject-matter authority and the heart of the instructional program”. Achour (2003: 4) outlines the objectives or to put it in his own

term “finalities” of the middle school textbooks of English (*SOE* 1+2+3 and *OTM*) in terms of three competencies that those students should master. It worth emphasizing that he defines *competency* as follows: “It is the know how (*sic*) which integrates and mobilizes a number of abilities and knowledge to be efficiently used in problem solving situations that have never been met before”. He states the three privileged competencies for first middle school: (1) interact orally in English, (2) interpret authentic oral or written documents, and (3) produce simple oral or written messages (*ibid.*). For the second middle school, Bouhadiba *et al.* (2004: 4) outline four (04) basic aims: (1) to provide motivating materials that allow pupils to respond in real life situations in which English is spoken, (2) to teach an appropriate language that can be put to immediate use, in both speaking and writing, (3) to teach authentic English, and (4) to give pupils a feeling of success and achievement in language learning.

## **2.7 Availability of the MS Textbooks/ Instructional Materials**

The impact of the availability of instructional resources on teaching and learning appears to be an established fact according to recent findings. In one such study, the figures collected corroborate the fact that in schools where “a high number of pupils to the number of textbooks (fewer textbooks) available have lower mathematics and English test scores compared with those who are in schools with lower ratio of pupils to textbooks” (Nannyonjo 2007: 2). Easy access to the schools textbooks helps student achieve better and teachers instruct better. In the same study, teachers have expressed their belief that “if textbooks are available and put to use the time that would otherwise been used for copying work from the teacher’s copy to the blackboard is saved” (*ibid.*). Moreover, students with easy access to textbooks would personalize their teaching “textbooks availability would also allow for more personal study” (*ibid.*). The availability of textbooks in time and in sufficient quantities should be, therefore, a priority for a quality teaching and optimal learning.

Algerian Ministry of National Education (MNE) strives to meet the increasing demands on school textbooks. A priori, the demands seem incessant as the number of the schoolchildren continues to flood schools and frustrate the few government

initiatives to limit the negative effects of this war of attrition. Every year, the authorities print millions of textbooks to satisfy its obligations toward the teaching-learning community. Besides, the large student population<sup>16</sup>, MNE needs to face the large numbers of school subjects in pre-tertiary phases, which appear to be all considered core subjects. The following table illustrates the subjects in the primary, middle and high schools.

Pre-Tertiary Phases	Textbook titles for (Core) Subjects
Primary School	39 (all years and subjects taken together)
Middle School	41 (all years and subjects taken together)
High (Secondary) School	68 (all years and subjects taken together)

**Table 16:** Textbook titles for school subjects

The National Authority for School Publications (OPNS) has therefore printed 148 school textbook titles. The quantities of textbooks made available to students constantly continue to rise. For instance, in 2008, the OPNS produced three times more textbooks than in 1999, and between 2003-2008, it produced 221 082, 294 textbooks, which means it was able to cover 105% of the needs. More textbooks are made available in the coming years. By 2010-2011, around 60 million textbooks were produced. It is worth of note to mention that OPNS has a stock of more than 3 million textbooks as yet (for further figure see Appendix). It seems paradoxical to note that every year the OPNS fails for some reason to sell 28 million textbooks.

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<sup>16</sup> In 2010-2011, the school population counted according to official sources 8 476, 700 students (<http://www.letempsdz.com/content/views/45097/1/>)

Textbook availability appears to be problematic in Algeria. Tens of millions of textbooks come to be produced at hundreds of millions of dollars with seemingly a temporary *relief effect* without actually eradicating the problem. A priori, the colossal production, timely supply and delivery of textbooks seem to be a war of attrition that chips away at the national budget as well as self-worth. A technical challenge at a period of financial opulence should not be enduring. Clearly, the problem of textbook availability lies in the mismanagement of resources and shortage of efficient initiatives and schemes to reduce the huge financial and moral attrition caused by this rush to print school textbooks. School textbook market, infra-structures, stakeholders' needs, and management skills need to be understood fully and constantly assessed and evaluated. There appears to be a recurrent pattern in the Algerian school textbook market that only through incessant research would reveal itself in its full splendor. The factors that control it ought to be identified, and eventually reshape their course so that they work together in harmonious synergy. Top-down consultation must be *de rigueur* all the time. As a final note, objectives should clearly set and sustainable resources provided timely.

### **2.7.1 Quantity of the MS Textbooks/ Instructional Materials**

School textbook production and supply is big business and a complex undertaking. For many countries the provision of sufficient quantities represents an insurmountable challenge. Altbach (1991: 239) maintains “Textbook concerns differ from country to country. For many parts of the Third World, the problem is simply to provide a sufficient number of books to school children”. Besides being an economic burden, the production and supply of textbooks to a large population of students is also deeply entrenched in politics. Altbach (*ibid.* 243) states:

Textbooks are among the most political of commodities. In a sense, textbooks define the nature of education. They embody legitimate knowledge. They are perceived as a powerful teaching tool and content as one of the key determining of what gets taught in schools. The content

of the textbooks is thus highly political and often terrains for battles over the nature of education, and sometimes over important issues are interpreted.

The budget to cover the expenses of the production and supplying textbooks to a variety of stakeholders is a highly politically debated issue. What is more, the provision of sufficient quantities is tightly interrelated to the number of the students enrolled in the school system.

Governments usually encounter a huge problem that needs to be urgently addressed: Who is supposed to print the large quantities of textbooks? And how efficient that may be? Developing countries rely mostly on the private sector, whereas developing countries either count on their former colonizers to print for them but at affordable prices, or they may invite local publishers to print textbooks. Textbooks locally produced demonstrate various deficiencies and salient lack of efficiency. In its annual report the World Bank (2008: 59) minutely reports that “local publishers not only lack the back list and the investment finance to complete head to head with multinationals, they also are often short of textbook publishing experience and basic publishing skills ...”. These assertions are echoed by a Cameroonian workshop analysis of the deplorable state of locally-produced textbooks, which concluded in 2005 that (1) authors were not rigorous enough, (2) the books were not professionally copy-edited and were full of typos and factual mistakes, (3) they were little editorial supervision or quantity control, (4) binding, paper, and cover quality were poor, and finally (5) prices were too high (*ibid.*). These factors may be claimed to be the cause of the shortage of textbooks and their untimely supplies.

In Algeria, textbooks are traditionally printed by the public sector. For a quarter of a century, Algeria adopted the socialist model, which favored public over private property. On score of that, textbook production and distribution come under the

jurisdiction of government agencies. The National Authority for School Publication<sup>17</sup> (otherwise known as, ONPS) comes to be identified as the governmental body in charge of printing school textbooks, whereas the Centre National de Documentation Pédagogique (CNDP) assures the distribution across the country. In recent years, however, the traditional government agencies raised a number of concerns over the government's decision to give the lion's share to private publishing houses to print school textbooks. A posteriori, the budget devoted to school textbook printing seems luring: The government has devoted DA 5.5 billion (c. US \$ 74, 829.58) to print 52 244 139 textbooks. In the school year 2009-10, the private sector printed 23 millions of textbooks copies of which eight millions were printed by the *Aures Company* and followed by *Al-Hillel Printing House*, *Dar Houma* and *Al-Nakhil Printing House*. In the same school year, ONPS only printed three (3) million copies, which was perceived as a blatant disparity by the 1800 workers of the aforementioned agency. In theory, this huge figure should suffice the growing numbers of students, which are estimated to more than seven (7) millions of school girls and boys (*see Appendix*).

### **2.7.2 Dissemination of the MS Textbooks/ Instructional Materials**

The production and distribution of textbooks are highly sensitive worldwide. This view is echoed by Altbach (1991: 244) who states “Throughout the world, there is a growing debate about how textbooks can be most effectively and efficiently produced and marketed”. Political, economic, psychological, and social considerations are at the crux of textbook production and dissemination. Altbach asserts “Producing and distributing textbooks is a highly complex undertaking” (*ibid.*). For better or worse, developing countries have one major concern: to find local authors to write local textbooks to cut down costs in textbook import expenses from the former colonizer, to spare historical inconsistencies, to reduce racial prejudices, and to avoid cultural shock. Altbach observes that “in the Third World, the problem is simply to locate

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<sup>17</sup>This is the official English translation of *Office National des Publications Scolaires* (ONPS) as it is acknowledged on *On the Move* (Book 4).

authors with the needed qualifications to write textbooks” (*ibid.* 250). In brief, textbook issue is ultimately political. Altbach (*ibid.* 244) explains:

... the question of who makes decisions about the content, orientation, publication, and distribution of textbooks is embedded in politics. Such decisions have significant economic implications, since textbook publishing is a major segment of the publishing enterprise in any country. Moreover, it is potentially lucrative because textbook publishing is relatively predictable in the costs of distribution are low since publishers can sell in large quantities directly to sell districts. Thus publishing interests often struggle over access to textbook markets.

Therefore, the production and dissemination of textbook is competitive, lucrative, and sensitive.

In Algeria, the funding, production, publishing, and distribution of school textbooks and subsequent pedagogical materials are the department of the State agencies, i.e., Ministry of National Education (MNE), The National Center of Pedagogical Documentation (aka, CNDP<sup>18</sup>), The National Authority for School Publications (aka, ONPS<sup>19</sup>) and The National Institute of Research in Education (aka, INRE<sup>20</sup>). It should be note, however, that one aspect is missing: printing. Some claimed that the recent *Spotlight on English* series (1+2+3) and *On the Move* (Book 4) had been printed abroad due to the fact that they had been printed on quality paper and the high definition of typefaces as well as pictures. It may seem paradoxical to notice that there exists no clue as to who printed (indigenous or foreign) the textbooks and where. The CNDP is the State’s body which undertakes to deliver the approved textbooks by the the *Commission d’homologation et d’approbation* (INRE) to its depots across the national territory. The headmasters of schools are the

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<sup>18</sup> Centre National de Documentation Pédagogique : المركز الجهوي لتوثيق البيداغوجي

<sup>19</sup> Office National des Publications Scolaires : الديوان الوطني للمطبوعات المدرسية

<sup>20</sup> Institut National de Recherche en Education : المعهد الوطني للبحث في التربية

responsible for the acquisition of textbooks and transportation to their schools and later sold to students. This long process often causes disturbances in the transactions and number of books delivered. Students are usually reported to complain of not being able to obtain enough textbooks. CNDP offers the school textbooks for a limited period beyond which they must be sent back to central *dépôts*. In such a case, parents search for secondhand textbooks in the flea markets at much lower prices.

### 2.7.3 Prices of the MS Textbooks/ Instructional Materials

When schools start in September, parents -and teachers among other civil servants- go through a stressful period over the high prices of school things and gadgets. In a country overtaken by high inflation, low income and weak buying power, school comeback is a period of big spending tout court, especially as this school year (2009-2010) different colored outfits were required by the Ministry<sup>21</sup>. Additionally, middle school textbooks are a true concern as the prices are skyrocketing if we also bear in mind that textbooks are no longer subsidized by the government. The following table illustrates the prices of middle school textbooks over the four-year period.

Grade/ Year Middle School	Textbooks Prices (all the school subjects)
1 <sup>st</sup> Year Middle School	DA <sup>22</sup> 1, 590
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year Middle School	DA 1, 770
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year Middle school	DA 1, 920

<sup>21</sup> Schoolboys are required to be clad in blue overalls whereas schoolgirls in pink ones. This gender-biased policy has taken both teachers and parents off-guard and caused their resentment.

<sup>22</sup> DA stands for Dinars Algériens. The change rates of the Algerian Dinars are €1= DA 120 and \$= DA 71

4 <sup>th</sup> Year Middle School	DA 2, 020
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**Table 17:** Middle school textbooks prices

It is worth of note to mention that ten core subjects are incorporated in the middle school's curriculum. The overall price of the textbooks amounts to DA 7300, 00, which is by all accounts a large sum of money in Algeria. Although the English textbooks are printed on quality paper with a large amount of album-like photos and hundreds of pages, they do not figure among the most expensive textbooks. In the following table, the prices of the English textbook are illustrated.

Grade/ Middle school Year	Title	Prices
1 <sup>st</sup> Year Middle School	Spotlight on English 1	DA 120
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year Middle School	Spotlight on English 2	DA 140
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year Middle School	Spotlight on English 3	DA 190
4 <sup>th</sup> Year Middle School	On the Move book4	DA 210

**Table 18:** Prices of middle school English textbooks

The overall price of the middle school textbooks reaches DA 660, which may be a day's pay for a good number of civil servants in many sectors. In the next table, the percentages of the MS English textbooks are estimated in comparison with the other subjects in each grade.

Grade/ Year Middle School	Percentage of MS textbooks
1 <sup>st</sup> Year Middle School	

	8.16%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year Middle School	8.58%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year Middle School	10.98%
4 <sup>th</sup> Year Middle School	11.60%
Overall %	9.83%

**Table 19:** Percentage of middle School English textbooks

As illustrated, textbooks prices pose a real economic pressure on parents and teachers (both as parents and professionals). If separated from other textbooks, English textbooks barely reach 10% of the overall prices of the middle school instructional materials. Nonetheless, their prices are particularly challenging especially to those low-income families which count by hundreds of thousands. As a matter of fact, the Algerian population below poverty line <sup>23</sup>is estimated at 25% in 2005, which means that the quarter of the total population is actually poor, and cannot afford to purchase the required textbooks.

This critical situation has been such daunting to both parents and authorities as a quick action seems necessary to alleviate the financial burden. Mr. Boubakeur Benbouzid, the sitting Minister of National Education, has decided to reduce the overall prices across grades down to 10% in this school year (2009-2010). The following table illustrates the textbooks prices reduction.

	Total Previous Prices	Total Reduced Prices (-10%)
1 <sup>st</sup> Year Middle School	DA 1, 590	DA 1, 431
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year Middle		DA 1, 593

<sup>23</sup> This percentage was expected to fall in 2009 to as low as 8.8% according to the same source.

School	DA 1, 770	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Year Middle School	DA 1, 920	DA 1, 728
4 <sup>th</sup> Year Middle School	DA 2, 020	DA 1, 818
Overall	DA 7, 300	DA 6, 570

**Table 20:** Textbooks prices reduction

Even with this reduction, the middle schools textbooks prices are still staggering by all accounts if we bear in mind that many Algerian families have more than one child either in the stage or other. Another alternative to reduce both the shortage of textbooks (about 7 million copies up until 2007-8 school year)<sup>24</sup> and high prices, disfavored families and teachers' children had free access to textbooks. In a middle school we visited to collect most of the data above, he took a personal initiative to ask leaving students at the end of year to give away their textbooks in favor of poor students. The initiative was a success as most students who could not afford a textbook received one or more according to their needs.

#### **2.7.4 Textbook Rental Scheme (TRS)**

Meeting the needs of an ever-increasing school population in terms of textbooks is an ongoing challenge. In order to take measures to ensure timely production and supply of textbooks, and to be able to overcome the shortage of textbooks in a number of schools across the country, not only the number of birth rates<sup>25</sup> needs to be considered, but also resources need to be marshaled, and creative measures need to be put forward all the time. The World Bank (WB) authors of *Textbooks and School Library Provision in Secondary Education in Sub-Saharan Africa* (2008: 19) lay out “Textbook rental schemes operate when schools loan textbooks to students at the beginning of the school year for fee and collect the books back at the end of the year for the re-use in subsequent years”. It would be intuitive to claim that such projects

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<sup>24</sup> According to *El Watan* newspaper (September 3rd, 2007)

<sup>25</sup> CIA Fact Book reports that the birth rate in Algeria is estimated at 16.71/1,000 population in 2010.

are acclaimed and sustained by poor families and low-income communities as a practical solution to the shortage and imbalance in the supply of textbooks. In many parts of the world the prices of textbooks are beyond the price range of many families especially in the Third World. In their report (2008: 185) on *South Africa*, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) recognizes that “A number of countries use ‘textbook rental schemes’ as a way to reduce the cost of material provision”. TRS seem to be a temporary solution to the ills of textbook shortages and/ or degradation.

Drawing upon various readings, the advantages and disadvantages are juxtaposed. The premise is to demonstrate the viability of such projects in countries with limited resources and/ or technical disturbances (dated printing machines, poor quality of paper, inadequacy in fair distribution of textbook because the expansion of the territory, etc.)

Advantages of TRS	Disadvantages of TRS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. TRS are usually preferred to parental purchasing systems</li> <li>2. Initial investment is much reduced</li> <li>3. Equity in textbook access</li> <li>4. Poor textbook availability can be obviated</li> <li>5. TRS reduces the annual financial burden on the both the states and schools budgets</li> <li>6. TRS ensure money for the replacement of torn and/ or worn textbooks</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. TRS are difficult to implement (few noticeable exceptions)</li> <li>2. TRS add to the financial burden on states and schools budgets</li> <li>3. TRS threatens the profits of both private and public sectors (workers may be laid off or licensed).</li> <li>4. More chores on school administrators and teachers.</li> </ol>

**Table 21:** Advantages & disadvantages of TRS (drawn upon OECD, Verspoor, and WB)

Clearly, TRS represents an opportunity to come to the assistance of an otherwise burdened (both financially and socially, i.e., large family) community, especially in developing countries. Verspoor (2008: 157) asserts “Notwithstanding these challenges, these schemes represent an opportunity for improving the availability of textbooks ...”. In short, TRS can help to a large degree appease the daunting consequences of faulty production and supply of textbooks.

In Algeria, MNE has taken serious steps, though by no means exhaustive and/ or efficient, to meet the frustrating challenges posed by the high prices, shortages of textbooks, and availability of textbooks. The prices of textbooks have been cut by 10% (*see* the previous section), and TRS has been adopted. The Algerian version of TRS is not payable as in many other African countries; faithful to its welfare projects of the socialist state, Algeria rents textbooks to middle school students free of charge. Reference newspapers such as *Le Quotidien d’Oran* reported that in the school year 2005-2006, Mr. Benbouzid, the acting Minister of National Education *revoked* the loan scheme over managerial problems. Furthermore, tear and wear affect great numbers of textbooks once returned at the end of the year. The Minister declared to the national press that “C’est la gestion qui posait problem. Louer des livres a 7,5 millions d’élèves n’est pas chose aisée, et le plus souvent .. ces manuels retournaient amputés de pages”. In the 2010-2011 school year, however, the Loan and Loan-Purchase Scheme (L-LPS) was reconsidered, especially as the number of the underprivileged students is estimated at more than three (03) millions. During the same year, the MNE devoted a budget of DA 852 billion (US \$ 117 339,209) of which 7.62% or DA 6.5 (c. US \$ 8 951, 935) billion worth of textbooks to needy students<sup>26</sup>.

### **2.7.5 Weight of the Textbooks/ Instructional Materials**

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<sup>26</sup> These figures are drawn from various national newspaper sources both in Arabic and French.

It may appear ironical to note that textbooks are often judged by their covers (esthetically well-designed as well as well-bound) and content, but almost never by their weight. Recently, both lay-people and scholars have noticed that schoolbags are constantly filled with heavy loads of textbooks, copybooks, and school furniture of all kinds, shapes and weight. It is not uncommon to see leaning schoolchildren because of the weight of their loads. From primary school all through the middle school to high school years, students are required to carry their loads of books and copybooks to the classrooms; they are also required to return all that they have brought with them once the classes finish- and in many cases- over long distances. Consequently, these strenuous physical efforts directly affect their biological development. It is worth emphasizing that developing countries fail to take appropriate measure to control schoolchildren's loads. In the same vein, Koletzlo *et al* (2008: 118) state "monitoring growth is ... important tool for assessing the health and wellbeing of children, especially in countries where other diagnostic tools are scarce". What is more, poor food habits especially in developing countries do not favor normal growth. Middle school students are adolescents who need better food habits to endure hardships caused by learning and subsequent circumstances. Koletzlo *et al.* corroborate "At this age, many nutritional problems arise and become prevalent: inadequate growth patterns, anemia, excess weight and some situations that could indirectly affect nutritional balance such as sport, stress, menarche, etc." (*ibid.*). Bulging schoolbags may be a threat to normal biological growth.

Textbook critics such as Durkin harshly comments on the disparity between textbook weight and content, he observes that textbooks are "heavy in weight but light in substance" (cited in Altbach 1991: 33). Clearly, textbook loads and heavy weight coupled with long distance take their toll on already poorly fed children. Adolescent students' health risks injury enormously with the increasing weight of textbooks and the other materials. Cavanaugh (2005: 2) reports that "Doctors suggest that to avoid physical injury, one should never carry more than 10% of one's body weight". The table below juxtaposes the weight of the Algerian middle school textbooks.

Subjects	Year 1	Year2	Year3	Year4	Percentage
Arabic	447.8 g	662 g	369.6 g	334 g	18.13%
Amazigh/Berber					
French	311.5 g	385 g	447 g	400 g	15.43%
English	279.2 g	297 g	392 g	302 g	12.70%
Mathematics	338.5 g	474.9 g	433 g	585 g	18.31%
Physics & Technology	361.2 g	451.3 g	490.6 g	393.3 g	16.96%
Science of Nature & Life	253.1 g	367 g	418.6 g	336 g	13.74%
Islamic Education	196.5 g	239.8 g	180.3 g	103.9 g	7.20%
Civic Education	216.6 g	165.1 g	263.5 g	286.2 g	9.31%
History	199.5 g	374.3 g	362 g	354.1 g	12.89%
Geography	270.5 g	244.1 g	333 g	297 g	11.44%
Musical Education					
Plastic Education					
Physical & Sports Education					
Total	2874.4 g	3660.4 g	3689.6 g	3391.5 g	

**Table 22:** Middle school textbooks weight

Luckily, middle school students need not carry all their materials at the same time. As a general rule, they attend two to four sessions in the morning and two to three sessions in the afternoon. All in all, they may attend four to seven sessions a day (namely, 4 to 7 hours per day). Besides, the regular class attendance, they need to

cover the home-to-school distance four times a day on regular basis, which eventually adds to their ordeal of carrying heavy schoolbags.

### **2.7.6 Textbook Life Expectancy**

School textbooks life expectancy is yet another issue that is frequently taken for granted. Ironically, lay-people appear never to question the longevity of their children's textbook except when these tear or wear. In developing countries, ministries of education and textbooks writers/ authors feel complacent. As long as no school reforms are looming large in the horizon, textbooks are either renovated and/ or replaced. In theory, textbooks in Third World countries are not reviewed and/ or edited once published. In case of inconsistencies, the curriculum is slimmed down and/ or reshuffled. A case in point, the previous middle schools textbooks of English lasted for almost two decades despite harsh criticism. *Spring 1+2* were uninterruptedly been used as from the mid eighties to the 2002. The obsolescence of information, overuse, tear and wear chipped away at the usability of the textbooks. Middle school were relieved when the new series of textbooks were implemented, which accounts for the *reification* of the new curriculum. Most teachers could not perceive the print and pedagogical inconsistencies that denigrated the value and worth of the textbooks. Textbooks are expendable like any other school material. School textbooks life span need to be explicitly expressed so that replacement and innovation are planned.

A priori, school textbooks longevity is measured and defined in different ways. Politics, economy, the culture of the society, the literacy of the community, and the awareness of the individuals who handle and use these pedagogical materials influence the longevity of the materials in question. The adoption of new reforms sweeps away the previous textbooks and the teaching methodologies. As instructional materials are of low quality in Third World countries, textbooks life span is dramatically reduced. If it were not for the determination of the ministries of education to sustain the use of the textbooks, they would not outlive few years. Rao (2003: 94) states that, on average, textbooks are expected to last three to five years.

Students' frequent if careless use of the textbooks hastens the tear and wear of these instructional tools. Usually, immature use (greasy hands, damp grip, and frequent, careless scribbling on the pages of the textbooks) degrades instructional materials. The recent Algerian middle school textbooks seem to be printed on better quality paper. Still, the pictures look dim and of low definition. It should be noted that overused textbooks are still in circulation with the same persistent inconsistencies (especially *Spotlight on English 1*).

### **2.7.7 Textbook Authorship**

The writing of school textbooks has proved a highly complex undertaking but frequently excluded from official and public discussions and, therefore, underexplored. This view is also echoed by Altbach (1991: 249) who observes that “the author (or authors) are (*sic*) the most important ingredient of textbook quality and it is surprising that little attention is paid to the nature of textbook authorship in debates about textbook quality and development”. Differently sated, textbook quality correlates with the quality of authorship behind the conception, design, and development of the school textbooks. Highly acclaimed textbooks reflect the quality, expertise, and knowledge of the authorship. The development of school textbooks is a lengthy and effortful process wherein different stakeholders interplay. Moreover, the development of school textbooks is the product of many participants who work under certain financial, logistic, and psychological constraints. Altbach states that “A textbook is written with many constraints and many participants” (*ibid.*) who might come under a great deal of pressure and stress during the process of writing. Marsden (2001: 191) reports an overriding inquiry: “How acceptable is the nature of the preparation and experience of the author, in order to qualify him for writing the textbook?”. Perhaps that accounts for the existence of official body within ministries of education to authorize and/ or approve textbooks.

In developing countries, the setting up of a team to develop school textbooks does not emerge problematic. Altbach succinctly notes “In the Third World countries, the problem is simply to locate authors with the needed qualifications to write the

textbook’’ (*op.cit.* 250). As the government is in control of the whole process, from elusive aims to the delivery of textbooks and subsequent instructional materials, then the real challenge is to designate the suitable people to author the required materials according to the standards already set. At the other end of the spectrum, the developing countries invest so much in developing school textbooks. Altbach (*ibid.* 249) explains:

More and more frequently, in the United States and increasingly in other industrialized nations, textbooks are written by teams of people rather than by a single author. Frequently, much of the actual writing is done by writers hired by the publisher with supervision from experts in the field.

While in the developing countries, the government and the ministries of education which are the initiators of textbook writing and production, the publishers, in the developed countries, assume those responsibilities by gaging the needs and/ or recommendations of the governments. Although, teams of writers develop textbooks in both spheres, only in developing countries, textbooks never seem to be supervised and/ or well-edited by “experts in the field”, which may account for the innumerable errors.

We believe that would be useful for our purpose to differentiate between ‘author a textbook’’<sup>27</sup> and “write a textbook’’ in school contexts. Oftentimes these two terms are attributable to the same semantic field: to produce a written material. Basically, they differ as to who expresses ideas and thoughts. Etymologically, anyone who scribbles something is a writer, while to author something refers to the “father, creator, and originator’’ of a written material. Aron<sup>28</sup> (2011) believes:

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<sup>27</sup> In Arabic, an author is translated to ‘المؤلف’ and writer to ‘الكاتب’. All school textbooks are unanimous on the appellation.

<sup>28</sup><http://www.differencebetween.com/difference-author-and-vs-writer/>

The aim of an author is the completion of the book that he writes. Once he completes writing the book he can be called author. He may or may not continue writing thereafter. On the other hand a writer continues to write until the last breath of his life. He does not stop writing altogether.

Algerian middle school textbook “producers” call themselves authors, which seems compatible with the identification above. Still, they fail to acknowledge their degrees, academic careers, and seniority. In the following table, the team of authors of the middle school textbooks of English is outlined.

Schoolbooks	Authors
<i>Spotlight on English 1</i>	Merazka, L., Guerdjoudj, O., Mekaoui, O., Achour, K., Ameziane, H., Bouhadiba, F., Riche, B. & Tamrabt, L.
<i>Spotlight on English 2</i>	Farouk Bouhadiba+ Wahiba Gueoudj+Zehour Torche
<i>Spotlight on English 3</i>	Amaziane, H+ Khouas N+ Louadj, K+ Riche, B.
<i>On the Move (Book 4)</i>	Si-Abderrahmane Arab+ Bouteldja Riche

**Table 23:** Middle school textbook authors

The authors of the series of the middle school English textbooks acknowledge their professional titles in the magazine that they have issued in (2003). The table below displays the authors and their professional titles:

Number	Authors Full Names	Professional Rank	Administrative Address

01	Bensemene Faiza	University Teacher (UT)	University of Algiers
02	Meliani Rouag	UT	Kasdi Merbah University of Ouargla
03	Riche Boutheldja	UT	Tizi-Ouzou University
04	Benaziza Houria	High School Inspector (HSI)	Constantine
05	Benarbia Zehour	HSI	Algiers
06	Achour Khelifa	HSI	Tizi-Ouzou
07	Bouahmadouche Zahra	Middle School Inspector (MSI)	Algiers
08	Temrabet Lounis	MSI	Setif
09	Boufedji Ghania	Teacher Trainer (TT)	Institut Technologique d'Education- Ben-Aknoun
10	Kal Zoubida	TT	ITE-Ben-Aknoun
11	Kedoudj Khadidja	Researcher	INRE
12	Kahria Fouzia	High School Teacher (HST)	Al-Mokrani 2 High School
13	Wahmed Nouredine	HST	Emir Abdelkader High School of Touggrouit
14	Mekaoui Ouzna	HST	Abbane Ramdane High School of

			Tizi-Ouzou
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**Table 24:** The GSD (anglais) team (2000)

The GSD (anglais) is headed by Mrs. Merazga Lakria and Dr. Si-Abderrahmane Arab. It should be noted, however, that not all the team completed the writing of the textbook series. The former occupies the post of middle school general-inspector, whereas the latter is a former university teacher.

## **2.8 Quantitative Survey of MS Textbooks/ Instructional Materials**

The following section aims to provide a quantitative approach to the middle school textbooks of English. This endeavor is premised by the fact that the different artistic, linguistic, pedagogical, and didactic aspects have an emotional footing on both agents of the teaching-learning process.

### **2.8.1 General Layout**

Badly conceived school textbooks are intimidating. Conversely, well-organized, well-crafted, and well-elaborated textbooks add enormously to the enjoyment of learning. The matching of estheticism to the easy access to knowledge engages meaningfully, motivates beyond measure, and promotes self-esteem and positive attitudes of both agents of the teaching-learning process. By the same token, Chambliss and Calfee (1998: 4-5) state that “... a well-crafted textbook offers the best of two worlds, serving as a wise ‘master’ while leading children through richly informative exercises”. A well-thought-of and well-proportioned layout, clear structure, easy reference, glossy graphic imagines, well-designed anthropometry, and well-balanced and legible typeface all help bridge book learning, or *learning by knowing*, and *learning by doing*. In the same breath, Chambliss and Calfree assert “Book learning, learning by knowing, often amounts to little more than memorizing meaningless statements. But if a book is properly designed then book learning can lead to expertise more efficiently...” (*ibid.* 4). Textbooks are, therefore, something of

an *objet d'art* that fosters intellectual growth and promotes meaningful engagement of both teachers and students. A priori, it is not surprising to claim that textbook layout and organization are a real concern of textbook authors: Either it is officially authorized<sup>29</sup> and sells, or it may be rejected.

Textbook layout refers to the blueprint of the textbook. The schematic plan and/ or arrangement of items or sequences of school textbooks are broadly called layout. Graham (2005: 4) defines layout as “the design and placement of visual elements on a page”. Layout is not randomly designed; rather, it is in direct correlation with the nature of the targeted audience. Graham (*ibid.*) explains:

The more you know about your audience, the better equipped you are to attract their attention and communicate your message. Knowing more about your audience’s demographics (age, gender, education, occupation, income, marital status, and so on) will help you target your audience and speak to them in a voice they will understand.

Layout emerges a factor of attraction and communication of the authors’ intentions and message. Failing to consider that will only negatively affect the whole teaching-learning process. In this section, layout is taken in its broadest meaning to include design, organization, and structure of the textbooks and their different sections. The Algerian textbook authors of the middle school textbooks of English have produced a much better textbooks in comparison with the previous ones in terms of quality paper, binding, graphic images, proportion of typeface and pictures, and color. It appears, however, the *Spotlight on English (SOE)* series and *On the Move (OTM)* are crowded in terms of sequences, rubrics, activities, graphic pictures, drawings, anthropometrics, typeface, and colors. In The *Second English Coursebook (SEC)*, the margin is practically used. The same observation can be generalized to SOE 3 and

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<sup>29</sup> Countries like Algeria and Japan have authorization bodies in the ministries of education to authorize the approval of textbooks. In Algeria, this body is known as : la Commission d’homologation et d’approbation (CHA). In the USA, some states adopt a narrow list of textbooks to be used in schools ; they are called *Adoption States (AS)*.

to, a lesser degree, *OTM*. All the textbooks are structured around sequences (*see* Appendix). To conclude, the middle school textbooks of English are in breach of Graham's recommendations.

Yet another intimidating observation: Owing to the complex nature of the middle school textbooks of English in terms of layout, students are frustrated from taking the initiative to study on their own. They all flip the textbooks for the graphic pictures but would not endeavor to go beyond that without their teachers being in their vicinity to come to their assistance. It may seem perplexing that all the directions and even the address to the students are written in English to non-native speakers and whose knowledge of the FL is still patchy, shaky, and unreliable. Basically, *SOE* 1+2+3 and *OTM* are teacher-centered despite the clear claim of the authors that they have designed textbooks to honor learner-centeredness. Arab *et al.* (2005:4) declare that "The approach is competency-based, *the method learner-centered*, and the general layout roughly the same (as *SOE*1+2)" (**boldface** not in the original). Learner-centeredness can be achieved by empowering students to use textbooks by including prompts, if necessary in L1. Siebörger (2006) states:

Textbooks should be clearly structured and illustrated in a way which is easily accessible to learner by, for example, an overview or summary at the beginning or ends of each section, guiding questions and tasks, and hints for the students how to work with given materials, etc. (cited in Foster and Crawford 2006: 234).

In a nutshell, *SOE* series and *OTM* represent an opportunity for highly motivated, skillful, already-knowing the language students. Nonetheless, for (false) beginner students, they are intimidating.

### 2.8.2 Competencies

The authors of the Algerian middle school textbooks of English voice their adherence to the Competency-Based Approach to foreign language teaching. In *Spotlight on English (Book Three)*, the authors<sup>30</sup> (2005: 4) clearly state in “To the Teacher” the following: “On the whole, *Spotlight on English Book 3* builds on the format of *Spotlight on English Book 2*. The approach is competency-based, the method learner-centered and the general layout roughly the same” (**boldface** in the text). The Competency-Based Approach (CBA) brought with it an equivocal term competency. Competency is taken to mean competence by most people who are clearly not aware and/ or familiar with language teaching methodologies especially performance- based ones. Bowden (2004: 6) identifies *competency* as a term which derives from competence and it constitutes its diminutive. Competency is taken to mean skill, or the necessary ability, authority or knowledge to perform a task. Learning by doing is therefore at the fulcrum of education. In Burns and Klingstedt (1973: 42), Burns explains “The most striking feature of CBE obviously is competency, which is synonymous with the concept of ability. At the end of instruction, in competency education, the learner is to have acquired the ability or skill to do –do something- since doing is the essence”. Learners are no more reactive but active.

Basically, CBA aims at the identification and nurturing of the learners’ lifelong potential to seek to acquire knowledge. At the hub of optimal achievement is the accommodation of the stakeholders’ expectations, needs, wants, and learning styles. In Burns and Klingstedt (*ibid.* 8), Klingstedt substantiates

Since the emphasis in CBE is on achievement of specified objectives and not the ranking of learners, an effort is made to increase the probability of learner success by providing different instructional routes from which the learner may select the most compatible with his/ her unique learning styles.

Ideally, textbooks and other instructional materials as well as media to attain the desired behavioral objectives are utilized. The themes and tasks should encourage the

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<sup>30</sup> The authors are S. A. Arab (General Editor), H. Amaziane, N. Khouas, L. Louadji, and B. Riche.

learners' meaningful engagement, develop their background knowledge and experience, promote their interpersonal competencies, and their sense of leadership. Drawn upon Anema and McCoy's identification of competencies that learners need to develop, an illustrative table is drawn below.

Competencies (i.e., Skills)	Subject Matter
Basic Skills	Reading, writing, mathematics, speaking, and listening.
Thinking Skills	Thinking creatively, decision making, and problem solving
Personal Qualities	Individual responsibility, self-esteem, social skills, managing self, and integrity
Interpersonal and Managerial Skills	Organizing innovation, and managing change, etc.

**Table 25:** List of foundational and advanced competencies (drawn upon Anema & McCoy 2010: 5)

The authors of the Algerian middle school English curriculum have managed to include the Project rubric around which the whole file revolves. Bouhadiba <sup>31</sup>*et al* (2004: 3) announce that “The **Project** is not only limited to being the target of every file, but it is also considered the linchpin of the teaching-learning process”. At this stage, peer and group work are favored and eventually encouraged. The challenges that teachers may face are class size (i.e., over crowdedness), students may feel embarrassed to speak other than in their L1, and they make considerable noise when they meet in confined spaces *à l'algerienne*.

### 2.8.3 Content

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<sup>31</sup> This researcher has himself translated the passage from Arabic into English with the approval of the supervisor. Thus reads the Arabic original text : "لا يقتصر المشروع على كونه غاية كل ملف بل إنه يعتبر كذلك محور المسار التعليمي"

Content refers to the amount of facts, information, and knowledge to be taught by teachers and learned by students. In the same vein, Heacox (2002: 10) identifies content as “the ‘what’ of teaching- the curricular topics, concepts or themes presented to the students”. Renzulli and Reis (2008: 98) define content as being “the knowledge or subject matter that is to be taught...”. The choice of content arguably amounts to real challenge for curriculum developers as much as to textbook authors. Kaplan believes that the selection of content is the most difficult aspect of curriculum development (*ibid.*). The difficulty lies in the fact that textbook content is considerably value-laden. Provenzo *et al* (2010: 311) state:

The content of textbooks is highly sensitive issue in any culture. They serve as one of the most traditional means by which a society preserves its values, traditions, and beliefs. More often than not they mirror what is considered acceptable or unacceptable by the society at large. Ultimately, they are the reflection of the culture of whom they are written.

The bottom line, textbook content is a political issue as much as it is cultural, educational, and social. It has been noted that debates about textbook content have been passionate both nationally and internationally. Themes such as racism, wars, sexism, stereotypes, and armament have always heated debates what schoolchildren should or should not learn in schools.

School textbooks intended for the teaching and learning of foreign languages (FL) face a dual challenge as far as content is concerned. For better or worse, learners are required to be knowledgeable in linguistic and sociolinguistic contents. It is widely recognized that language learners need be fluent and accurate in more than one language (i.e., mother tongue and foreign / or second language). Differently couched, students ought to be bilingual and bicultural. It is worth emphasizing at this point to observe that additive bilingualism and biculturalism are ideal goals that could be

problematic in a world of constant struggles. As discussed in Chapter 1, FL languages have usually been associated with linguistic, political and economic hegemony from historical imperialist nations. In such contexts of politico-historical tensions, the textbook content accounts for the resort of many Third World countries –Algeria among others- to locally-produced textbooks despite the very many inconsistencies in linguistic and sociolinguistic contents. Along those lines, Altbach (1991: 43) observes “Playing such a central role in the dispensation of knowledge, the content of textbooks becomes a critical issue”. Furthermore, textbook content is a worry for classroom teachers, Langer (nd) notes that teachers’ predominant concern for content is driving force of curriculum and the examination students take (cited in Oliviera 2011: 18). Textbook linguistic and sociolinguistic contents are, therefore, an issue that will constantly develop into a heated debate.

### **2.8.3.1 Textbook Linguistic Content**

This section seeks to cover an aspect of an overriding important: the linguistic content of the middle school textbooks of English. This is carried out from different linguistic perspectives so that a more comprehensive, though by no means exhaustive, framework is established. Teachers’ attitudes are clearly intertwined with their perception of the linguistic content of the textbooks.

#### **2.8.3.1.1 Choice of the Variety of English**

Algerian textbook writers never seem to bother themselves with such questions: Which variety of English should we teach? Which spelling system should we chose to teach? What are the attitudes of teachers and students vis-à-vis the variety of English that should be part of the Algerian curriculum? By and large, they avoid justifying their choice of the variety of English to be taught. They leave the option open or assume that British English is the one, especially as some of them studied in British universities and/ or stayed in UK for some time. While leaving choice to teachers of

English to teach the variety that they themselves prefer seems refreshing, but in the long run may bring about serious confusion and distress. It is also worth point out that the English spelling system-although capricious- is never taught systematically with the view of scaffolding the learning of an otherwise different spelling system from that of the French. Amazingly, both systems are practically never differentiated or pointed out to their different phonological value system. The corollary of that policy is the obvious confusion that Algerian students display when it comes to reading or writing English; they attribute the same orthographic and phonological values to both French and English. Many Algerian teachers and students of English nourish negative attitudes towards the divergence between what they read and pronounce.

Another aspect that appears to be entirely ignored by the Algerian textbook authors is the choice of the phonological system on which Algerian ELL are to model up their learning of English. The pronunciation of English, in the abstract, is as intimidating, irritating, and unpredictable for most non-native teachers and learners as the English spelling system of which it differs considerably<sup>32</sup>. Different varieties of English use different phonological values. These could be unintelligible even to some other native-speakers of English with different phonological values (Australian English vs. American English). Ronowicz and Yallop (2005: 38) corroborate that “... newcomers to a country will find it easy to cope immediately with casual and colloquial conversation ... but even newcomers from English-Speaking countries (say Americans in Australia, or Australians in Scotland) may find that difficult!”. In the phonological section of the Algerian middle school textbooks of English (*SOE1+2+3* and *OTM*), the textbooks authors never appear to acknowledge which variety (American, British, or otherwise) is to be taught, practiced, and eventually emulated. It is assumed to all likelihood that Received Pronunciation <sup>33</sup>(RP) is the one, although no indication whatsoever of that preference in any one of the textbooks or subsequent handbooks or teacher’s manual is apparent.

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<sup>32</sup> Some linguists estimate that sound-to-spelling divergence may be estimated at 65%.

<sup>33</sup> Received Pronunciation (coined by Daniel Jones in 1917) is also known by other labels such as the Queen’s (or King’s) English, Oxford English, or BBC English. It is the standard of southern English.

### 2.8.3.1.2 Lexical content

Natural languages are made up of thousands and thousands of words, most of which are learned and used by native speakers for communication. In the preface to Schmitt's *Vocabulary in Language Teaching* (2000), Richards (2000: xi) believes that "Vocabulary and lexical expressions are at the core of learning and communication". In the same breath, Milton (2009: 2) explains that "learning a language is an enormous task. To perform like a native speaker you need to learn thousands of words". In a language as rich as English, it means that learners would spend all their lifetimes without really coming to grips with all the words that constitute the English language. Schmitt asserts "Mastery of the complete lexicon of English (and probably any other language) is beyond second language learners but also native speakers" (*op.cit.* 3). The survey of the reports of the size of the English language is revealing of the challenge of learning English. The following table displays the figures of the corpus linguistics in English estimated at different times and places (across the English-speaking countries:

Surveyors	Date	Size of the English Language
Claiborne	1985	400,000 -600,000 words
Crystal	1988	500,000-2 million words
Nurnberg & Rosenblum	1997	1 million words
Bryston	Nd	200,000 common-use words-1 million words (+technical and scientific terms).

**Table 26:** The size of the English language (drawn upon Schmitt 2000:3)

These figures amply demonstrate that learning a second or foreign language may mean that it is a serious undertaking.

The pertinent question that curriculum developers and textbooks authors need to address is: How much vocabulary ought the ELL to learn throughout the proposed curriculum and textbooks? Different countries have different vocabulary policies. A case in point, in Finland students are supposed to acquire about 3.5 words in every session throughout the course program, while the Algerian first year middle school students of English need to learn 10.43 words in every session throughout the school year through *SOE* 1. According to our calculations in our M.A. <sup>34</sup>(2005), these figures demonstrate that the Algerian middle school students face a daunting task of “internalizing” many new words incidentally as they occur in different contexts. Milton (*op.cit.* 21) notes:

The evidence suggests that the vocabulary uptake from truly incidental language exposure is usually negligible and that successful learners acquire large volumes of vocabulary from the words explicitly taught in the classroom and supplement their learning by targeting vocabulary in activities, like learning the words of songs, outside of class.

It should be worth of note that direct targeting of vocabulary in extra-curricular activities is not a recommended policy in the Algerian middle school curriculum. Furthermore, glossaries are practically missing except in *SOE1*. A priori, the Algerian textbooks authors have included a rich and colorful vocabulary without a clear policy as to how many words should middle school students of English learn by the end of the middle school course program. Wilkins (1972) succinctly couches that “without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed”

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<sup>34</sup> A Linguistic and Sociolinguistic Investigative Study of Spotlight on English 1. It was submitted in 2005

(*ibid.* 3). A clear-cut vocabulary policy emerges as a necessity not a luxury in foreign and second language teaching and learning.

### 2.8.3.1.3 Grammatical Content

Grammar represents the backbone of language. Although, grammar can be mastered fairly early, it represents the “*bête-noire*” of both native and non-native learners. In some languages whose grammar appears to possess regular patterns such as Turkish, native Turkish-speaking children master fairly early (three years), whereas, according to Crystal (1987), a native English-speaking child masters the grammar of English by the age of 10 (cited in Schmitt 2000:4). In the same vein, it should be noted that Crystal (2004: 94) puts forward that there exists 3,500 or so grammatical constructions in English not all of which are used by native speakers of English. Grammar teaching has always played a pivotal role in teaching FL. Richards (2001: 153) asserts that “grammar remains a core component of many language courses”. Whether it is explicitly or implicitly taught, grammar clearly appears omnipresent in today’s classrooms as much as it was in the past. ELLs have always struggled to come to grips with the grammar of English, which has been taught through different approaches to language teaching. Although, grammar is inevitable in FL classes, it is not the only aspect of language that ELLs need to learn. It may appear, nonetheless, that the sequence most salient in FL teaching and learning and, by the same token, the most difficult.

Algerian middle school textbooks of English seem to be primarily centered on the *mapping* of grammatical items. And all the other aspects of language appear to be pieced together to fit the proposed syllabus. The very diction utilized by the authors of the *SOE* series and *OM* transpires that they wrote the textbooks with the Grammar Syllabus (GS) in mind. In their *To the Teacher* section in *On the Move* (Book Four), Arab and Riche (2006: ix) state that All these features will be made more explicit in the book *map* that follows ...” (*italics* not in the original). What is more, the beginning-level of the series overlaps with the objective of GS. Richards stipulates

“Traditionally, grammatical syllabuses have been used as the basis for planning general courses, particularly for beginning-level” (*op.cit.*). *Ad hoc* browsing of the choice and grading of the grammatical map of the textbook series reveals that the authors developed the syllabus along the lines laid in GS. According to Richards (*ibid.*) “Choice and selection of grammatical items in grammar syllabus reflects not only the intrinsic ease or difficulty of items but their relationship to other aspects of a syllabus that may be being developed simultaneously”. The patching of potential lesson content (topics, skills and activities) corroborates the adherence of middle school syllabus of English to GS. Richards (*ibid.*) notes “The syllabus planner is typically mapping out grammar together with potential lesson content in the form of topics, skills, and activities, and for this reason grammatical syllabuses often differ from one course to the next even when targeting the same proficiency level”. Clearly, the Algerian authors of MS textbooks had their own way of managing the curriculum.

## **2.1 Sociolinguistic & Socio-cultural Contents**

Prior to Communicative Approach to Language Teaching (CALT), social context was at best ancillary. The primary focus was, however, on the linguistic code. In *Social Interaction, Social Context and Language*, Ervin-Tripp (1996: 35) echoes “The omission of context from linguistic account has occurred because some linguists have considered context structure to be too chaotic, too idiosyncratic, to be characterized systematically”. De-contextualized teaching of grammar and vocabulary may turn out accurate users of the language at the individual level, but a social level, they will prove to be dysfunctional. Social context and language are inseparable: They are so intertwined that communication and interaction may fail totally. Again, Ervin-Tripp claims that “context permeates language, that contextual assumption affects how we understand language, and that contexts of speech have to be better understood to develop realistic theories of language and of language learning” (*ibid.* 21). Language cannot therefore be solely explained in terms lexicogrammatical terms in oblivion of the socio-cultural contexts. Ervin-Tripp asserts “Evidence that there is massive learning of language features beyond those described in current lexicons and grammars suggest that current theories of language acquisition have too narrow a

definition of language” (*ibid.*). It would be counter-intuitive not to lay claim that foreign and/ or second languages are better learned in appropriate socio-cultural contexts.

The inclusion of sociolinguistic as well as socio-cultural features into the foreign language curriculum (in our case) emerges as a natural and logical necessity. Savignon (1993) notes “Language is communication, communication rich with social meaning” (in Alatis 1993: 115). Curriculum designers and textbook authors have urged to place the linguistic code in its socio-cultural contexts to achieve competence in the FL. The inclusion of social facts in teaching-learning a second or foreign language is inevitable. Coulmas (2005) explains:

Language is a social fact in that every language is a collective product, an artifact crafted by its speakers which, at the same time, enables higher forms of social planning and cooperation to evolve. Society is built on language. There is no human society that does not speak and use language as its central instrument of organization.

Second and foreign languages are therefore better learned having as a springboard the native societies of the language(s) in question. The overemphasis on grammar and vocabulary of the second or foreign language would probably have little effect on learners’ efficiency in the language being learned. Somehow, they have the sensation of being *socially excluded* when they are in direct contact with native speakers as they feel panic, lost for the right word, hesitation, irrelevant repetition, breathlessness, and sweat.

Reviewing the Algerian middle school textbooks of English, the assumption that the textbooks are still considerably grammar-centered may be prevalent. It is worth of note to mention that grammar is taken as yet in its broadest definition to include morphological, syntactical, phonological, and semantic aspects of language.

Nonetheless, cultural snapshots are introduced as from first year in the rubric *Learn About Culture*. Achour (2003: 8) introduces this part:

This part focuses on the cultural aspect. Various items are presented in order to initiate tasks and activities linked to culture, so that the **learners express themselves cross-culturally**. The learners will feel that no language is self-sufficient. They will almost unconsciously realize that it is through culture that they can perceive facts, events, history and life in general. They will be able **to infer the similarities and differences between their own cultures that use English a national and official language (bold not in the text)**.

*Learn About Culture* aims primarily to communicate cross-culturally and compare the local culture (i.e., Algerian and Arab-Islamic) English-speaking people's cultures (American, British, and Commonwealth). In *SOE 2 Teacher's Guide*, Bouhadiba *et al.* (2004: 8) echo "It is meant to give the pupils an insight into the **universal culture**. The pupils discover it through texts and authentic documents related to the project" (**emphasis added**). English in its international dimension (EIL) is the foreign language that comes to be introduced to the Algerian middle school students. A priori, the note of culture taught to the Algerian middle school students is *neutral* in nature. Devoid of its native culture, the type of English taught to Algerians resembles Esperanto, a constructed international language (CIL).

Instead of the inclusion of social interaction formulas, middle school textbook authors resorted to authentic materials as a means of teaching (universal) culture. It has been noticed that apart from scanty politeness formulas such as (please, thank you, and you're welcome), middle school students of English do not appear to have the ability to express themselves politely in a society that cherishes politeness and

good manners<sup>35</sup>. Furthermore, students cannot open and close a telephone call; the dialogs in the textbooks wherein a telephone call is involved, the same codes in L1 are used in L2. This is in total breach of the target language (TL) sociolinguistic and socio-cultural codes and values, which specify certain expressions for opening and ending a telephone conversation. Other breaches of the sociolinguistic and socio-cultural codes and values are also noticed in terms of addressing people, good manners, expressing appreciation, eye contact, and using space in nonverbal communication, etc. Failure to make students aware and familiar with the TL sociolinguistic and socio-cultural codes may offend the foreign interlocutor and, therefore, leads to utter failure of communication and interaction. Algerian interactional codes and values cannot be transferred to TL for fear of being perceived impolite or lacking good manners.

## **2.2 Authenticity of the Content**

Students of English at different levels have usually complained of their inability to comprehend and positively react to native speakers and/ or the language that these use in both oral and written forms. They point out that the kind of language used by native speakers of English (in our case) is not what they practice in the classroom, or the way it is pronounced by their non-native teachers. Many Algerian students express their disappointment of not being able to pronounce or read correctly let alone write in English. The kind of English that they learn in most Algerian schools is, at best, a simplified version and very much similar to French, and at worst a freak version of English<sup>36</sup>. Actually, English is experienced in the shadow of French with which it shares a good deal of features; in the same breath, it differs from the French language from diverse respects. From a linguistic vantage point, students do not deal with the rich idioms and proverbs that native speakers of English utilize in their daily speech. Anglo-American social and cultural values are ironically not introduced in class but

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<sup>35</sup> In Britain, they often say ‘‘Politeness costs nothing’’. Cotter (2001: 33) notes ‘‘While Americans run short on ‘please’, they say ‘thank you’ after almost anything’’.

<sup>36</sup> Many teachers of English have heavy accent, poor vocabulary, shaky grammar, and can barely manage to write in an intelligible English.

learned the hard way through the non-stop movie channels on the Nilesat. It is worth emphasizing that the Anglo-American linguistic register and repertoire is rich and colorful very much higher than that of the Algerians. Schmitt (2000: 3) quotes Nation and Waring (1997) who estimate that a five year-old native speaker of English beginning school will have a vocabulary of around 4,000 to 5,000 word families.

Defining what “authenticity of the text” refers to may prove to be a daunting task. Different scholars have produced different definitions that are not usually inclusive. For convenience’ sake, three definitions are listed in the table below in which the focus of each definition is laid out.

Authors	Definitions	Focus
Morrow (1977)	An authentic text is a stretch of real language, produced by real speaker or writer for real audience and designed to convey a message of some sort.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Real language</li> <li>. Real speaker/ writer</li> <li>. Real audience</li> <li>. Real message</li> </ul>
Harmer (1983)	Authentic texts (either written or spoken) are those which are designed for native speakers: they are real texts designed not the language students, but for the speakers of the language in questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. Real texts (oral+written)</li> <li>. Real native speakers</li> </ul>
Nunan (1989)	A rule of thumb for authentic here is any material which has not been specifically produced for the purposes of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>. non-pedagogical material</li> </ul>

	language teaching.	
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**Table 27:** Different definitions of “Authentic Text” (drawn upon House, 2008: 55).

A priori, authentic texts are oral and written materials produced by native speakers for an audience composed of native speakers for non-pedagogical purposes about the different real –life issues of common interest, i.e., politics, economic crisis, health care, and terrorism, etc. The “smuggling” of such materials into classrooms is not any more luxury but necessity. This view is echoed by Widdowson (1990: 67) who observes “It has been traditionally supposed that the language presented to learners should be simplified in some way for easy access and acquisition. Nowadays there are recommendations that the language presented should be authentic”. While the introduction of authentic materials in its *raw form*, as it were, to non-native learners may be problematic, and in some rare cases counterproductive, Widdowson offers a distinction between two key terms "authentic" and "genuine material". According to Martinez (2002), Widdowson’s contribution has been a seminal one: *Authentic* would be material designed for native speakers of English used in the classroom in a way similar to the one it was designed for. For example, a radio news report brought into the class so students discuss the report on pollution in the city where learners live. Any use or adaptation of authentic materials in classrooms would *de-authenticate* them. This *de-authentication* of real-life materials is termed *genuine* use of materials. Most of the time, however, this material is used in a *genuine* way, in other words, not in the way it was intended for, but in a somewhat artificial way (*ibid.*). As a final comment, both authentic and genuine materials may enhance and/ or hinder FL learning.

The use of real-life materials in foreign language classes in non-native settings has its credits and debts. Drawing upon Martinez (2002) listing of the advantages and disadvantages of authentic materials, the table below juxtaposes in what way these materials may positively or negatively affect foreign language teaching and learning.

Advantages of Authentic Materials	Disadvantages of Authentic Materials
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are exposed to real discourse, as in videos of interviews with famous people where intermediate students listen for gist.</li> <li>• Authentic materials keep students informed about what is happening in the world, so they have an intrinsic educational value. As teachers, we are educators working within the school system, so education and general development are part of our responsibilities (Sanderson, 1999).</li> <li>• Textbooks often do not include incidental or improper English.</li> <li>• They can produce a sense of achievement, e.g., a brochure on England given to students to plan a 4-day visit.</li> <li>• The same piece of material can be used under different circumstances if the task is different.</li> <li>• Language change is reflected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They may be too culturally biased, so unnecessarily difficult to understand outside the language community.</li> <li>• The vocabulary might not be relevant to the student's immediate needs.</li> <li>• Too many structures are mixed so lower levels have a hard time decoding the texts.</li> <li>• Special preparation is necessary which can be time consuming.</li> <li>• With listening: too many different accents.</li> <li>• The material can become outdated easily, e.g. news.</li> </ul>
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in the materials so that students and teachers can keep abreast of such changes.

- Reading texts are ideal to teach/practise mini-skills such as scanning, e.g. students are given a news article and asked to look for specific information (amounts, percentages, etc.). The teacher can have students practice some of the micro-skills mentioned by Richards (1983), e.g. basic students listen to news reports and they are asked to identify the names of countries, famous people, etc. (ability to detect key words).
- Books, articles, newspapers, and so on contain a wide variety of text types, language styles not easily found in conventional teaching materials.
- They can encourage reading for pleasure because they are likely to contain topics of interest to learners, especially if students are given the

<p>chance to have a say about the topics or kinds of authentic materials to be used in class.</p>	
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**Table 28:** Drawn upon Martinez’s listing of (dis)advantages of Authentic Materials (2002).

The benefits of incorporating authentic materials as an integral part of the classroom practice are tremendous. Nonetheless, a special care, time and energy need to be devoted to the debts of utilizing real-life materials in non-native settings, if the objective is to optimize the positive effects of these materials. It may appear frustrating, however, to note that authenticity is relative: Real-life materials lose – partially, at least- some of their authenticity by being assigned to classroom activities. Wallace (1992, quoted in Berado, 2006: 62) states “As soon as texts, whatever their original purpose, are brought into classrooms for pedagogic purposes they have, arguably, lost authenticity”. Real-life material cease, therefore, to be authentic once pedagogically handled through adaptation, simplification, and/ or utilized in their raw form in classrooms. Some scholars, such as Berado, consider real-life materials that are intended for classroom practice “ non-authentic” and “artificial”, especially as they contain a series of false-text indicators such as perfectly formed sentences (all the time), a question using a grammatical structure, its full answer, repetition of structures, and very often does not “read” well (*ibid.*). It seems that textbook writers and educators have a frustrating challenge: They are urged to resort to authentic materials in teaching foreign languages and in the same vein, they “de-authenticate” by including such materials for pedagogical purposes.

Senior (2005) notes that “we need to have clear pedagogic goal in mind: what precisely we want our students to learn from these materials” (*ibid.*). Differently couched, the teacher who undertakes to introduce authentic materials to his/ her class needs to set clear objectives: Does s/he want to expose his/ her students to real-life vocabulary? Does s/he want his/ her students to master (in)formal grammar? Does

s/he want his/ her students to be accustomed to certain variety of English? Or, does s/he want his/ her students to be exposed to socio-cultural aspects of an English-speaking community? Although, the writers of *Spotlight on English* series (1+2+3) and *On the Move* (Book 4) claim that they have included authentic materials, many instances in which the English used in the aforementioned books clearly do not appear to be authentic. One point in case is the dialog between Ronald and Abdelkader File One<sup>37</sup>, Script One on page 165. The question-tags with different auxiliaries and tenses are repeated no less than eight (08) times in twelve (12) turn-taking dialog exchanges. Moreover, a teasing atmosphere seems to characterize the dialog between the two fictional characters, which cannot be caught by final year middle school students. Tag-questions are used in rising and falling intonation with obviously different meanings. The characters are highly knowledgeable and sure of what they know as though the authors subconsciously were discussing and researching the issue at the same time. As a final, succinct note, this dialog does not “read” well.

### 2.3 Tasks and Activities

Practice is an essential part of the teaching-learning process. Both teachers and students engage in some form of practice to consolidate the proposed input after instruction. Practice constitutes an important part that may cover 60% of the textbooks and teachers’ guide (TG), and 90% of workbooks. Different terms have been utilized over time to denote classroom practice: activity, drill, exercise, and task<sup>38</sup>. It is noted that they come to be used-erroneously- interchangeably in different situations by teachers and even some scholars. It is within the scope of this work to differentiate between the terms and demonstrate both time and usage borders. Exercise is perhaps the oldest in use to mean to use one power to achieve a goal; Nunan (2005: 22) believes that “language exercises come in many shapes and forms and can focus on lexical, phonological or grammatical systems”. Drill seems to be

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<sup>37</sup> Arab, S, and Riche, B. (2006). *On the Move* (Book 4). (Office National des Publications Scolaires (ONPS). Approved by Officialization and Approval Committee (National Institute of Research in Education) on 3.14.2006

<sup>38</sup> Here practice types are alphabetically ordered not chronologically.

borrowed directly from military jargon by proponents of Audio-lingual Method (ALM). Activity is the term put forward by advocates of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Task is a more recent term utilized extensively in Task-Based (TBLT) and Performance-Based Language Teaching (PBLT) literature (PB). The following table elucidates the difference in concept, focus, and outcome of the aforementioned terms.

Types	Definitions/ characteristics	Outcomes
Exercise	Provision of practice of a restrictive set of lexical, grammatical, and phonological items	In language, the outcome is linguistic terms: Did the learners get the language right? (Nunan 2004:22).
Drill	Drills are administered orally and can be of various kinds like repetition, build-up, and expansion (Singh & Sudarshan 2004:131). Drills reinforce the learning of particular grammatical structures and enable learners to practice the actual use of language ( <i>ibid.</i> )	Drills aim at the development of fluency and avoidance of errors at any cost.  Learners parrot language without being creative.
Activity	Communicative activities represent a kind of 'half-way house' between language exercises and pedagogical tasks. They	Activities provide manipulation of linguistic set of items and have an element of

	represent ... manipulative practice of a restricted set of items ... they an element of meaningful communication.. and authentic communication (ibid.)	communication and authenticity (Nunan, <i>op.cit.</i> ).
Task	A task is taken to be an activity in which meaning is primary, there is a relationship to the real world; task completion has some priority (Skehan 1996, cited in Ferris & Hedgcock 2005:138) A task consists of the smallest unit of classroom work that engage learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, and interacting in teaching and learning (Nunan) ( <i>ibid.</i> )	In tasks, the outcome transcends language (Did the learners select the correct article of clothing according to weather forecast? Did they manage to go from the hotel to the bank?)  They have an element of communication and authenticity (Nunan, <i>op.cit.</i> )

**Table 29:** Definitions and outcomes of pedagogical practice

The Algerian authors of the middle school textbooks use different types of practice to achieve the tripartite goals that they set for themselves. It appears that the authors have avoided labeling the practice sections in the middle school textbooks of English. The practice starts with prompts such as “Listen and speak”, “Listen and repeat”, “Discover the language”, “Match people with their dates of birth”, “pair work”, and “Group work”. Overall, most of the practice is communicative activities (two thirds of the practice), while phonological drills are the preferred tactic and shares the one third of practice with the rubric “Project”. By its nature, this rubric is essentially

a communicative activity with an element of authenticity, autonomy, and communication. However, it is worth mentioning that teachers ask students to write reports as their *project* for which they will be scored. By and large, teachers do not get involved with their students preparing project(s) together so that students realize what it means to undertake a *project*. Instead, they are left to their own devices and, therefore, they resort to *cybercafés* where they would purchase already-made reports. It does not seem to bother the teachers that their students turn out the same reports; they collect, they score; and it is business as usual. Feedback on the layout, content, and meaningfulness of the *project* clearly is not part of the teaching process.

#### **2.4 Teacher's Guide (TG)**

The teachers' guide (TG) is oftentimes an extricable part of the instructional material packages. Whenever available, TG comes to the assistance of both senior and novice teachers alike as it represents a safe road map that they consult to reach their ultimate goal destination: the pre-set objectives of the course. It also keeps the teachers focused on specific items around which the course and the tasks revolve. Basically, TGs are the teachers' guidebooks to the course lay-out, objectives, content, and method. They are as important to the teachers as textbooks are important to both teachers and students. According to Hemsley (1997: 72) the TG state "the purpose of the associated by materials and describes the rationale behind them." Teachers' attitudes may be built on the presence or absence of TGs: They may perceive that such a method or textbook is (im)possible to implement by virtue of its valorization and/ or transgression of the teachability, learnability, coverage and usage standards. The presence of an adequate TG along textbooks should be considered a necessity not a luxury.

The TGs play a range of pivotal roles in today's classrooms. Even though their presence in the classroom is telescoped in their being put away in the teachers' schoolbags, they are the motor and generator of a good lesson. It is noteworthy to state that TGs positive roles and merits exceed their demerits. In the following table,

we have juxtaposed the roles, merits and demerits of TGs with the view of highlighting their utmost importance to teachers and their classroom practice.

TGs Roles	TGs Merits	TGs Demerits
1. TGs encourage the development of teaching skills. 2. TGs assist teachers to understand the course as a whole. 3. TG provide guidance on the use of the material. 4. TGs promote teachers' self-reliance. 5. TGs triggers teachers' independence. (Hemsley: 1997:72) 6. TGs facilitate teaching through adaptation of gradation of items.	1. Teachers are more confident and less frustrated. 2. Teachers are eager to try, retry, and review their teaching practices. 3. Teachers are not short of ideas . 4. Teachers' improvization is appropriate and timely. 5. Lesson preparation is fun. 6. Teaching practices are more inductive, conducive and inviting. 7. Teaching is differentiated according to students' preferences and learning rate. 8. Timely presence	1. Too much reliance on TGs causes "deskilling" (Richards). 2. Too much dependence on TGs kills teachers' creative talents. 3. Too much reference to TGs leads to routine and rote teaching. 4. Too much reliance on TGs increases teachers' frustration (feeling of entrapment). 5. Too much dependence leads to the slavish adherence to TGs.

<p>7. TGs facilitates classroom management through empowering teachers.</p> <p>8. TGs help teacher provide quality teaching.</p>	<p>of TGs reshapes teachers' beliefs and attitudes and compensate for lack of training.</p>	<p>6. Too much trust on TGs infallibility tends to develop blind adherence to old dated knowledge and methods.</p> <p>7. Too much use of TGs causes improvization to disappear.</p> <p>8. Too much slavish adherence to TGs frustrates teachers to cope with new situations that may crop up in their classrooms.</p>
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**Table 30:** TGs roles, merits and demerits.

As it can be noted, a priori, TGs physical presence in the teachers' immediate contexts is one way to attain quality teaching. However, addiction to the use of TGs may be have reversed outcomes.

According to Sigurgeirsson doctoral thesis findings, 5 to 10% of the teachers in Iceland consult the teacher's guide (*op.cit.* 79). This low figure may reveal something about the TGs in question; they might contain no more than some practical tips to go about lesson preparation, presentation, practice and expected outcomes. Sigurgeirsson

(1992) observes “The use of teachers' guides was mainly limited to quick reference, only rarely did the teachers consult guides for decisions about their teaching”. *Au fond*, the nature of TGs is much more complex than tips here and there. They are systematic introductions to the course of study with all the necessary components. Some TGs are teachers-proof, which means that teachers creative contribution is extremely limited; other TGs are at the other end of the spectrum in that they only sketch what teachers ought to utilize the TGs and textbook contents. In the Algerian EFL context, the aforementioned figures are expected to rise in case teachers are provided with such a tool/kit box all the more so if they are still struggling to readjust to the newly adopted methodology (i.e., Competency-Based- Approach designed textbooks, long files, and new rubrics, etc.).

The natural process of producing workable TGs makes it equally important to conduct a thorough evaluation of the material. It is no use to provide teachers with a TG only to be there to remain replete with insurmountable and often unforgivable flaws. It will not only cause teachers to shirk utilizing it, but in the long run to frustrate them, demotivate them, increase their distrust, decrease their low self-esteem, and prompts undesirable attitudes. It is practically a common knowledge that most Algerian teachers from the primary to the pre-tertiary level reitify and even sanctify all instructional materials that are provided by the Ministry of National Education (MNE); they usually perceive it as being their fault that they cannot work properly with the prescribed TGs; they feel the burden to develop their own strategies to implement the textbooks, a task for which they have never been trained; and finally they will that they are going to be blamed for the deplorable students' poor results and the achievement gap that incessantly widens with years in any case. It may not appear paradoxical to put forward that all these uncomfortable challenges affects directly teachers' commitment and involvement in the teaching-learning process, which in turn fuels the emergence of negative attitudes and beliefs.

In Algeria, TGs have a secondary (tertiary, if at all) position: Middle school English teachers have been for decades promised TGs that have never come as yet!

Speaking about the Teacher's Handbook, which was supposed to serve as a reference document to Spotlight on English (*SOE*) (1<sup>st</sup> Year Middle School (MS) textbook), Achour (2003) outlines that “ {i}t contains information about the syllabus and its accompanying documents, *which will be made available to all, to help grasp the new elements and concepts vehicled by competency-based approach.*” (*italics, ours*) Not only the corresponding TGs to middle school English textbooks and the textbooks in question (viz, *SOE* series and *On the Move* textbook (for 4<sup>th</sup> Year MS)) did not go a synchronization process in the conception, production, and dissemination, the promise – to the best of our knowledge- has not been fulfilled after seven years from the launching date of the course program! The picture is made incredibly surreal even when such TGs were produced and disseminated, they never came under scrutiny. Apropos, Hemsley observers bitterly that “{l}iterature concerning evaluation of TGs is extremely thin on the ground.” (*op.cit.* 73). To conclude, EFL teaching in middle schools lacks TGs and subsequent evaluation thereof, which compromises the good implementation of the recent school reforms. And, in the long run, this may lead to the total abandonment of the undertaken reforms.

#### **2.4.1 Objectives of TG**

Ideally, teachers' guides (TGs) objectives ought to resemble the curriculum aims, syllabus and textbooks objectives. As a point of fact, the more the various objectives of the key components of the instructional program are compatible and complementary, the more is the instructional program is sustainable. Albert Einstein is reported to have observed that “our world is characterized by a proliferation of means and a confusion of goals.” (cited in Kaufman 1995: 2) Therefore, it is the confusion of the objectives of the different stakeholders that compromised a whole range of curriculums and course programs despite of the availability of resources. The 20<sup>th</sup> Century was known as the age of methods, which explains the appearance of a number of teaching methodologies. None of these methodologies sprang from the overall analysis of the needs, preferences, expectations, talents and wants of those involved in the teaching-learning process. By the virtue of the fallibility of each one

of these methodologies, a new method was advanced. Naturally, each claiming a set of objectives not mentioned in the previous one.

Defining one's objectives clearly is a primary step to attain satisfactory outcomes. By objectives, we mean the expression of the specific ways in which goals will be achieved (Graves1999: 17). Here the goals are taken to mean the statement of the overall, long-term purposes of the course (*ibid.*). Determining the goals and objectives of instructional materials comes down, therefore, to conceptualizing the content and rubrics of the course programs (Graves 1999, Nunan 1988b). A priori, the objectives of the textbooks and TGs are subtly interrelated and even symbiotically cogent. The presence of well-designed TGs with clear and realizable objectives in the immediate context of the teachers adds to the credibility of the content of the instructional material package and eventually the obtaining of optimal outcomes. In wide brief, the success or failure of a course program, Riche (2000: 28) notes, depends on:

The degree to which they (i.e., syllabus designers) managed to make appropriate selection, grading of teaching items into manageable units, as well as on the perspective capacity to determine the right objectives in terms of social and individual needs.

Again, the objectives of textbooks and TGs need to match to successfully attain the required standards and eventually expected outcomes.

It may seem paradoxical and even ironical to reiterate that the Algerian writers of middle school textbooks have not as yet come up with workable TGs. Instead, they produced two booklets that they called *Teacher's Handbook* (1<sup>st</sup> Year Middle School) and *Spotlight on English (SOE) Book 2 (Teacher's Guide)*. *The Handbook* was authored by Mr. Achour Khelifa, a formerly inspector of English; the Guide, on

the other hand, was authored by three members of GSD<sup>39</sup> (d'anglais) Mr. Farouk Bouhadiba, Mrs Wahiba Guedoudj and Mrs Zehour Torche. According to Achour (2003: 3), the main aim of *the Handbook* is “to serve as a reference document to be consulted by teachers.” He also mentions yet another aim, which he does not state whether it is a part of the first aim or it is an independent aim in its own right. This second aim “draws the broad lines of the new textbook and describes the way it is organized together with its content.” (*ibid.*) He also draws the teachers’ attention to another aim of *the Handbook* “It even supplies information about various aspects of methodology and class life and class management.” (*ibid.*) He concludes with a fourth aim of *the Handbook* that “.. suggests a few ways and procedures to conduct the routines of everyday class” (*ibid.*). All in all, we cannot speak of TGs that aim to assist perplexed and confused middle school teachers of English.

What is more, the *SOE Teacher’s Guide* succinctly develops along already laid lines by Mr. Achour’s *Handbook*. The authors (2004: 2) state “This document is a reference material to be consulted as a complement to the programme, together with its support document and the coursebook itself”. They further explain that “{i}t describes the rationale for the methodology of the course and provides extensive guidance on how to use the material effectively.” (*ibid.*) Later, they recognize that the *Guide* is “a set of suggestions to help you through the various stages of your mission.” (*ibid.*) The *Guide* also “contains hints about techniques, procedures, evaluation as well as useful information about the approach, its methodology (how to plan or deal with a file, and class management.” (*ibid.*) Finally, they reassure teachers that “{y}ou will also find the keys to the exercises and tips on specific difficulties that you may encounter.” (*ibid.*) All in all, the authors of the *Guide* outline no less than six objectives as opposed to four in the *Handbook*. The authors of the *Guide* are, however, reluctant to call their prospects objectives.

#### **2.4.2 Format and Layout of TG**

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<sup>39</sup> *Groupe Spécial Dédactique* : A heterogeneous committee made up of university teachers, general inspectors and some teachers with a mission of writing middle school textbook series along Competency-Based Approach lines.

We should put it bluntly from the very onset that there is no one single format and/or layout that characterizes TGs. Different designers come up with different TGs that reflect time available, resources devoted, managerial demands, and circumstantial constraints. In Algeria, the early TGs, especially those designed in accordance with Audio-Lingual Method tenets and Communicative Approach principles were more or less detailed in Algeria and therefore resemble to some extent the textbooks. It is worth emphasizing that Algerian TGs have always been printed in black-and-white ink and devoid of any pictures, graphs, or otherwise. Practically, the sole activity where something is drawn is keys on a map or some rare graphs. Algerian TGs focus as a general rule on the provision of the objectives of the activities, some teaching tips, and keys to exercises. The GSD (anglais) has provided middle school teachers of English with Teacher's Handbook (1<sup>st</sup> Year MS) and *SOE 2* Teacher's Guide. Both TGs appear hastily written and designed. The former, written by Achour (2003), only sketches the English curriculum and *SOE1* and the latter seems more detailed but does not exceed File 1 and contains some teaching tips. *SOE 2* TG follows in the footsteps of *SOE 2* Students' Book but devoid of any graphic representations.

### **2.4.3 Dissemination of TG**

As mentioned early in this section, TGs and the instructional material package ought to be designed, produced at the same time and disseminated preferably at the same time. Any reluctance would create a state of chaos and confusion among teachers. As it has been mentioned repeated throughout this chapter, middle school students' textbooks are usually made available in September, while the subsequent instructional material lag behind for some time that may span for years. According to the surveyed middle school teachers of English, the scanty number of TGs disseminated among them does not live up to their expectations and needs. It is worth of note that senior and experienced teachers would go about their business with relative ease because so many years of seniority and class management, and therefore, they can do away with ill-prepared TGs. Novice teachers, however, face a daunting task without something or someone to mentor them in their "formative years" of real teaching in real settings with real students. Most of the novice teachers are former

university students who have enrolled in TEFL/ Didactics course. Actually, they have received more theory than practice. The absence of detailed, well-structured, well-crafted, and available TGs only worsens their situation and increases their worries and frustration. Many surveyed novice teachers feel outraged because they feel that are left alone without professional guidance or adequate instructional materials.

## **2.5 Teaching Aids (TA)**

Teaching Aids (TA) are by definition means that come to the pedagogical assistance of the teachers in making learning more vivid and experiential. More than anything else except effective and engaging teachers, TA help ELLs meaningfully engage in the process of learning. ELLs are more motivated by whatever media and realia that are used by the teachers in order to create a more tangible, interactive, and engaging EFL learning context. TA make learning more attractive and easy to understand because they bring the foreign culture and language to the learners' immediate context (i.e., classroom).

### **2.5.1 Nature of TA**

Decidedly, teaching Aids (TA) contribute substantially to effective teaching and learning. Varghese (1994: 105) asserts "No effective teaching is possible without appropriate aids". Since teaching is all about facilitating learning, then adequate media are an inextricable component of effective teaching and optimal learning. In their broadest definition, aids comprise all the human and non-human entities that learners interact with or use to help them understand what they are being taught. The person of the teacher may be the overriding and most-catching aid in the classroom beside all those media and realia<sup>40</sup> s/he uses to help learners comprehend. In their restricted definition, aids include all the objects learners see or hear in their classroom settings: chalkboard, pens, chalk stick, school gears and gadgets, and furniture, etc.

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<sup>40</sup> Ordinary objects used in class for teaching purposes (OALD).

Aids may be seen or heard: Those objects the learners see come to be called visual aids (VA) and those they can hear/ listen to are called audio-aids (AA). Generally, these aids are identified as audio-visual aids (AVA). “Visual aids help the students see and comprehend what they are taught whereas audio-aids help them learn from what they hear.” (*ibid.*). As a concluding note, TA accommodate learners’ five senses all while as they represent the main sensors for learning.

### 2.5.2 Types of TA

To all likelihood, the above section has suggested the existence of two categories of teaching aids: audio-visual aids. Studies have recently claimed that learners retain 30 % of what they see and 26% of what they hear (Felder and Enrique 1995:21). By a mere calculation, we may estimate that learners may retain about 56% of what they can see and hear at the same time. When students’ hearing and sight faculties are targeted simultaneously learning rate is significantly maximized. Audio-aids may include such items as tape recorders, radio, etc. while visual aids may count chalkboard, chalk, flash cards, charts, maps, over-head projector (OHP), and still pictures, etc. There are, on the other hand, some aids that combine both such as the teacher, moving pictures, and personal computers (PCs).

- a) The Teacher: Nguyen (2002) mentions a Vietnamese proverb that says “Without the teacher, you sure can’t be successful.” The teacher’s physique, dressing code, gestures, voice, eye contact, mindfulness, and personality all contribute to the making of the lesson.
- b) Chalkboard: According to Varghese chalkboards are “the most versatile and indispensable visual aid.” (*op.cit.*). Chalkboard is the common denominator in all the classrooms across the world. It serves many purposes: the teaching of linguistic items, scribbling of graffiti to explain facts or ideas, a support to post up pictures, and display of the summary of the lessons, etc.

- c) Chalk Sticks: They always follow chalkboards. Colored chalk helps students distinguish various transliteration differences, focus on particular items, and keep the students' attention alive, etc.
- d) Flash cards: Varghese defines flash cards as “sets of cards with words or phrases written on one side and their meaning on the other.” (*ibid.*)
- e) Charts: Charts are used in different ways: They can introduce new linguistic items, help visualize quantity differences, and give a sense of scientific seriousness to the lesson, etc.
- f) Still Pictures: They may include cartoons photos, drawings, paintings, OHP, data show devices, etc. Pictures are widely used in most classrooms especially as newspapers and magazines could be found easily.
- g) Moving Pictures: Today's classrooms may include TV sets, home video cameras, VCRs etc. that would make the lesson more enjoyable through the elimination of boredom especially in large classes.
- h) Tape recorders: Tape recorders have been around particularly language classrooms for many decades. Many teachers use tape recorders to play dialogs and songs in their classrooms bringing over native speakers (metaphorically) to a foreign audience.
- i) Personal Computers (PCs): In many classroom settings, PCs are common and come to good use particularly in affluent societies in the European Union (EU), North America, Gulf Countries, Australia, New Zealand, and in Far the East countries (namely Japan, South Korea, and a fair extent China). It should be noted that laptops are still not quite common even in most developed countries. A point of fact, however, the case is not so in colleges and universities. The use of PCs in today's classrooms is gaining ground as software programs in different school subjects are made available. Moreover,

the Internet, or the Worldwide Web, with its innovations (blogs, chat rooms, etc.) have made the acquisition of PCs a must even more so because as many schools are connected and make use of this virtual technology to induce authentic learning.

### **2.5.3 Availability of TA**

It depends on whether you are in a developing or in developed country to realize that the availability of TA is affluent and abundant, skimpy and/ or inexistent. In the Algerian middle schools, relevant teaching aids witness striking paucity particularly in language classrooms. Under the aegis of the Ministry of Education, colorful textbooks are produced for English classes, but apart from *fancy* pictures and drawings no other aids (accompanying tapes or CDs, pictures, or realia) are catered for. It may appear ironical to mention, on the one hand, that teachers are supposed to teach English phonological/ supra-segmental aspects (i.e., stress, pitch, and tone) in individual words and dialogs, all while they themselves are predominantly Algerian and non-native speakers (NNS) of English! Most of the teachers leave so much to be desired when it comes to fluency and accuracy: They are still confused by complex grammatical structures, unable to produce native-like accent, and their writing style is deplorable. On the other hand, many American and British songs (Louis Armstrong's "*It's a Beautiful world*" and the Beatle's "*Yesterday*") are included in **SOE series** and **On the Move** without the teachers having an idea how these songs are sang or could be effectively taught in overcrowded classes. In a nutshell, the absence of suitable, purposefully-designed, accompanying audio-(visual) aids stretches the teachers' efforts and, of course, wits.

### **2.5.4 Roles of TA**

TA have a wide range of roles that basically target the facilitation of teaching and learning. For the sake convenience, we have drawn a table thanks to which we have attempted to juxtapose advantages and disadvantages of TA. The attempt is premised by the fact that teachings aids are better appreciated when advantages and

disadvantages come to be juxtaposed. A mere survey of the many advantages attests that TA are inevitable and should be, therefore, considered a key component of a good FL course program.

Advantages of TA	Disadvantages of TA
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Help learners improve the four skills (listening, reading, speaking, writing)</li> <li>2. Illustrate facts, ideas, etc.</li> <li>3. Reinforce a fact, idea, etc.</li> <li>4. Facilitate learning.</li> <li>5. Involve learners in the learning process.</li> <li>6. Fight boredom and routine.</li> <li>7. Provide for authentic materials.</li> <li>8. Induce debates</li> <li>9. Meets students' learning styles.</li> <li>10. Diversify teaching strategies.</li> <li>11. Motivate both teachers and students.</li> <li>12. Enrich and insure quality teaching.</li> <li>13. Promote teachers' and students' creative talents.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. May distract students.</li> <li>2. May be culture-insensitive.</li> <li>3. May be time-consuming.</li> <li>4. May lead to disruption (part. Songs, movies, etc.)</li> <li>5. May disturb other classes.</li> <li>6. May drain school budget (some artifacts are costly).</li> </ol>

**Table 31:** Advantages and disadvantages of TA

Definitely, the presence of teaching aids in middle school EFL classrooms compatible with the adopted curriculum especially as many scenes, dialogs, cultural insights, and interactions are felt to be either in the USA or UK would add to the credibility of the

EFL course program. In wide brief, teaching aid are at the fulcra of vibrant EFL classrooms.

## **2.6 Assessment and Evaluation Guides (AEG)**

Assessment, examination, evaluation, and tests are an integral and endemic part of the teaching-learning process. Soled (1995: 1) recognizes that “*assessment, testing, and evaluation are everyday occurrences in .. education*”. In the same breath, Atkin *et al.* (2001: 7) state “*Assessment is universally present in schools and a natural part of both teaching and learning*”. Therefore, educational measurements of students’ achievement (or otherwise) are inevitable. It may appear surprising to notice that future prospects depend fairly enough upon the outcomes of these measurements. Societies the world over have at times gained and lost “geniuses” because of either effective or devastating measurement systems. For better or worse, these metrics will stay as yardsticks in our schools as long as these are meant to say. Their intellectual and psychological effects will (as they always have, anyway) mark us for the rest of our lives. On score of that, a great deal of theoretical analysis and empirical research need to be carried out to maximize their benefits and minimize their drawbacks. This section concerns itself with the identification of these constructs in a comprehensive framework whose premise it to spotlight and raise awareness vis-à-vis the complex intricacies of this enduring issue (i.e., educational measurements) in the middle school particularly in the aftermath of the implementation of Competency-Based Approach.

### **2.6.1 Nature of AEG**

Instruction is always followed by periodic tests to assess and evaluate the achievement gap. As a general rules, students in Algerian middle schools sit a number of tests (devoirs/**فروض** ) and three trimestrial examination papers (compositions/**امتحانات/اختبارات** ) every year of their study. The different test and examination periods represent a stressful period for both teachers and students. The former need to construct tests that are modeled up according to the tenets of the *Brevet d’Enseignement Moyen* (BEM) and the latter need to “swot” as much information as possible to be able to respond to the different exercises or activities. It is amazing to mention that most student nurse negative attitudes toward their yearly examinations as they are perceived as sanctions. Their grievances sparkle in the week

following the examinations when they obtain the keys to their examination papers and unexpected marks. Teachers have a somewhat different attitude: They think that the way examinations and tests are conducted do little to stop cheating. The students' marks do not represent their true achievement. A common teachers' grievance is couched in the following terms: due to over-crowdedness during quiz<sup>41</sup> periods, student cheat and receive high marks; (standardized) examination marks, however, may represent the real students' achievements.

It is worth of note to acknowledge the appreciation between assessment and evaluation throughout this work. Assessment is assumed to mean the collection of quantifiable data and information on students. Suskie (2009: 4) identifies assessment in the following terms: "Assessment is the ongoing process of (1) establishing clear, measurable expected outcomes of the students, (2) systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well student learning matches our expectations ...". As for valuation, it is taken to mean the collection of data and information on students for the purpose of making appropriate decision. Again, Suskin (*ibid.*: 12) defines evaluation as "... evaluation is using assessment information to make an informed judgment". Evaluation enables stakeholders to propose remedies and/ or reforms to the course program, textbooks, and/ or teaching methodology. Assessment and evaluation represent an integral part of the teaching-learning process and are as important as instruction itself. These ongoing processes represent the compass, which directs and redirects the educational reform as well as instruction. It may not be an exaggeration to claim that assessment and evaluation may define the success and failure of the educational system.

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<sup>41</sup> *Quiz* is often referred to as **الفرض** (in Arabic) and "Le Devoir" (in French)

## 2.6.2 Justifications of AEG

A pertinent question that needs to be addressed urgently concerns the efficiency of the Algerian middle school teachers of English in preparing, designing, constructing, and scoring term examination papers. Loppriore (2002: 218-9) notes that “ teachers lacked for years the basic skills in assessment and evaluation, and, particularly since the introduction of the concept of competence development and the diffusion of task based methodologies, teachers have felt the need for more specific training in this specific field”. Paradoxically, assessment-related activities appear to consume much of the teachers’ time and energy. Phye (1997: 40) believes “Assessment requires a significant portion of a teachers (*sic*) professional time and energy”. In one study, Stiggins (1991) estimates that teachers spend up to 50% of their instructional time in assessment-related activities” (cited in Plake 1997: 53). Despite such a high proportion, teachers receive little formal education and training in constructing and scoring assessment-related activities. Plake observes “For an activity that commands such a high proportion of their professional practice, teachers receive little or no formal training in the preparatory programs” (*ibid.*). Constructing useful tests may mean a stressful period for teachers, who lack the necessary skills and self-confidence in producing pedagogically fulfilling tests. In his 1980 monumental study, Ward notes that “... teachers frequently report feeling ill-prepared to undertake assessment-related activities” (*ibid.*). An assessment guide to testing is all the more obligatory.

The production of well-structured and well laid-out assessment guides to testing is made all the more urgent when new reforms and/ or teaching methodologies are adopted. It has been noticed that in recent years, in Algeria and elsewhere, a paradigm shift from norm-referenced to criterion-reference assessment is marked. Rao (2004: 9) explains:

Public examinations are ‘norm-referenced’, which means that they are designed to show well pupils do in relation to their peers, not whether they have mastered a particular body of knowledge. Such measuring devices tend to concentrate on a relatively narrow band of academic skills required for

passage into the next level of education, and then only limited attention to life skills and vocational jobs.

Basically, Competency-Based Approach to Language Teaching (CBALT) favors criterion-referenced assessment. According to Burns and Klingstedt (1973:7), “In CBE, time may vary, but achievement is held constant”. Differently stated, CBALT targets how well individual learners achieve competency regardless of the required time. Therefore, assessment systems need to match that approach to language teaching, or otherwise they would be in sheer breach of the very nature of CBALT. In Algeria, practically, all the assessment systems in the middle school are norm-referenced (NR), whereas the whole teaching-learning process is criterion-referenced (CR). There need to be an assessment guide to testing to redirect middle school teachers of English to respect the CR tenets of CBALT.

### 2.6.3 Availability of AEG

It may seem paradoxical to note that assessment and evaluation guides or simply Test Guides (TG) are missing from the instructional package. *Au fond*, the whole competency-based education, which was adopted and launched in 2002-2003, provided teachers with no more than the textbooks. From the textbook content, syllabus, and rubrics, teachers are required to construct testing tasks and activities that reflect the spirit of the avenue in question (i.e., CBA). Most teachers if not all still adopt the same attitudes and practices in constructing tests as the ones in the previous approach (namely the Communicative Approach). It is assumed that the availability of the CBA-designed textbooks represent the availability of AEGs in that the same rubrics and tasks are replicated while designing, constructing, and administering tests in the middle schools. What may be at issue at this point is the fact that by reaching the final year of their middle school studies, students are supposed to sit a standardized test known as *Brevet d'Enseignement Moyen*<sup>42</sup> (or simply, BEM). Throughout the year, teachers in all subjects of the curriculum are urged to teach their

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<sup>42</sup> Middle School Certificate also known in Arabic as شهادة التعليم المتوسط

student for the final test. To carry on their high school studies, middle school students are required to balance the scores in the periodic examinations and the BEM results.

In the total absence of a testing guide and/ or model, teacher approach the construction of quizzes and examination papers intuitively. Harlen (2006) propounds “It is not realistic for teachers alone to create such indicators for themselves, nor would it lead to valid outcomes; it requires input from researchers and developers with expertise in students’ development as well as classroom experience” (in Gardner 2006: 111). As middle school teachers of English have not received adequate education and training in developing tests according to CBE tenets, they have automatically resorted to older practices and models. As it has already mentioned, these models are norm-referenced, while CBE test models are criterion-referenced. Gardner argues “By using models of assessment borrowed from elsewhere, teachers may find themselves subscribing, uncritically and unwittingly, to the theories of learning on which they are based” (*ibid.* 49). Furthermore, having the BEM, a standardize middle school test, as the only model for testing risks to compromise the teachers’ classroom practice. They will teach for test. Therefore, the BEM will control the teachers’ classroom practice. This effect of testing on teaching is labeled “washback”. Messick (1996) explains “Washback refers to the extent to which the introduction and use of a test influences language teachers and learners to do things that they would not otherwise do that promote or inhibit language learning” (in Fulcher and Davidson 2007: 221). GSD (*anglais*) team needs to make available -in sufficient quantities- CBE-based test model and to train an otherwise ill-prepared middle school teachers of English to construct useful tests in accordance with CBE tenets.

## **Conclusion**

The foregoing chapter has aimed to survey the Algerian middle school instructional materials from quantitative and qualitative perspectives. The endeavor has been challenging from every respect even more so as it has often been extremely difficult to find data on Algerian middle schools and the resources employed. It should be noted that unlike other nations around the world Algeria cannot be said to be defined by assessment: Researchers need to rely on their initiative and hard work to establish facts that usually come to be taken for granted. We have attempted to come to grips with the scarcity of information concerning the different agents and tools that interplay and frequently overlap in the teaching-learning context in Algeria. After the research and cross-examination, we have every reason to lay claim that Algerian middle school education is lagging behind in terms of the effectiveness of the teaching methodologies, instructional materials, and teachers' education and training. It seems that middle school teachers in general and teachers of English in particular are put under a lot of pressure to implement textbooks that they have never been seriously trained to come to terms with their methodology of teaching and daunting rubrics as well as linguistic content. It is intuitively easy to imagine both novice and senior teachers facing insurmountable challenges in teaching large classes of beginners a foreign language through materials that stretch their abilities. As a final note, middle school teachers of English are either taken to be aces in their craft or robots that execute orders efficiently.

## **Chapter Three: Middle School EFL Teacher Profile**

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## Chapter 3: Middle School EFL Teacher Profile

### Introduction

The present chapter is undertaken with a view of surveying, in a comprehensive framework, the profile of the middle school EFL teachers. The springboard for such an attempt is to scan the ecological<sup>1</sup>, psychological, professional, and social aspects which clearly affect teachers' output and commitment to their task, mission, and vision. The ultimate objective is to spot the incubating area of the diverse though conflicting attitudes nursed by the EFL teaching community vis-à-vis their profession, students, pedagogical materials, and their own expectations. A special reference to the proposed middle school textbooks of English (*viz.*, *Spotlight on English* 1+2+3, and *On the Move*) is envisaged with the quiet hope to unravel the underlying underpinnings of teachers' commitment to or disengagement from the teaching-learning process. We believe that teachers' motivation to classroom practices are primarily related to the practicality, teachability, and the pedagogical opportunities that instructional materials offer to the intended users. By examining the physical contexts of the teachers (classroom settings, textbooks, and teacher's guides, etc.) so much valuable and pertinent information may be collected and eventually revealed of the controlling and patterned *attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and mindsets* that make up teachers' psyche, and which would, in turn, culminate in a better understanding of the dynamics of teachers-surroundings interactions.

### 3.1 Socio-Professional Profile

Teachers' socio-professional profile appears to be an essential component in the research to understand the origins of the teachers' attitudes, behavior, beliefs, perceptions, and values. Furthermore, the socio-professional context sheds more light

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<sup>1</sup> Ecology refers to the scientific study of the relations that living organisms have with respect to each other and their natural environment (Wikipedia).

on the direct impact on the teachers' constant interplay with the students as well as the available resources. It is within the borders of the current section to investigate and outline the forces that have a salient imprint on teachers' in-service attitudes.

### 3.1.1 Nature of Teachers' Needs

Frustration, denial or unfulfillment of basic human needs will certainly lead to individuals' dysfunctionality in society. One common denominator among all those who have failed to cope with the laws and rules of their societies such as criminals, thieves, corrupt, burnout people have had their basic needs in one way or another denigrated. Across all walks of life, professionals deplore the way they have been handled, and the way the job is being performed, which has caused the feelings of distress, frustration and unhappiness to set in. In the same vein, many teachers would prefer to quit the job and a good number of bright students drop out of school because they think that one or more of their basic needs is/ are violated. Abraham Maslow's brainy quotation<sup>2</sup> telescopes the mood, "The fact is that people are good. Give people affection and security and they will give affection and be secure in their feelings and their behavior". Hence, affection, security, and survival are the basic elements of needs that not only society but also 21st century schools need to accommodate. The denial of teachers' and schoolchildren's basic needs only worsens the teaching-learning experiences since negative attitudes shape much of what teachers teach and students learn.

Three *need theories* are presently discussed at some length: Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Murray's psychogenic needs and Max-Neef's human needs. The linchpin in this polemic is the elusive nature of the notion of *need* and the boundaries of its meanings and shades. In point of fact, *need* comes to be defined in many nuances according to different perspectives. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (OALD) identifies circumstances in which something is lacking, or necessary as *need*, while Hachette dictionary defines *need* as "sensation qui porte les êtres vivants à certains

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<sup>2</sup> In *brainy quotes*

actes qui leur sont ou leur apparaissent nécessaires''. Differently stated, lack and necessity characterize the main synonyms of *need*. Moeini (2009: 1) presents a more specialized view when he considers that needs are the gaps between *what is expected* and *the existing conditions*. Moeini's definition, thus, clearly marks the discrepancy between what individuals expect to possess and/ or fulfill and the inability to deliver on. In other concrete words, when actual political, social and professional conditions frustrate the fulfillment of the individual's expectations, desires and wishes a breach cracks and widens as the individual feels the incapacity to cope with this new situation.

As psychology seeks to explore the individuals' mind, needs received a particular attention from psychologist. According to this perspective, needs may explain organisms' behavior. In search for an accommodation of their basic needs such as hunger, thirst, or shelter, both animals and humans follow certain pattern that psychologists call behavior. This type of definition focuses on the pragmatic and/ instrumentalistic aspect of need. This approach is advocated and promoted by the American psychologist Murray<sup>3</sup>. Murray (1938) defines *need* as a, "potentiality or readiness to respond in a certain way under certain given circumstances". Differently couched, if a teacher challenges the excruciating conditions surrounding him/ her and endeavors to improve his/her quality teaching, then we can say that the teacher in question recognized his own need for excellence. This view is obviously compatible with the tenets of the traditional school of behaviorism. It is so sobering, therefore, to realize that the responsiveness to certain stimuli (both internal and external) represents the notion of need, which is reminiscent of the very idea of the American school of behavior pioneered by B. F. Skinner<sup>4</sup> and dominated the academic and teaching fields for a long period of time. It should be acknowledged that American psychologists however critical of Skinnerian approach, they can never be severed from that tradition despite denial.

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<sup>3</sup> **Henry Alexander Murray** (May 13, 1893 – June 23, 1988) was an American psychologist who taught for over 30 years at Harvard University (Wikipedia)

<sup>4</sup> Burrhus Frederic "**B. F.**" **Skinner** (March 20, 1904 – August 18, 1990) was an American psychologist, behaviorist, author, inventor, and social philosopher (Wikipedia).

### 3.1.2. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

It was the American psychologist Abraham Maslow<sup>5</sup>'s pioneering work (1943) that established the value of *need* at the fore of exploration and the specialized scholarly literature. He was the first scholar who provided both the conceptual analysis (the examination of the semantic aspects of the terminology) and normative analysis (the examination of values). Maslow's cogent classification of needs into hierarchy amply demonstrates that needs can be prioritized. The hierarchy of needs is usually referred to explain the different types of needs and their degree of importance. Besides, it implies that certain needs ought to be satisfied first before other needs. The Three types of needs can be spelled out as follows: physiological needs (air, food, sex, and shelter, etc.), safety needs (personal safety, and financial safety, etc), and social needs (friendship, intimacy, supportive community, etc.). Maslow calls the first set of needs *Deficiency* (or *D-*) *Needs* and the second set of needs *Being* (or *B-*) *Need*. We propose the chart below to show the predetermined hierarchy which Maslow advanced in his books<sup>6</sup>. This pyramid of needs has at its base the survival needs (i.e., physiological) then topped by safety, social, esteem needs, and the topmost head is self-realization.



**Fig 1.** Maslow's hierarchy of Needs Chart

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<sup>5</sup> **Abraham** Harold **Maslow** (April 1, 1908 – June 8, 1970) was an American psychologist who was best known for creating **Maslow's** hierarchy of needs (Wikipedia).

<sup>6</sup> *A Theory of Human Motivation* ( 1943 ), *Motivation and Personality* ( 1954 ), *Toward a Psychology of Being* ( 1968 ), and *The Farther reaches of Human Nature* ( 1971 )

In short, the individual expects that his biological needs, physical needs, social needs, and psychological needs to be accommodated before he can put his full potential to be a productive citizen.

### 3.1.3 Psychogenic Needs

The second theory of *need* is advanced by Henry Murray. As we mentioned earlier, the pragmatic mechanisms (*viz.*, responsiveness to internal and/ or external stimuli) are the birthplace of *need*, and therefore the responsiveness comes from the individual's mental recognition of his/ her needs, which Murray names psychogenic. He proposes a taxonomy that includes 26 psychogenic needs (see table *below*).

<b>Murray's Psychogenic Needs</b>	
<b>Psychogenic Need</b>	<b>Description of Need</b>
<i>Abasement</i>	To surrender and accept punishment
<i>Achievement</i>	To overcome obstacles and succeed
<i>Acquisition</i> ( <i>Conservance</i> )	To obtain possessions
<i>Affiliation</i>	To make associations and friendships
<i>Aggression</i>	To injure others
<i>Autonomy</i>	To resist others and stand strong
<i>Blame avoidance</i>	To avoid blame and obey the rules
<i>Construction</i>	To build or create
<i>Contrariance</i>	To be unique
<i>Counteraction</i>	To defend honor
<i>Defendance</i>	To justify actions

<b><i>Deference</i></b>	To follow a superior, to serve
<b><i>Dominance</i></b> ( <i>Power</i> )	To control and lead others
<b><i>Exhibition</i></b>	To attract attention
<b><i>Exposition</i></b>	To provide information, educate
<b><i>Harm avoidance</i></b>	To avoid pain
<b><i>Inf avoidance</i></b>	To avoid failure, shame, or to conceal a weakness
<b><i>Nurturance</i></b>	To protect the helpless
<b><i>Order</i></b>	To arrange, organize, and be precise
<b><i>Play</i></b>	To relieve tension, have fun, or relax
<b><i>Recognition</i></b>	To gain approval and social status
<b><i>Rejection</i></b>	To exclude another
<b><i>Sentience</i></b>	To enjoy sensuous impressions
<b><i>Sex</i></b> ( <i>Erotic</i> )	To form and enjoy an erotic relationship
<b><i>Similance</i></b>	To empathize
<b><i>Succorance</i></b>	To seek protection or sympathy
<b><i>Understanding</i></b> ( <i>Cognizance</i> )	To analyze and experience, to seek knowledge

**Table 32:** Murray's psychogenic needs

In wide brief, Murray's interpretation of psychogenic needs takes that individuals are separate organisms and every single individual has his own set of needs that distinguish him from the others individuals. Both Maslow and Murray approach needs from a discrete point and ignored the fact that despite disparity, humans across climates, cultures and civilizations share a common vision of needs.

### **3.1.4 Fundamental Human Needs**

The third theory of human needs is advanced by the American-educated, Chilean scholar Manfred Arthur Max-Neef and his collaborators. As opposed to Murray's conception of the confined vision of needs which takes each individual separately, Max-Neef<sup>7</sup> and others (namely, Antonio Elizalde and Martin Hopenhayn) deem that the needs are universal and common to all human beings regardless of their ethnicities, denominations, and predispositions. Accordingly, they classify the basic human needs into nine (09) fundamental needs. They stipulate that the fact of being human, *Man* (in capital, generic use for mankind) across times, climates, civilizations, and cultures has always had common and interactive needs. As a matter of fact, the only difference lies in the manner *Man* satisfies and meets these needs.

<b>Need</b>	<b>Being (qualities)</b>	<b>Having (things)</b>	<b>Doing (actions)</b>	<b>Interacting (settings)</b>
<b>subsistence</b>	physical and mental health	food, shelter, work	feed, clothe, rest, work	living environment, social setting
<b>protection</b>	care, adaptability, autonomy	social security, health systems, work	co-operate, plan, take care of, help	social environment, dwelling
<b>Affection</b>	respect, sense of humour, generosity, sensuality	friendships, family, relationships with nature	share, take care of, make love, express	privacy, intimate spaces of togetherness

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<sup>7</sup> **Manfred Arthur Max-Neef** (b. October 26, 1932, Valparaiso, Chile) is a Chilean economist and environmentalist. Max-Neef started his career as a teacher of economics at the University of California, Berkeley in the early 1960s. (Wikipedia)

			emotions	
<b>understanding</b>	critical capacity, curiosity, intuition	literature, teachers, policies, educational	analyse, study, meditate, investigate,	schools, families, universities, communities,
<b>participation</b>	receptiveness, dedication, sense of humour	responsibilities, duties, work, rights	cooperate, dissent, express opinions	associations, parties, churches, neighbourhoods
<b>Leisure</b>	imagination, tranquillity, spontaneity	games, parties, peace of mind	day-dream, remember, relax, have fun	landscapes, intimate spaces, places to be alone
<b>Creation</b>	imagination, boldness, inventiveness, curiosity	abilities, skills, work, techniques	invent, build, design, work, compose, interpret	spaces for expression, workshops, audiences
<b>Identity</b>	sense of belonging, self- esteem, consistency	language, religions, work, customs, values, norms	get to know oneself, grow, commit oneself	places one belongs to, everyday settings

<b>Freedom</b>	autonomy, passion, self- esteem, open- mindedness	equal rights	dissent, choose, run risks, develop awareness	Anywhere
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**Table 33:** Fundamental human needs according to Max-Neef (Wikipedia)

Like all the other people and professionals, teachers look forward to having all their deficiency, being, psychogenic and fundamental human needs met to be more effective in the workplace. The reluctance in addressing and redressing teachers' needs would probably affect negatively their instructional skills and eventually undermine quality teaching and widens students' achievement gap. This is so because "teaching is a flat profession in which a teacher's responsibilities can remain the same from the first day until retirement regardless of the level of expertise gained over the years" (Katzenmeyer and Moller 2009: 4). In the following section, we would like to discuss with more precision in well defined contexts the EFL teachers' needs.

#### **3.1.4.1 Teachers' Subjective Needs**

Subjectives needs (SN) refer to the individual's psychological needs (i.e., affective, emotional, and cognitive) in the teaching-learning situation, and which are obtained from data about all those mental variables that include personality, confidence, attitudes, wants and expectations, learning styles, and teaching strategies (Richterich, 1980 ; Brindley, 1989 ; cited in Graves 1999: 13). Differently couched, subjective needs are actually *macro*-needs that are primarily inborn, but also acquired to a certain degree, and which tend to shape as well as define the individual's course of actual and future actions. Subjective needs are oftentimes beyond individuals' consciousness. In the same vein, Albert Einstein cautions that "weaknesses of attitude becomes weaknesses of character". This may account for the teachers' beliefs and attitudes which have frustrated their effective interaction with their fellow teachers, instructional materials, and students. Comments such as "students' proficiency keeps

waning day in, day out” or “male students are often very disruptive” are quite common if a strong indicator of the teachers’ incapacity to handle their own emotions and those around them. Steinberg (2002) observes “If a child does not learn, it could be teaching problem instead of a child problem” (cited in Tuncay 2002: 1). As long as these *inborn* needs are not accommodated adequately, then *teaching problems* will continue to frustrate quality teaching and optimal learning.

#### **3.1.4.2 Teachers’ Objective Needs**

Objective needs include knowledge about the context of the agents in the teaching-learning situation. Richterich (1980) and Brindley (1989) define objective needs as “derivable from different kinds of factual information” (*op.cit.*) that include “information on the agents (here teachers and/ or students), their use of language in real-life communication situations as well as their current language proficiency and language difficulties” (*ibid.*). Objective needs are in other words *micro*-needs acquired from socio-cultural environment and "include information about the teachers’ and/ or students’ backgrounds (country, culture, education, and family, and so on), languages spoken, speaking proficiency, reading, understanding, use of English outside the classroom" (*ibid.*). Most teachers if not all are well aware of these factors, but frequently fail to overcome challenges posed by their interplay. Syllabus designers and textbook writers need to be aware of these needs while they collect data and materials before they launch educational innovations. A needs questionnaire has been designed specifically to identify teachers’ needs, and the results thereof have included in this chapter in order to give credit to our claims.

### **3.2 Teachers’ Demographics**

While we may be deluded by the fact that middle school teacher community is homogeneous, namely all are Algerian, Muslim, Arabic-speaking, and with tolerable knowledge of their craft, they are basically heterogeneous in many other departments. They differ in such essential matters as : seniority, experience, gender, age, ITE - educated, university-educated, learning styles, brain dominance, teaching strategies, degree of bilinguality, emotions, cognition, self-esteem, motivation, empathy, and

socio-economic status, etc. They come into their classrooms with a mosaic of attitudes, beliefs, expectations, mindsets, moods, needs, personality traits, potential, strengths, talents, values and weaknesses. This diversity in the teaching community is both color and richness, but also a daunting challenge when it comes to accommodating all these constructs. Functionality and dysfunctionality of the teachers depends largely on the positive and/ or negative interplay of the aforementioned factors.

It is all the more perplexing to notice that teachers are an ignored entity: Most research seems to be learner-oriented but teacher-oblivious. Judging by the wide plethora on learners leads to the conviction that everything about the teachers is taken for granted at best and ignored at worst. It appears as if teachers were devoid of any attitudes, beliefs, concerns, expectations, needs, wants, and values. They are assumed to be those stoic “superhumans” who transcend their pain, low self-esteem, personality defects, and low salary, and so on, in their mission to educate young minds. Silverman notes (2002) “Today teachers must be superhuman and adapt to the children, instead of the other way around” (cited in Golon, 2008). They are expected to be “a modern social worker, part a special educator, part police officer, part ringmaster (to accommodate the range of all students, and oh, yes, part enthusiast- knowledge of your subject matter and of the fine art of teaching” (*ibid.*). As a concluding note, teachers’ demographics needs to be rehabilitated and made an indelible part of the implementation of school reforms.

### **3.3 Teachers’ Socio-Economic Status (SES)**

Socio-economic status (or simply, SES) affects people’s attitudes, behavior, and way of life in different ways. The way people speak, gesture, eat, look at others, spatial use, company one keeps, and have access to knowledge and resources all may be predicted from one’s SES. Income, education, and occupation define much of the individual’s psychological and social interplay. People with high SES tend to have more resources and influence on surrounding people ; people with a moderate SES have less access to resources and seem less influential ; people with low SES appear

less fortunate and spend most of their energy and time grappling with social and economic hassles. SES also draws the line between the different social layers, also known as social classes, and defines the way(s) they interact and the degree of interaction. A close inspection of SES may lead to a better understanding of the (dys)functionality of individuals and societies to cope with the changes and policies.

SES is defined as “an economic and sociological combined measure of a person’s work experience and of an individual’s or family’s economic and social position relative to others”. Four factors determine SES: income, education, occupation, and wealth. The more of these, the higher is the SES, and reversely the less of these, the less of the SES. Families with high SES have easy access to technology, health care, better schooling, and more entertainment. On the other side of the spectrum, unfortunate families (those with low SES) are more prone to stress and dismantlement (e.g., high rates of divorce, diseases, and poor schooling, etc). According to 2005 statistics, the Algerian population below poverty line is estimated at 25% of the population, which means that the quarter population suffers from low SES and its corollary ills. Unfortunately, pre-university teachers constitute a considerable percentage of the aforementioned estimation.

In its 1991 report, the Geneva-based International Labour Office (ILO) (1991: 98) explains the discrepancy between teachers’ salaries and the costs of living in developing countries:

Teachers’ salaries in a large number of developing countries can thus be described as excessively modest in absolute terms occasionally sinking below subsistence level, in many cases inadequately protected against rises in the cost of living and comparing unfavourably with earnings from other occupations which demand less in terms of training and responsibilities.

More than any other civil servants, teachers feel more uncomfortable with their low salaries. This gruesome situation, therefore, affects deeply the way they teach. Again, the ILO report continues its analysis on the teachers’ inability to teach better. It states

“Developing countries, for financial and demographic reasons, ... obviously do not possess the necessary resources to create the ideal environment, in which teacher can give their best”. Algerian teachers do unanimously agree that they are unfairly paid in comparison with other sectors (*viz.*, Sonatrach).

Algerian teachers’ underpayment led to various strikes that paralyzed the schools for months. The ubiquitous demands were and have been to pass the Fundamental Teacher’s Bill which regularizes teachers’ salaries, pension, social security, and other benefits. In 2009, the government brokered an agreement with the various teachers’ unions that stated a salary increase by 25%, and which would affect 300,000 workers. In 2010, another pay rise of 30% with a back pay effect that did not appear to live up to the teachers’ expectations. Boudida, CNAPEST spokesman, denounced the decision “the national minimum wage will only affect employees who are already at the national minimum wage- they are not many in Algeria”. The skeptic approach to salary increase originates from the fact that food prices have skyrocketed in recent years and the purchasing power of the Algerian civil servants in general and teachers in particular is still deplorably low. The Algerian media report that the government intends to increase salaries 20% in 2011, and which, according to the Prime Minister Mr. Ouyahya, will cost DA 75 billion to cover the financial implications of salary increase. Overall, low salaries and purchasing power nourish the teachers’ negative attitudes toward their profession.

### **3.4 Teachers’ Socio-Professional Rights**

Although, there is a *School Legislation* codebook in every school and you might even find a copy in the possession of some teachers, but you can hardly find a copy available for every teacher! On the day of the official appointment (namely *licensure*), most teachers are interviewed about some legislation that are pertinent to their duties

and rights. However, the questions on the School Legislation do not exceed 10% of the time of the interview. The majority of the teachers learn their rights hands-on: not until they face a challenge or a problem that the teachers get to know what the legislation provision has empowered them with or revoked from them. Issues such as health insurance, teaching time volume, board councils, examinations periods and filling students bulletins (i.e., mark reports), and so on are background knowledge to teachers (ironically, some as a legacy from the days of their own schooling). Issues such as promotion, sanctions, affectations, and so are scarcely debated on. A good number of teachers ignore in part or *in toto* their rights as full-fledged teachers in an institution very much governed by laws and rules.

It may appear paradoxical and even ironical to mention that teachers are oftentimes reminded of their duties rather their rights. Teachers are practically called on to comply with the laws in vigor when headmasters wish to press a point, or exert some pressure in order to gain some concessions, or even to expand their authority. Many interviewed teachers resent the fact that some headmasters resort to such practices to force some teachers to accept busy schedules, disruptive classes, or work extra hours as librarians, and so on. Female teachers, more than any other teachers, feel that they have been coerced to accept situations that make their task even harder. Supply teachers seem to suffer more than the other fellow teachers; their suffering gets more and more if they are novice or with little experience. Such impediments affect deeply teachers' self-image, commitment, and attitudes. Middle school English teachers frequently denounce the manner whereby certain headteachers/ principals perceive them as teachers among other exact sciences teachers and their subject matter as a school subject among other more essential subjects. They report statements such as: "English language course is ancillary"; "English is اللغة الغرب", and "English is the language of Britain which erased Palestine off the map", etc. Such negative attitudes are counterproductive, especially as English the main key to get access to knowledge in this Information Age.

### 3.5 Psychological Profile

By definition, the psychological profiles deals with the “mental states” that affect teachers’ cognitive and emotional being. It is no short of disappointing to note that teachers psychological aspects seem to be underexplored judging by the short bibliography. Of course, this comparison is done against the large plethora of literature dealing with students’ psychological aspects.

#### 3.5.1 Teachers’ Self-Esteem

Branden (1992: xi) recognizes that the notion of self-esteem as a psychological term came to wide use and study only in the 1980s. He defines self-esteem as “the experience that we are appropriate to life and the requirements of life” (*ibid.* xii). The appropriateness to life means that the individual has (a) confidence in his thinking abilities and in facing life challenges, and (b) confidence in the individual’s rights to be happy, worthy, and to assert his needs and wants (*ibid.*). Mecca *et al.* (1989: xii) characterize self-esteem as “the term that implies a deeply felt appreciation of oneself and one’s natural being, and trust one’s instincts and abilities”. Both definitions advance without naming though two concepts “self- worth” and “belief in one’s abilities” in their attempt to identify self-esteem. The notion of “worthiness” is also mentioned by Coopersmith (quoted in Branden, *op.cit.*) “Self-esteem is a personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes the individual holds toward himself”. In the same breath, Branden quotes Bednar *et al.* who consider self-esteem an “enduring and affective sense of personal value based on accurate self-perception” (*ibid.*). Hence, self-esteem refers to the individuals’ self-worth and self-image.

By and large, middle school teachers of English hold a contradictory self-image. They almost never question their pedagogic abilities: They are good teachers, and they perform their duty fully. Their self-esteem is tarnished either by the absence of pecuniary and moral incentives or by the defensiveness of their students who come from the primary schools with deplorable background knowledge. It is not uncommon to hear high school teachers blaming middle school teachers for low level of students;

the middle school teachers blame the primary school teachers for the low level of students. University teachers complain of the students' paucity in knowledge and learning strategies. Pre-University teachers voice criticism as far as the inability of the university graduates to be professionally functional in school contexts! <sup>8</sup> This vicious cycle clearly demonstrates how Algerian teachers try to hide their hurt self-esteem by blaming the others.

The flip of the coin is that almost none in the Algerian education circles approves of the practices in their workplaces except those involved in the development of programs. The policy of exclusion in decision making has chipped away at the teachers' self-esteem to such an extent that many teachers feel demoralized, occupationally stressed, and lacking sense of purpose. Teachers are incapacitated by their low self-esteem, which has generated an awkward situation- teachers' disengagement instead of a meaningful engagement in the instruction. Subsequently, middle school teachers of English have succumbed to the two types of low self-esteem, situational and characteriological, which is even more critical to their psychological wellbeing. Mackay and Fanning (2000: 6) relate the former to the workplace while the latter to the previous experience. The middle school teachers of English situational and characteriological low self-esteem certainly would affect the manner wherein they perceive and interact with their instructional materials and students.

### **3.5.2 Teachers' Learning Styles**

It may not seem an exaggeration to state that the only one common denominator between learners is their difference and rate of learning. Throughout this work, learning is identified as the change in behavior as a result of an experience. All normal people are born with more or less the same ability, potential, and readiness to learn, but each, however, has (a) preferred way(s) of capitalizing on those raw resources. Sternberg (1997) terms "styles" those preferred ways of using the abilities that individuals have. The combination of learning and styles begets a psychological

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<sup>8</sup> A middle school inspector of English advised his teachers to respond this much "All right, if we have sent you low leveled students, then why don't you (here high school teachers) improve their level?"

construct known as learning styles. A wide plethora in specialized literature has provided tentative definitions of what is meant by learning styles. In both minimalist and maximalist identifications a leitmotiv seems to be omniscient: the preferred ways of learning. In the forthcoming definitions, additive terms and metaphors are included to shed light more on some perspectives that missed in previous definitions. It is noteworthy to observe that the concept of learning styles is powerful inasmuch as it is omnipresent in any serious classroom-related research.

Learning styles add to the individualness and uniqueness of the persons. Vail (1989: 6) states that “learning styles are the individual’s intellectual fingerprints, unique and permanent”. Different scholars approach learning styles from different perspective, although they usually acknowledge the individuals’ preferences in processing information. Leaver *et al.* (2005: 65) identify learning styles as “... the habitual patterns of perceiving, processing, or reacting to information”. This definition explicitly reference to the cognitive processes involved in determining learning styles, which indicates eventually related to the individuals’ ability to hear, see, smell, taste and touch. Sonbuchner (2008: 3) substantiates “The learning styles are related to the five senses and learning channels”. Therefore, learning styles can be categorized: auditory (hearing-related), kinesthetic (touch-related), and visual (seeing-related). The following table illustrates the skills associated with every learning style.

Auditory Channels	Kinesthetic Channels	Visual Channels
Listening & Speaking	Visualizing & Manipulating	Reading & Writing

**Table 34:** Learning styles and skill-related activities (drawn upon Sonbuchner 2008 :3)

According to Sonbuchner (*ibid.* 6) the teacher’s approach to classroom practices and discipline point out his/ her preferred approach to learning. The characteristics acknowledge below classify the teacher in one of the learning styles.

Auditory	Kinesthetic	Visual
An undercurrent of talking	Talking and moving around	The classroom is quiet
Discussions in different areas	Teacher appears disorganized	Worksheet lined up on a table
Bulletin boards are not important	Teacher's desk is used for storage	Bulletin boards are full of information
Blackboard is not organized or neat	Materials for projects are available	Blackboard is organized and neat
Large space in the middle of the room		

**Table 35:** Classroom practice & discipline evaluation of teachers' LS (drawn upon Sonbuchner 2008: 6)

Teachers are all three but with different rates. Some teachers rely most of time on one style and play down the other two ; at other times, the less preferred ones may emerge at the detriment of the one usually relied upon. Overall, teachers can prefer one learning style but still rely on the other styles but at lower frequencies.

In an attempt to classify middle school teachers of English according to their preferences in learning, a self-completed questionnaire has been administered to Biskri teachers (n=70). The results prove that 65% of the surveyed teachers may be labeled "visual", while 25% of them come under the label "auditory", and only 10% of them are "kinesthetic". The results obtained prove that individuals rely on visual ability as they grow into adulthood. Child psychologists state that babies tend to rely on their hearing and body movements to connect with parents. Chamberlain (nd: 22) reports that "signs of ear development can be seen in ... pre-nate only a week after conception". Moreover, it is widely known that babies start moving and "frolic" in the womb as soon as its limbs develop. Baby's sight, however, improves much later. Teacher education and training is yet another point in case that accounts for teachers'

visual preferences. 64.70% of the surveyed teachers had been educated at the *Institut Technologique d'Education* (ITE) where they were taught to be systematic and neat in presenting lessons to non-native adolescent learners. The figures presented have little significance if they do not correspond to the middle school students' own learning styles. Compatibility in learning preferences leads to optimal learning.

### 3.5.3 Teachers' Brain Dominance

Man is endowed by his Creator by a powerful, amazingly wired, if small brain. Amazingly this soft, viscous matter which weighs something around three (3) pounds (i.e., 1 ½ kilogram) is behind all those great achievements (shuttles, planes, robots, PCs, iPods, novels, poetry, paintings, and music, etc.) and sorrows that have befallen on humanity (racism, colonization, genocide, conflicts, wars, and crimes, etc.). Man's thinking and emotional faculties are born and processed there giving him, thus, a chance to stand out in the animal kingdom (namely, *Homo sapiens*, thinking man). It should be noted, nonetheless, that the human brain is not one construct; it is made up of two *split* hemispheres whose only connection is through a delicate body of tissue called *corpus callosum* (i.e., Latin word for tough body) that contains millions of interhemispheric fibers. The claim may be put forward that this split feature of the brain may account for the phenomenon known in neuroscience as *lateralization*.

Lateralization of the brain (each hemisphere specializes in *certain* functions) is widely accepted theory, confirmed and supported by a solid battery of experimentation. Hardiman (2003) notes “Although, recent research has confirmed the specialization of our brain hemispheres, we also that the two hemispheres are continuously working in tandem to produce the rich complexities of human thought” (cited in Golon 2008: 3) In other terms, the brain hemispheres are functioning symbiotically and synchronically; people tend to catch the big picture, but some details are more captivating than others and quickly shifted to long term memory (LTM). This is exactly how these two hemispheres work in tandem to help individuals make sense of the world. Understanding how both hemispheres carry out their missions could be readily observed in left-and right-handed individuals and people

with brain-related damage. The subsequent question is: which hemisphere does what function?

From the very onset, it is necessary to mention that both hemispheres are involved in higher-cognitive processes such as applying attention, understanding and classification, memorization, and retrieving information (*viz.*, thinking) (Williams 1986: 5). Despite the distribution of the functions between the two halves of the brain, both of them enjoy an exceptional status of positive harmony and interactiveness. Williams draws the attention to the fact that “the differences between the hemispheres should not obscure the fact that it is their complimentary functioning that gives the mind its power and flexibility” (*ibid.* 4). Research studies have outlined the different functions attributed to each one of the two hemispheres : While the left hemisphere deals with details in accretional processing, the right hemisphere perceives the global picture in non-verbal avenue:

In a nutshell, whereas the left hemisphere is.. linear, sequential, moving from one point to the next in a gradual step-by-step manner (analytical function), being also most efficient for processing verbal information for encoding and decoding speech, the right hemisphere specializes in combining those parts to create a whole (synthetical function) seeking and constructing patterns and recognizing relationships between separate parts, moving simultaneously, in parallel, being most efficient at visual and spatial processing with a minimum capacity of language perception and use (*ibid.* 3-4).

Overall then, the analytic and synthetic halves of the brain co-ordinate man’s thinking, behavior, and destiny as *homo sapiens*.

A posteriori, brain dominance defines man’s character, content and preferences shaping thus his proper (or otherwise) functioning in society. In a world that has changed dramatically from minimum literacy and skill to specialized knowledge and

skill, teachers, like other professionals for that matter, are forced to cope with this challenging situation. Darling-Hammond (2006: 4) states:

As the social and economic demands for education grow, so do expectations of teachers' knowledge and skills. Teachers must be able to succeed with wider range of learners than they were expected to teach in a time when school success was not essential for employment and participation in society. In the early society.. the school system was designed, only 5 percent of jobs required specialized knowledge and skill ; today, about 70 percent are knowledge work jobs that demand the ability to acquire and use specialized information, manage nonroutine tasks and employ advanced technology.

Teachers' brain dominance determines much of their approach to instruction and the way their students learn. Disparity between stakeholders' brain dominance would eventually frustrate the teaching-learning process immeasurably. It is incumbent upon specialists (anthropologists, educationalists, psychologists, and sociologists) to identify teachers' and students' brain dominance and lead both agents to be fully aware of the diagnosis and assist them bridge differences and disparities to minimize negative attitudes and ultimately achieve optimal learning.

Brain dominance affects teachers' and students' attitudes toward the teaching-learning process. Handedness (preference of using either hand in writing), intuition, objectivity, subjectivity, and emotional reactions, to name but a few, are all affected by brain dominance. According to Coon and Mitterer (2010: 73), 94 % of the population uses the left brain for language. Differently stated, the majority of people tend to to be analytical, mathematical, problem solvers, rational, technical, linear, sequential, systematic, and organizational. Therefore, they prefer to receive information gradually from known to unknown, easy to difficult, step by step; the methodology of teaching should be systematic and sequential. Conversely, the other 6% prefer the use of the right brain, which means they are artistic, conceptual, innovative, intuitive, divergent (solve problems through imagination and discovery), and they go beyond the task. Attitudes frequently appear in terms of preferences

without individuals being aware of this fact. Mismatch in brain dominance usually leads to misunderstanding and stereotypes that dramatically impacts the way teachers teach and students learn.

### **3.5.4 Teachers' Bilingualism and Bilinguality**

Normal people are born bilingual. However amazing this statement may appear, it has been proved that children strive to learn their community language with all its different linguistic, psycholinguistic, and sociolinguistic features. Romaine (2001: 8) observes “Bilingualism exists within cognitive systems of individuals, as well in as families and communities” (*sic*). From early age, children face different types of languages within the same community language: informal, formal, jargon, refined diction, profane diction, liturgical forms, slang, and paralinguistic gestures, grimaces, and interjections, etc. In the same breath, children soon face another challenge in their early formative years: learning a second/ and or foreign language. Different strategies are marshaled to meet this new linguistic challenge. Some children find a springboard in their bilinguality strategies, some other, however, are frustrated and end up underachieving in what it seems a natural function of human beings- to speak.

In comparison with the construct “bilingualism”, *bilinguality* is relatively recent. It was introduced by two French-speaking Canadian scholars, Josiane Hamers and Michel Blanc. Hamer and Blanc (2000: 25) view bilinguality as a “*psychological* state of an individual who has access to more than one linguistic code as a means of social communication. This access is multidimensional as it varies along a number of psychological and sociological dimensions” (*emphasis added*). While bilinguality concerns the individual’s competence to deal with more than one linguistic code to function in his community, bilingualism concerns the possession of the community in question two or more linguistic codes which it utilizes for particular functions, for instance Arabic-French in Algeria, English-French in Canada, and Schwyzertütsch-High German in Switzerland, etc. Each code comes to be utilized in particular social functions. Bilingualism is, therefore, a societal phenomenon rather than individualist as it characterizes a linguistic community which is torn between two linguistic codes,

similar or not. Romaine quotes Mackey (1968) who considers “Bilingualism (is) not a phenomenon of language but of its use” (*ibid.*). However, bilinguality concerns the individual’s attitudes toward the linguistic codes in use in his society. A good example of bilinguality is the Polish speakers of the exclamative English word “Jesus!” to avoid sounding blasphemous in their native language.

Paradoxically, Algeria implicitly recognizes two mutually exclusive kinds of bilingualism: additive bilingualism and subtractive bilingualism (see *Chapter One*). At one end of the spectrum stands English, which represents a means to be involved in global issues such as modernization, science, and technology, and at the other end stands French, the language of the former brutal colonizer whose incessant policies targeted the eradication of the native languages, i.e., Arabic and Berber vernaculars. Except for some big cities *bourgeoisie*<sup>9</sup> and specific elite, which uses French on relatively daily basis, French smitherreens are picked up by the Algerian population to fill up conversations and/ or missing equivalents in their community language(s). Common people’s use of fragmented and broken forms of French is more code-switching<sup>10</sup> than bilingualism. The interplay between these languages and the way the individual Algerians’ bilinguality developed put them in a particular frame of mind: They can learn any language with ease.

Most teachers who responded to the questionnaires and attended unstructured interviews claimed to speak more than one language despite the fact that they are native speakers of Arabic. Some of them (especially senior ones) are excellent at two languages at least, namely French and English, whereas junior ones are better at least Arabic and English. However, a tiny minority is trilingual, for they can function properly in Arabic, English, and French. It is unquestionably reasonable to state that none is a true bilingual or trilingual for a number of reasons. Firstly, an ideal bilingual and/ or polyglot is a myth. Secondly, the individual’s bilinguality influences the

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<sup>9</sup> High middle class

<sup>10</sup> The alternative utilization of two or more linguistic codes (languages, vernaculars, dialects, and accents).

acquisition of other languages through interference. Middle school English teachers' bilinguality has a great impact on their instruction. It is felt that a good number of them lack self-confidence, and on score of that they quickly resort to their community language <sup>11</sup>as soon as they cannot explain a new word. Nuances, phonological, and certain grammatical structures (namely, if-clauses, reported speech, embedded questions, and tense, etc.) appear to be an ordeal that stretches teachers' capabilities. In short, middle school teachers of English have an excellent view of English, but they rarely undertake to use it outside schools even with their students. They quickly switch to the native language out of shyness or for fear of being perceived pompous, especially as the Algerian society is culturally face-saving.

### **3.6 Professional Profile**

It is within the scope of this section to inquire about teachers' strictly professional profile. The premise is to spot light on teachers' in their workplace and how this affects their choice of being a teacher, their attitudes toward probation period (namely, *periode de stage*, *فترة التربص*), their attitudes toward the licensure procedure (namely, *nomination*, *الترسيم*), and their education and training. It should be acknowledged that attitudes are understood throughout this section rather than directly addressed.

#### **3.6.1 Teachers' Vocation**

Some people feel strongly that they were born teachers, and if they were not, they are "cut out" for the job. They feel that they would appear clumsy doing other thing than imparting knowledge to youngsters and equip them with the appropriate set of morals in order to make up good citizenry. They fondly connote teaching their "calling" or "vocation", which may account for their sharp sense of mission, a sort of religious attachment to a fervor that wanes at times but it never weans. Other people, however, nurse different feelings altogether. They argue that they were either lured to and/or entrapped in a job that never seems to satisfy them professionally,

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<sup>11</sup> *Community language* is an equivalent term of *mother tongue* or *L1*.

psychologically, and/ or socially. They disgustingly connote teaching their “life blunder” or “hole<sup>12</sup>”. A priori, this pessimism means that these people are emotionally disengaged from the teaching-learning process, which may justify underachievement in standardized tests (i.e., BEF and Bacchalaureat). In wide brief, teaching, for its own sake, makes all the difference in the emotional satisfaction (*viz.*, happiness) of those involved in the teaching-learning process.

It is argued that people who choose to teach out of “vocation” are definitely more committed to, satisfied, and meaningfully engaged in building up their own characters and of their students. Committed teachers are the sources of inspiration for the students as much as they stand examples for other colleagues. Along those lines, Mayer and Allen (1997: 3) define a committed employee as “one who stays with the organization through thick and thin, attends regularly, puts full day (may be more), protects company assets, shares company goals, and so on”. Three traits characterize committed teachers, therefore, or any other employee for that matter, loyalty, vigilance and conviction. This is done by being assiduous, trustworthy, conscientious, devoted, and mindful. Morrow (1993) views commitment therefore as “an attitude that reflects feelings like attachment, identification, or loyalty to the object of commitment” (cited in Cohen 2003: xi). Teachers whose commitment is sought need be involved in the teaching-learning process and in decision-making, or else alienation and disengagement will be sure replacements. Unfortunately, many middle school English teachers show alarming signs.

Yet another trait that people who call teaching their vocation seem to manifest is job satisfaction. Spector (1997: 2) identifies job satisfaction as “simply how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs. It is the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs”. It may appear ironical that teaching, once and sometimes still called noble profession, loses its glimmer and ends up irksome, daunting, and full of never-ending chores. Teachers’ dissatisfaction

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<sup>12</sup> Slang word for *prison*. Here, this term is deliberately utilized to convey the unwanted feeling of entrapment that teachers’ feel after some in-service years.

seems to stem primarily from low salaries that barely make both ends meet, subsequently crippling them from leading a decent life. Other causes of teachers' displeasure with their vocation is the students' lack of discipline, overcrowdedness, busy schedules, lengthy syllabuses, and lack of incentives. Social security has taken its toll on teachers' job satisfaction especially as teachers are not fully covered against chronic teaching-related diseases (namely, occupational stress as well as allergies), and let alone their families. What is more, many teachers feel they are stuck in their outdated approaches, methods, and techniques even more so when new "outlandish" approaches are adopted in the conception of textbooks.

Teachers' meaningful engagement seems to be compromised by the introduction of a new reform together with a halo of subsequent changes such as teaching methodology, syllabus, textbooks, teaching strategies, and evaluation, etc. Teachers demonstrate reticence to fully co-operate not because they refuse but because they have been taken off-guard and they have not been trained to appreciate new methodological and instructional changes. Much of the success of school reforms, implementation of textbooks, attainment of objective, establishment of a favorable atmosphere for learning, and enhancing a healthy portion of self-esteem depends on teachers' meaningful engagement. Marzano (2001: 3) quotes Wright and others who assert that "the most important factor affecting student learning is the teacher". In the same breath, Stigler and Hiebert (2009: 2) believe that the highly visible efforts such as reducing class size, outfitting school with technology "miss the mark, because they leave out the one ingredient most likely to make a difference: the quality of teaching". To conclude, the success of school reforms depends heavily on teachers' meaningful engagement in the teaching process.

### **3.6.2 Probation and Licensure<sup>13</sup>**

Probation and licensure are an indelible part of the lengthy process of educating and training teachers. Officializing the appointment of novice teachers occurs through two

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<sup>13</sup> "Periode de stage" and "nomination" in French. In Arabic, they are "فترة التريص" and "التريص". Respectively.

phases called probation and licensure respectively. Probation represent the period of training that novice teachers spend in their new position. During this period, novice teachers work hard to meet the requirements and standards suitable for competent teachers. In the same vein, The authors of the Geneva-based International Labour Office (ILO) (1991: 31) note

A probationary period or trial period is a common feature of most education systems. Its purpose is to provide supplementary training under normal class conditions, side by side, with, or sometimes, under the supervision of, experienced teachers, as well as evaluate the new teacher's abilities before final appointment.

Generally, the probationary or trial period may span from one to two years. This period is also termed induction in Britain where candidates are supposed to undergo a phase in learning to teach as well as a phase in teacher socialization in that they assimilate the school dynamics and eventually contribute to school change.

After the demonstration of satisfactory skills in teaching and meeting the legislative requirements, novice teachers are eligible for *licensure*. A board of examiners (inspectors and qualified teachers) issue a statement and subsequently submit a report to the directorates (or boards) of education affirming that candidates have demonstrated the ability to teach. Probationary teachers are required to present two lessons with two different classes and/ or levels (i.e., grades) in the presence of a board of examiners made up of three professionals : an inspector of the subject (English in our case) and two experienced teachers. An interview follows wherein candidates account for the procedures that they have followed in delivering their lessons. Besides, candidates need to demonstrate an ability in understanding *school legislation* (aka, التشرية المدرسية). The board of examiners is entitled to prove one of the three decisions : (1) the teacher has given evidence of practical efficiency in teaching normal classes, (2) recommend that the teacher be granted another opportunity for an extended probation (i.e., trial) period, and (3) recommend that the teacher be unfit for further employment as a qualified teacher. It should be noted that while the first two decisions are common, the third is extremely rare (only in case the teacher commits grave teaching or behavioral abnormalities).

### 3.6.3 Teachers' Education and Training

Algerian middle school teachers of English come from two different traditions and/or tracks. The majority of the teachers (especially senior ones) have studied in *Institut Technologique d'Education* (ITE). These are schools whose main mission was to recruit would-be teachers from among Baccalaureate holders. Candidates studied for two years a core curriculum made up of TEFL, linguistics, phonology of English, grammar, Oral Expression, and Written Expression. In the second semester of the second year, would-be teachers underwent training period with normal classes. They were assigned to different middle schools where they not only attended classes with experienced, senior teachers, but also they were required to demonstrate skills in teaching. According to our census for the current research, ITE educated middle school teachers of English represent 64.70% of the total teaching staff. The other 38.23% of middle school teachers of English have received college education; they have not been specifically trained to be teachers. They are *Licence Diploma* (i.e., B.A.) holders of English studies, and therefore, would be fit anywhere in the job market from translators to civil servants. ITE educated teachers frequently criticize college educated teachers for their lack of knowledge and expertise in teaching English.

ITE-educated and college-educated middle school teachers of English stand at the opposite sides of the spectrum. While the latter suffer from inabilities in the theoretical aspects of teaching, the former lack the practical aspects of teaching. In the self-completing questionnaire designed specifically for the present work, middle school teachers demonstrate low rates in reading specialized literature. We may cogently claim that most of them lack the ability to understand the new terminology. The table below exposes the rates :

Question-Item	Number of teachers	Percentage (%)
Reading EFL Journals	18	26.47%

Reading EFL Reference books	22	32.35%
Reading Online Articles	24	35.29%
Reading Novels	34	50%

**Table 36:** Specialized literature middle school readership

For teachers of English in the Age of Information where books are available in huge quantities and easily accessible (particularly e-books) the readership of specialized literature among teachers' community has proven to be low. The anxiety of not being able to understand the new theories in teaching has led ITE middle school teachers of English to stress the kind of education programs that put the conceptual framework of teaching as a necessity. In the same vein, college educated middle school teachers of English express earnest wishes that the practical aspects of teaching to be prioritized in education programs.

### 3.6.4 Teachers' Teaching Styles

Teaching styles (aka, cognitive styles) refer to the teachers' approaches to teaching practices. Fisher & Fisher 1979, cited in Saklofske and Zeidner 1995: 219) define teaching styles as "a pervasive way of approaching the learners that might be consistent with several methods of teaching". Kuchinskas (1979, *ibid.* 219-220) identifies cognitive styles as "manner in which an individual acts, reacts, and adapts to the environment". Differently stated, teachers' styles or cognitive styles mean the teachers' engagement and interplay with the class components such as textbook content, students, and school climate. Diaz-Maggioli (2004: 6) observes that teaching styles mean "the way teachers perform in classroom- that is, to teacher behavior". According to this definition, teaching styles refer to the in-class conduct of teachers. Teaching styles are the synergy of different aspects resulting from socio-professional experience. Diaz-Maggioli (*ibid.*) notes that teaching styles "are the result of interacting personal, professional, knowledge, career, institutional, curriculum

development''. Teaching styles are ostensibly contagious in that they are perpetuated in some form across various generations of teachers.

It is widely recognized that teachers teach the way they themselves have been taught. Along those lines, Siddiqi (2007: 2) corroborates "Recent research indicate that teachers teach in a manner consistent with their own way of learning". This cogently explains the reason why teachers are reluctant and even resistant to change and innovation. Teachers approach teaching in different ways: Some teachers are clearly manipulative; some others encourage student autonomy, and others teach subject rather than students. Hanson and Borthwick (1984, cited in Saklofske and Zeidner *op.cit.*) suggest six different categories of teaching styles.

Teaching Styles Teaching	Explanations
Task-Oriented Approach	Teachers plan tasks that associated with some appropriate prescribed materials.
Cooperative-Planner Approach	Teachers and students plan an instructional venture, though the teacher in charge.
Child-Centered Approach	Teachers plan tasks with the students choosing from options according to their interests.
Subject-Centered Approach	Teachers plan and structure the content to the extent that students are nearly excluded.
Learning-Centered Teaching	Teachers show equal concern for both students and the content of the subject.

Emotionally Exciting Teachers	Teachers try to make their teaching as stimulating as possible.
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**Table 37:** Categories of teaching styles (drawn upon Hanson and Borthwick (1984).

In more recent studies, teaching styles are telescoped to three main categories according to Siddiqi (*op.cit.*). In the table below, they are outlined along their features.

Teaching Styles	Features
Instruction-Centered	<p>The teacher acts as a model.</p> <p>The teacher selects from the discipline the information to be taught, studied, and learned.</p> <p>The teacher is the authoritative expert, main source of knowledge, and focal point of activity.</p> <p>Students are the passive recipients of information.</p>
Student-Centered	<p>The focus is on the cognitive development of students.</p> <p>The teacher helps students grasp the development of knowledge as a process rather than the product.</p> <p>Students create their own conceptual/ cognitive models.</p> <p>Other factors that affect learning are considered such as attitudes, values, beliefs, and motivation.</p>

Discipline-Centered	<p>The teacher's and students' needs are not taken into consideration.</p> <p>The course is driven by and depends on the disciplinary content.</p> <p>The teacher is the transmitter of knowledge.</p> <p>The content is prescribed by some separate authority.</p> <p>The course has a fixed structure.</p>
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**Table 38:** Teaching styles (drawn from Siddiqi 2007: 2).

It should be noted, however, that teachers oftentimes combine one or all of the teaching styles mentioned above. Teachers' preference for one style in particular is the commonest.

Attitudes are at the heart of teaching styles. As it has already been acknowledged, teaching styles are a coalescence of psychological, social, and professional factors. Teaching styles are affected directly by teachers' attitudes. It is widely known that teachers with positive attitudes toward their students and workplace are considerably involved in the teaching-learning process and willing to "refresh" their teaching styles with new ideas, methods, and resources. Teachers with negative attitudes tend to worsen the school climate and diffuse counterproductive school culture that cannot be conducive to optimal learning. According to the results obtained from one of the questionnaires specifically designed to investigate the middle school teachers of English attitudes toward their school context, we have come to the conclusion that both female and male teachers share the belief that male students tend to disrupt the smooth running of class in comparison with female students, and on score of that teachers are prone to use corporal punishment and intimidation to bring law and order to the class. With overcrowded classes and less disciplined students, teachers seem to be adopting authoritarian methods to impose discipline. This attitude encourages teachers to focus on the completion of the course rather than on establishing rapport.

### 3.6.5 Teachers' Nonverbal Communication

For better or worse, teachers communicate through different channels most of which they seem to be unaware of. They arguably communicate more information to their students nonverbally than they might suspect. Wood (2009: 122) reports that according to some scholars, nonverbal communication (NVC) constitutes the majority of the messages teachers send to their students, which are estimated to occupy between 65% to 93% of the total meaning of communication. These figures amply demonstrate that NVC contributes conspicuously to the teaching-learning process. By definition, anything that teachers do in and outside the class apart from intelligible lexemes falls within the department of NVC. Wood identifies NVC as follows: "Nonverbal communication is all aspects of communication other than words. It includes not only gestures and body language, but also how we utter words: inflection, pause, tone, volume, and accent" (*ibid.*). NVC contributes to the elucidation and crystallization of meaning and/ or (dis)confirming certain attitudes and behaviors about the subject being learned. Wood echoes "These nonverbal features of environment affect meanings of our words. Nonverbal communication also includes features of environment that affect interaction, personal objects such jewelry and clothes; physical appearance and facial expressions" (*ibid.*). In short, NVC is an integral part of teachers' teaching practices.

By and large, teachers appear more oriented toward verbal communication, which is the primary medium as well as focus of instruction. For that particular reason, they tend to ignore or suppress the subsequent benefits of NVC. Occasionally, this is due to the selective lenses of their attitudes, which is prone to dismiss students' interests in teachers' NVC. As a point of fact, both verbal (VBC) and nonverbal communication <sup>14</sup>(NVC) need be of uttermost interest to teachers in general and English teachers in particular. Algerian students perceive FL2, English in our case, through their teachers, especially as teachers represent the only physical contact with

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<sup>14</sup> **Nonverbal communication** is usually understood as the process of communication through sending and receiving wordless (mostly visual) cues between people.

that language and its culture. Wood stipulates that “Nonverbal communication is similar to verbal communication in four respects. It is symbolic, it is rule-guided, it may be intentional or unintentional, and it reflects culture” (*ibid.*). If NVC is such value-laden<sup>15</sup> and value-rich process in teaching and learning in formal settings, then teachers need be made aware and familiar with its potential benefits and challenges. In the following section, which evolves from a powerful claim that the NVC systems of the Algerian middle school teachers of English is underexplored, we attempt to investigate how the teachers in question approach this compelling method of foreign language learning and teaching. Although it is a “silent language” to put it in Hall’s terms (quoted in Valdés, 1986: 65), it is actually and more than anything else outspoken.

### **3.6.5.1 Proxemics**

Proxemics (aka *space preference* and *social space*) refers to how individuals conceive and delimit the spatial interactions with the other members of the society. Tauber and Mester (2007: 56) define proxemics in the following terms: “the study of the communicative effect of the physical space between interacting people”. Differently stated, the distance that separates two interacting people denotes how close and/ or formal their relation is. Along those lines Livingston (2010: 71) develops her definition of the concept: “Proxemics is nonverbal communication that deals with the physical distance between people. It is the proximity that we are to a person when communicating”. The social interactions define the breadth and width of the physical space that comes in between interlocutors; individual clearly tolerate closer distances to intimate acquaintances, and prefer longer distances with strangers. The American anthropologist, Edward Twitchell Hall, Jr. (1914-2009) was the first to define proxemics and estimate the volume of the spheres and who is supposed to be where. The diagram below illustrates those spheres according to Hall. The four spheres delimit the distances that separate an English-speaking individual from the rest of his/ her peers. The inner spheres tolerate intimate persons while the outer one excludes those who may be life-threatening.

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<sup>15</sup> Presupposing the acceptance of certain values.

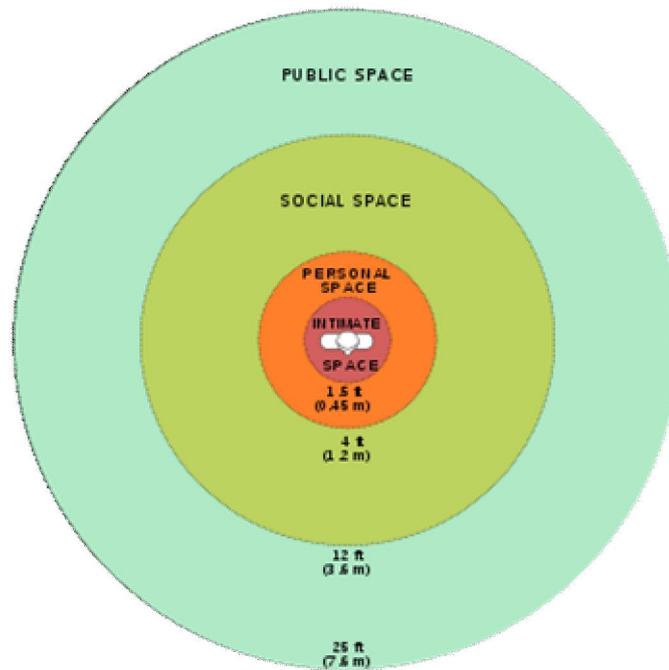


Fig.2 Hall's diagram

The closeness and length of the distance depends primarily on the degree of acquaintance. Weiten *et al.* (2011: 246) note “the amount of interpersonal distance people prefer depends on the nature of the relationship and the situations. The appropriate distance between people is also regulated by social norms and varies by culture”. The table below telescopes the interpersonal distances in the English-speaking cultures according to Hall.

Proxemic Zones	Nature of Relation	Distance	People Involved
Zone One	Intimate	0-1 ½ feet	Parents & children, spouses, lovers, partners
Zone Two	Personal	1 ½- 4 feet	Close friends
Zone Three	Social	4-12 feet	Co-workers, social gatherings, friends, work

			situations
Zone Four	Public	12 feet+	Actors, total strangers, important officials.

**Table 39:** Proxemics in society (drawn upon Livingston, 2010 and Weiter *et al.*, 2011).

In short, acquaintance, socio-cultural norms, and trustworthiness shape the physical space in individuals' daily interactions.

Space preference is socially regulated in spite of being influenced by other factors such as nature of relation, population density, and socio-economic circumstances. Earley *et al.* (2006: 94) substantiate that "... space preferences are most dependent on cultural norms". Apparently, peoples who dwell in colder climate prefer longer distances when they interact, while peoples from warm climates tend to prefer closer distances. Earley and Ang (2003: 176) report Jones's (1971) findings on space preferences "... in general, Asians and Native Americans prefer great distances when talking with each other than Southern Europeans, Arabs, and South Americans". Interestingly, space preferences are interpreted differently "therefore space communicates various meanings across cultures. Standing too far away from one who expects you to stand close might be perceived as aloofness or coldness. However, standing too close to another might be perceived as pushiness or aggressiveness" (*ibid.*). Misunderstandings of space preferences may account for much of unfavorable attitudes toward the culture that is different from one's. On score of that teachers of foreign languages need to make their student familiar with these space preferences.

As a social space, the classroom presents a unique opportunity to observe the society in action. The physical spaces between teachers and students are in constant adjustment and re-adjustment; spaces shape and reshape human interactions and relations inside classrooms. Good achievers are usually included within teachers'

“circle of trust”, and, therefore, can reduce the distance to the physical beings of teachers. Students’ within the “circle of trust” can carry teachers’ bags or (copy)books for their teachers ; they can be trusted to monitor the class while their teachers are away, or they can write in logbooks instead of their teachers. However, noisy students who attempt to disrupt the smooth running of the lesson come to be distanced to further spheres to such an extent that they end up totally ignored. Teachers frequently mention the idiomatic expression “شعرة معاوية” to define the social space with respect to their students. In a society that has always expressed deference to the teacher’s status and authority; individual teachers are discouraged to entertain more relaxed spatial distances with students. Female and male teachers’ social space is clearly patterned on the social norms that govern gender relations. Female-male teachers *coordination meetings* <sup>16</sup>(CM) are usually held in open staff rooms with a minimum of an arm’s space.

The efficient use of proxemics (space preference or social space) in Algerian EFL classrooms can engender positive attitudes toward learning, and which will eventually contribute to optimal learning. Unwanted psychological discomforts such as aggressiveness, aloofness, anxiety, excessive shyness, stress can be considerably reduced. Pedagogical challenges in terms of classroom discipline and management, academic dishonesty, and lateness may be neutralized or at least minimized. Students’ awe and deference to their teachers’ authority could be rationalized. Building teacher-student rapport may lead to better communication in the classrooms and dwarfs misunderstanding and frustration. Cohabitation of large class size and space preferences can be made more meaningful and beneficial through judicious management of proximity to foster a sense of belonging among the classroom community members (namely teachers and students). Classroom dynamics such as assiduity, punctuality, sitting arrangements, submission of homework, group work, and so on can be positively affected by a rationalized utilization of the social space. All things considered, there are compelling reasons why EFL teachers in Algerian

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<sup>16</sup> CM refers to the regular meetings that the teachers of the common subject hold to discuss various issues such as the progression rate, examination paper activities, evaluation system, etc.

middle school should be aware of the effectiveness of proximity in the development of favorable attitudes toward optimal learning.

### 3.6.5.2 Kinesics

Kinesics means is the systematic study of body movements and the message they attempt to convey. It derives from the Ancient Greek word “Kinesis” for motion. West and Turner (2011: 158) posits “Kinesics refers to the study of body motions and how people use them to communicate”. Kinesics, as a nonverbal communication strategy, is deeply intertwined with the socio-cultural norms and values of interlocutors/ communicators. Kinesic codes clearly constitute an integral part of formal and informal interactions and across cultures. Some are universally accepted; others appear too local and with different meanings and interpretations. The table below illustrates some kinesic codes :

Kinesics	Code Meaning	Identification
Clapping Hands/ovation	Approval	Universal
Up-Down Nodding	Agreement	Universal
Indicating the adjacent chair	Invitation to sitting	Universal
Yawning at somebody's presence	Feeling asleep/ desinteret	Universal
Cupping Ear	Invitation to Speak up	Universal
Drawing (?) in the air	Wondering	Universal
Handshaking	Greeting	Islamic
Joing hands and	Greeting	Eastern Cultures

slightly bowing		
Backhand V-form (fingers)	Insult	English-Speaking Cultures
Winking	Flirtation	Arabic and Western Cultures
Joining and raising forefinger and middle finger in class	Offer to answer the teacher's question	Polish Culture

**Table 40:** Universality-locality of kinesic codes.

Attitudes are therefore constantly expressed through kinesics, which adds to the enduring importance of this form of nonverbal communication in EFL teaching and learning.

Body movements are basically patterned according to established socio-cultural norms and values. The fact that they are “patterned” and “established” suggests that they can be classified according to the message code that they convey. An analytical view of the table above indicates that gestures either reflect an image (i.e., *iconic*) or refer to something (i.e., *deictic*). Yule (2010: 199) identifies the former as “gestures that seem to be a reflection of the meaning” and the latter as “pointing to things while talking”. Besides, the Canadian social psychologist, Bavelas (1994), classifies gestures in the Anglo-Saxon culture of North America into four types: Delivery Gestures, Citing Gestures, Seeking Gestures, and Turn Gestures. Drawn upon West and Turner’s (*op.cit.* 159), an illustrative table is proposed below with a premise that these types are better explained through examples.

Type of Gesture	Explanation	Example
Delivery gestures	Signal shared understanding between	Nodding in agreement.

	communicators in a conversation	
Citing Gestures	Acknowledge another's feedback in a conversation	Speaker points at addressee to indicate "as you said earlier"
Seeking Gestures	Request agreement or clarification from speaker	Speaker looks at addressee as if to say "can you give the word for..?"
Turn Gestures	Indicate that another person can speak or are used to request the conversation floor	Speaker "hands over" the turn to addressee.

**Table 41:** Types of gestures according to Bavelas (1994) (drawn upon West & Turner: 2011: 159)

Overall then, gestures among other types of kinesics such as postures and facial expressions acquire more signification in social settings reflect the interlocutors' socio-cultural norms and values. Besides verbal communication, kinesics represents another mode to fill the gaps in interaction.

Frequently gestures such as the ones mentioned above and many others either supplement or complement social interactions and sometimes both. Their conscious or unconscious use signals a plethora of coded messages that only people from that particular culture or with sufficient knowledge on that culture can interpret them in the way that they have been meant for. Gullberg (2008: 188 in McCafferty and Stam, *op.cit.*) defines gestures as "... the (mainly manual) movements speakers perform unwittingly while they speak are closely and systematically related to language and speech both temporally and semantically". What is more, she empirically demonstrates that L2 learners resort more often to gestures to complement their shortage in lexico-grammatical items: "The articulatory and spatial properties of

gestures that can be seen suggest that learners exploit anaphoric gestures as communication strategies to overcome grammatical difficulties and to alleviate ambiguity wherever possible” (*ibid.*). Thus, gestures, as nonverbal communication strategies, compensate L2 learners’ paucity in working vocabulary and faulty grammar, which help them eventually meaningfully engage them in social interactions. Positive attitudes may emerge as a result of the integration of L2 culturally-bound gestures in the curriculum.

EFL teachers in the Algerian middle school are similar to their fellow teachers in that they appear too self-conscious about their appearance, body language, artifact, and dressing codes. Middle school students are true observant and readily form attitudes and stereotypes about their teachers’ body language. Frequently, teachers are stigmatized in most aggravated sense due to particular “ticks”. Most of the gestures that middle school teachers of English use in class are instruction-oriented and often improvised, and, therefore, differ from one teacher to another. For instance, the gesture for telephone may resemble the old type telephone (hooked, with a receiver and mouthpiece) or it may hints to a cell phone. Other eye (i.e., winking) or manual movements (i.e., thumb up, round shapes made with hands) are avoided altogether for fear of being misinterpreted as vulgar. It is worth acknowledging that teachers rarely engaging in sensitizing L2 learners in the meanings of the gestures that those students watch on TV (in movies) because they, themselves, are unaware of their use and signification. The simplistic interpretation of this observation is that teacher may be aware that these nonverbal communication strategies constitute an integral part of the L2 and its culture, and they are patterned according to established social norms and values.

### **3.6.5.3 Oculesics**

Although teachers’ eyes and gazes induce fear in many students, they participate otherwise in establishing and maintaining interpersonal contact. Eye contact is by definition establishing contact with the eyes and their movement, and it comes to be termed “oculesics” in scientific circles from the Latin “oculus” for eye. Cohen,

Manion, and Morrison (2002: 352) define oculusics as “... the study of messages sent by the eyes”. This definition appears too generic as it may be understood to mean sending socio-cultural messages. According to Hunt and Touzel (2008: 84), this discipline refers to “The study of how the eyes and eye movements can communicate..”. Eyes and eye movement can communicate a wide plethora of messages such as anger, disinterest, impatience, indignation, interest, happiness, humiliation, and tiredness, etc. In the same vein, Morreale, Spitzberg, and Barge (2007: 117) state “The eyes send powerful nonverbal messages”. According to the aforementioned authors, “People generally use eye contact- or the lack thereof- to accomplish two goals: to communicate interest and intimacy or to express dominance, power, and control” (*ibid.*, 117-8). An awareness of the benefits of oculusics in formal educational settings can assist teachers, therefore, to establish and maintain a good rapport.

In order for teachers to put eye contact to efficient use, they need not only to understand its dynamics but also the cultural interferences in the process. Hunt *et al.* point out

Four major factors influence or determine how much eye contact will exist in a communication transaction. First is the **role of the communicator**; the person receiving the message usually demonstrates more eye contact than the person initiating the message being sent. Second is **the nature of the topic** to be communicated; making and maintaining eye contact is easier with wit impersonal topics. If the topic is personal, eye contact generally decreases. **Gender** is the third factor; women tend to engage more in eye contact than men. The fourth factor is **relationship**. If the people communicating are friends or otherwise individuals who at relationships, greater eye contact will be established (*op.cit.*) (**emphasis added**).

Consequently, these four (04) factors mold both the nature and intensity of eye contact in social interactions. Different cultures, however, perceive and interpret eye contact differently. In Western English-speaking cultures, to look in the eye is a guise of interest, respect, and trustworthiness. Inversely, the Arab and Muslim cultures

prolonged eye contact could be misinterpreted as insolence and ill manners. Hunt et al. caution that “An understanding of cultural differences is needed if teachers are going to effectively communicate with all students in a positive fashion” (*ibid.* 85). Subsequently, teachers can send wrong messages to their FL students, which eventually lead to communication failure.

As a matter of fact, Algerian teachers eschew direct and/ or prolonged eye contact in their classes, especially when they address female students or female colleagues. To divert or lower eyes seems to be the usual practice in Algerian schools. In traditional Arab and Islamic cultures, persistent eye contact may be ill perceived by both female and male gender despite the fact that women and girls in general and across cultures are prone to longer if innocent eye contact. Cohen *et al.* state “Women engage in more frequent and sustained eye contact than men and are generally more visually attentive than men” (*op.cit.* 118). However, in Algerian middle schools, female and male teachers (teachers of English included) spare less frequent and sustained eye contact with one another and with their students for fear of being misinterpreted and, also, to preserve the traditional “*Al Horma*” so cherished and venerated in the Algerian culture. Conversely, students perceive frequent and sustained teachers’ eye contact to a particular student as an indication of preference and favoritism for that particular student. Good teachers of English, therefore, need be bicultural and fully aware of the cultural differences between L1 and L2 cultures and seek to cushion those differences to minimize cultural shocks and induce positive attitudes.

#### **3.6.5.4 Haptics**

Haptics<sup>17</sup> refers to the tactile contact with the environment. The term *haptics* derives from the Greek word “haptain”, which means “to fasten” and/ or “to touch” in English. Citing Ting-Toomey, Krueger (2005: 6) reports that “haptics examine the perception and meaning of touch behaviour”. The perception and

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<sup>17</sup> In nonverbal communication, *haptics* is pluralized unlike in this work where it is used to rhyme like linguistics, phonetics, and pragmatics.

meaning of touch behavior seems to be subject to social evaluation according to acceptable or unacceptable yardstick. Dumont (2010: 256) echoes “Haptics refers to patterns of bodily contact that are socially approved or condoned”. Being so much imbued in social norms, haptics differ from one culture to another ; what appears to be tolerated in one culture may risk to cause outrage in another. Scholars have identified three types of *public display of affection* (PDA<sup>18</sup>): high contact cultures, moderate contact cultures, and low contact cultures. For a better illustration, we have drawn a table wherein the features of each of the aforementioned type of culture are laid out.

Types	Features	Locations
High Contact Culture	Preference for direct eye contact, face each other, touch and kiss frequently and speak in rather loud voice	Arab World, France, Italy, Russia, and Latin America
Moderate Contact Culture	Preference for personal space, vacuum kisses rather actual kisses, less frequent touch behaviors.	Germany, UK, Scandinavia, USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zeland.
Low Contact Culture	Preference for little use of touching, indirect eye gazes, and speak at lower tone.	China, Japan, the Koreas, Indochina, Taiwan.

**Table 42:** Haptic cultures (drawn upon Krueger 2005-6).

In theory, haptic behavior is an integral part of the social norms<sup>19</sup> of interacting with other members of one’s and alien societies. Attitudes, whether positive or negative,

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<sup>18</sup> **Public displays of Affection** are acts of physical intimacy in the view of others (Wikipedia) such as kissing, hugging, and holding hands.

<sup>19</sup> **Social norms**, the customary rules that govern behavior in groups and societies (Stanford Encyclopedia of philosophy).

emerge from haptic behavior and, therefore, define considerably readiness or resistance to learning.

The physical behavior of “touching” fulfills different social functions, which fulfill, in their turn, different social interactions with the view of establishing the required *rapport*<sup>20</sup> with the other members of the inner and outer circles. Duck *et al.* (2011: 69) acknowledge Haslin’s (1974) classification of the functions of touch. The table below illustrates those functions that include different social situations that range from intimate to most formal occurrences.

Type of Function	Illustration
Functional/ Professional	Touch is permitted by context- for example, during a medical exam, someone you hardly know may touch parts of body that even your best friend has never seen.
Social/ Polite	Touch is formal- for example a handshake.
Friendship/ Warth	Touch is an expression of regard.
Love/ Intimacy	Touch is special, permitted only with those with whom you are close.

**Table 43:** Haslin’s (1974) functions of touch (qtd in Duck et al. 2011: 69).

The literature on haptics constantly includes other functions of touch in social situations. Relying on Jones and Yaborough’s (1985) list of touch functions, Ting-Toomey (1999: 130) reports the five communicative functions of touch (namely, haptic) behavior : (1) ritualistic interaction such as handshaking or bowing ; (2) expressing affect such as kissing and kicking ; (3) playfulness such flirtatious stroking and poking ; (4) a control function such as grabbing somebody’s arm; and (5) a task-

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<sup>20</sup> Individuals’ friendly relationships

related function such as a nurse taking a patient's pulse at the wrist. Apart from the deliberate use of different terms, the functions mentioned by Jones and Yaborough appear practically similar except for the control function where touch can be utilized to stop the linear action of an individual either to draw his/ her attention or prevent a dramatic action from occurring (grasp a passer-by from crossing the street while the light is on).

Arab's perception and responsiveness to haptic behaviors are clearly different from those observed in the Western cultures in general and in the Western English-speaking cultures in particular. Hall (1966) found that Arabic cultures typically place emphasis on the sense of smell, and respond to the rich, varied, seductive (or repellent) odors of bazaar and people. These are high-context contact inclined ways of being that require cognitive processing that is more existential, immediate, intuitive, and subjective (Dumont, *op.cit.*). Subsequently, we may put claim that Arabic cultures are arguably olfaction-oriented and stand at one end of the spectrum, while Western English-speaking cultures stand at the other all the more as they tend to be audio-visually oriented. Hall (1966) posits that "Northern Europeans, on the other hand, give primacy to distance receptors like vision and hearing, and they are culturally inclined to less personal, more abstract and objective cognitive processing" (*ibid.*). Arabs' high contact culture appears to be gender-bound: haptic behavior happens to be more intense between two individuals of the same sex. Nydell (1987, cited in Ting-Toomey: 1999: 131) observes

In general, Arabs tend to stand and sit closer and to touch other people (of the same sex) more than westerners do. It is common to see two men or two women holding hands as they walk down a street, which is simply a sign of friendship. A westerner must be prepared for the possibility that an Arab will take his hand, especially when crossing the street... . Kissing on both cheeks is a common form of greeting (again only with members of the same sex) as is embracing.

These attitudes toward haptic behaviors, which stand at one another's ends of the spectrum, are certainly reflected in EFL textbooks and classroom practices.

By and large, male-female haptic behaviors in Algerian school contexts are diligently established. In primary schools, teachers of both sexes appear to tolerate more “fatherly, motherly, sisterly, and brotherly” touch of their students, while primary female-male teachers’ touch is maintained to the minimum. In the middle schools, teachers maintain restricted haptic behaviors with the students; occasionally, male teachers shake hands with male students especially good-achievers, whereas female teachers only demonstrate touch engagement even to female students. The premise behind such low engagement in touch may be related to the students’ age (i.e., adolescence) that teachers irrationally misapproach. In high schools, apart from handshakes (among the same sex members) students are rarely engaged in touch behavior among themselves and even more or less with their teachers. Generally, students demonstrate respect towards male teachers with affable behaviors with regard male students in particular (shaking hands, and gently patting on the shoulders, etc.). Inversely, such behaviors from female teachers would be misread and negative attitudes are developed and harbored. Krueger (2005: 6) notes “Touching is a bonding gesture and essential for psychological and physical well-being”. Hence, EFL Teachers need to be aware that haptic behaviors, if judiciously performed in accordance with the norms of the local culture, may engender positive attitudes toward learning a foreign language and tolerate its different culture.

### **3.6.5.5 Chronemics**

Time is an essential element in the teaching-learning process, because it embodies the culture of the society, and directly influences the two agents (namely, teachers and students) in their daily interactions. The perception, length, and management/ use of time in society comes to be termed “chronemics”, a word that derives from Ancient Greek “khronos” for time and the suffix “ics” denoting a scholarly study. According to Quinlisk (in McCafferty and Stam, 2008: 28) chronemics “refers to how we convey a sense of time in our interactions and potentially signals respect, attention, eagerness, and importance”. This definition clearly identifies chronemics within social interactions and outlines the benefits thereof on the interlocutors’ relations. Furthermore, chronemics encapsulates and expresses the culture of the

society. Argyle (1988 in Robinson, 1994: 27) states that “Chronemics deals with the perception and use of time. This perception is very culture-bound”. In the same vein, Wood (2010: 106) posits “Chronemics expresses cultural attitudes toward time”. Cultural Anthropology stresses the cultural aspects of chronemics ; Nanda and Warmas (2011: 89) postulate that “Chronemics refers to the study of cultural understanding of time”. Besides the socio-cultural perception and repartition of time, the length of interactions is also considered by chronemics. Duck *et al.* (2011: 68) echo “Chronemics also involves the duration of events. Boring lectures seem to last forever”. In wide brief, chronemics are socially attitudinal.

People’s attitudes toward time is either super-ordinated, in which case they belong to monochronic cultures, or subordinated, and therefore, belong to the polychronic cultures. Scholars agree that the classification of cultures into monochronic and polychronic is attributed chiefly to the economic type of countries. For instance, Nordic and Western Europeans, North Americans, Japanese, Southern Koreans, and Singaporeans belong to monochronic cultures due to the fact that time is perceived in deadlines to be respected. African, Arab, Central Asians, Mediterranean, Latin American countries are placed in polychronic cultures as they perceive time as “dealine-free”. In the table below, features of both cultures are deliberately juxtaposed so that similarities and mainly differences can be easily singled out.

<b>Monochronic People</b>	<b>Polychronic People</b>
do one thing at a time	do many things at once
concentrate on the job	are highly distractible and subject to interruptions
take time commitments (deadlines, schedules) seriously	consider an objective to be achieved, if possible
are low-context and need information	are high-context and already have information
committed to the job	are committed to people and human relationships
adhere religiously to plans	change plans often and easily

are concerned about not disturbing others; follow rules of privacy and consideration	are more concerned with those who are closely related than with privacy
show great respect for private property; seldom borrow or lend	borrow and lend things often and easily
emphasize promptness	base promptness on the relationship
are accustomed to short-term relationships	have strong tendency to build lifetime relationships

**Table 44:** Polychronic vs. monochronic cultures (Wikipedia).

All in all, monochronic peoples tend to be more time-focused, whereas polychronic people tend to be human relations-focused.

Teaching English as a foreign language in a polychronic society such as Algeria probably raises more challenge than one might expect. The efficient management of time or the lack thereof may lead to mixed attitudes toward the teaching-learning process in general and the teaching and learning of English in particular. Moreover, it may even affect eventually students' commitment, motivation, self-esteem, and self-confidence. Classroom time is best managed when it is divided in manageable chunks/ units, each of which is designed to achieve an objective and establish good learning habit(s). According to Quinlisk *op.cit.*), "Waiting time between a teacher's question and a student's response is another example of chronemics", and therefore, teachers need to balance between different times chunks/ units. Severe consequences may entail if deadlines between chunks/ units of time are deliberately encroached. Quinlisk (*ibid.*) warns "Short wait time may leave little time for students to cognitively process questions and formulate answers, particularly in L2". Damaging psychological effects of short time wait may affect students' psyche. Again, Quinlisk (*ibid.*) points out "Short wait time may also send a relational message that reinforces a teacher's authority and expertise, while signaling little confidence in students". Time management in EFL is a decisive factor in the development of positive attitudes to learning.

An accumulated body of research corroborates that teachers' talking time surpasses three times that of their students'. Hameyer (1995: 13) reports Hoetker and Ahlbrand's findings as to the teachers' rate of questions in comparison to the students "... teachers' usually put from one to four questions per minute to the students". Adam and Biddle (1970) report that at least 75% of instructional time is traditionally spent on teacher-centered instruction in which the focus is on academic knowledge (*ibid.*). What is more, the bulk of the instructional time is filled by teachers' talk at the expense of the students'. Bellack *et al.* (1966) found that teachers talk three times as much as pupils during lessons and use "rapid-fire questioning" (*ibid.*). Students' questions receive little percentage of the teachers' total talking time that does not seem to exceed the one tenth of the talking time: "Only 7% of the teachers' talking time is devoted to the students' questions" (*ibid.*). These dazzling figures certainly account for the students' negative attitudes toward learning, all while as they perceive that they observe teachers teach not students' learn. The classroom social interactions confirm that the teaching-learning in the classrooms is one way, where teachers are the authority and source of knowledge.

Yet another topic of enduring importance in polychronic cultures is lateness and punctuality. In public life, lateness appears to be relatively tolerated provided that the person who promised to come to the encounter meets his obligations. In other terms, punctuality is actually in the act of coming not in the time set for the meeting. However, in educational settings, punctuality and meeting deadlines are required and frequently observed; otherwise, the person(s) causing lateness are severely reprimanded and even sanctioned. Students' lateness to attend scheduled courses is severely admonished and calculated and appears on the students' marks reports. In some cases, parents are notified and required to justify their children's absence from schools. Moreover, students cannot regain their classes unless they obtain a written permission from the education counselor (formerly, the general supervisor). As for teachers' lateness, it may be tolerated within certain limits: when teachers live far from schools and transportation services are poor. In case of missing even one session, teachers may risk a deduction from their salary for the session or the day that

they missed. As a general rule, teachers expect their students to meet the deadlines for the submission of homework. Penalty seems to be the rule if students fail to submit the homework in time. All things considered, both teachers and students have developed negative attitudes toward certain inflexible aspects of punctuality in educational settings.

### **3.7 Teachers' Constraints**

Algerian school climate and culture is by no means idyllic for middle school teachers of English. They come under great pressure from various conflicting sources. They are clearly burdened by the social constraints of their schools, where they need to preserve their standing vis-à-vis their colleagues, students, and other personnel. Moreover, they ought to defer the standards and administrative duties (reporting marks, filling out mark bulletins/reports, furnish yearly planning, coordination with the other colleagues, and attending meetings with the headteachers/ principals). Another real challenge is accommodating inspectors' demands, which seem at times intimidating and never within reach (i.e., the logbook must be updated, lesson plans rewritten every year; diaries must be kept and available at all times, and seminars are to be attended). In one questionnaire administered to middle school teachers of English in which we sought to gauge the surveyed teachers' needs, we obtained the following results : 82.35% declare that they “need to deal with an open-minded, compassionate, and understanding inspector ...”, 73.52% express the wish that they “need to be advised not criticized by the inspector”, 58.82% state that they “need to feel more at ease with the inspector’s visit”, and only 29.41% hope to be informed beforehand of the inspector’s visit.

Pedagogical constraints seem to frustrate the surveyed teachers' psychological well-being (motivation, self-worth, and optimism). The teachers are excluded from taking part in the making up of pedagogical groups (i.e., classes); it is the headteacher/ principal who decides on the number of students in every class. The analysis of the questionnaire reveals that the class size (namely 40 students as a mean) is the single most frustrating issue that teachers would like to address. A solid

majority of 88.23% of the surveyed teachers expresses that they “need a moderate number of students, say 25 per class). General supervisors draw timetables without consulting teachers, which causes teachers to resent the “gerrymandering” of the distribution of sessions. Although most teachers harbor negative attitudes towards such manipulations, they disdainfully accept the timetables without complaining for fear of being labeled “disruptive elements”. Another issue that troubles the surveyed teachers is their inability to start the files the way they wish. They are made amenable to comply with the repartition of the files according to the textbook writers’ decisions. 79.41% of the teacher claim the right to be able to “start the files according to my class needs, and yet another 79.41% express the need “to be empowered to alter, add, or omit any part of the textbook if it frustrates the class progress”.

The socio-professional constraints weigh heavily on the middle school teachers of English psyche. Positive attitudes, motivation, self-esteem, commitment, and optimism are clearly periodic in the career of being an Algerian teacher. The message that the teachers receive from surrounding class climate and culture can be couched as follows: “Keep 40 students quiet for one hour session, teach the content of the syllabus with any available resources- if some of the students grasp it that is fair enough, if they do not, they are not meant to, fulfill duly your administrative duties but not necessarily with devotion, expect your salary in the first week of the month, and that is that”. The only issue that is observed to be in the upswing among teaching community is the teachers’ ongoing decrease in commitment, devotion, motivation, and self esteem. Baccalaureate students opt for *l’Ecole Normale Supérieure* (ENS) to become teachers certainly not out of vocation, but because ENS guarantees direct employment in the aftermath of graduation. However, once teachers, the newly recruited teachers face socio-professional challenges, which they have practically never been prepared to face properly.

### **3.7.1 Lengthy Syllabuses**

In this work, a syllabus answers the questions “what is to be taught?” and “In what order that should be taught?”. Thus, the content and sequence of the linguistic input that teachers are supposed to impart on, and what students ought to learn constitutes what is termed “syllabus”. Etymologically, syllabus is a loan word which

comes down all the way from Ancient Greek “sillybos/ sittybos” for table of content and through Latin in its present transliteration meaning “list”. Therefore, syllabus may be defined as the sequenced list of the content to be learned by the students in a particular discipline. This view is supported by Robinson (2011: np) who posits that “Syllabus ... formalizes the content to be learned in a domain of knowledge or behavior, ‘arranges this content in a succession of interim objectives’ (Widdowson, 1990, p.127)” (cited in Long and Doughty, 2011). While designing L2 syllabus, criteria such as coverage, sequence, gradability, teachability, and learnability are taken into consideration. As most L2 syllabuses commence as ambitious projects, units or files to be taught and learned are measured in balance in terms of rubrics and pages but rarely in terms of length of the whole syllabus. The “length” factor starts to take its toll on instruction once textbooks are put to use.

It is a common knowledge that Algerian pre-university syllabuses are usually lengthy and require considerable amount of time and energy. Lengthy syllabuses pose challenges on teachers, as they need to struggle to compensate for the lacking interconnectedness in the files proposed. The middle school syllabuses of English (see appendix) appear frustratingly condensed, which poses a serious challenge to teachers. Some linguistic items, although they seem easy to teach, they are difficult to learn. In *Spotlight on English* (Book 1), on page 10, students face the contracted form of apostrophe (‘s) as the third person singular form of (to be) in the present simple and genitive (‘s). Another pedagogical challenge in the series *Spotlight on English* (Books 1+2+3) and *On the Move* (Book4) is the amount of vocabulary. It does not appear that a foreign language vocabulary policy has been the concern of the syllabus designers and textbook writers. The first year middle school students of English encounter some 1100 words of English (a word list is added to the textbook as an appendix by the textbook writers). A simple calculation reveals that the students study a minimum of 10.43 new words in every session. English phonology is introduced in the early stages and along the four-year syllabus, and to make the teaching of English more complicated audio materials of the items being taught are not available. As all the middle school teachers of English are non-native speakers of English they frequently teach English phonology according to their own faulty pronunciation.

Overlarge syllabuses have incessantly required slimming down in order to alleviate teachers' and students' tribulations. The slimming down of the syllabuses considerably affects the gradability of the input, which increases students' inability to connect previously acquired knowledge. Oftentimes, Algerian learners think and use English in a truncated manner they answer in monosyllabic or isolated words. When asked to provide full sentences, they construct broken sentences that require a great deal to understand them. In many English classes, it is clearly hopeless to ask students to try to rephrase sentences. In a questionnaire to the middle school teachers of English, the results reveal that 64.70% of the surveyed teachers express the need to be involved in designing the syllabus and writing the textbook. 61.76% of the respondents report to need a detailed teacher's guide, and 58.82% state that they need to be trained to cope with new challenges posed by the textbooks. Even though slimming down the middle school lengthy syllabuses seems to the benefits of both teachers and students, they still cause concern and pedagogical challenges. Lengthy syllabuses and subsequent slimming down procedures nourishes teachers' negative attitudes toward teaching of English through the textbooks delivered by the Ministry of National Education (MNE).

### **3.7.2 English Time Scheduling**

School schedules (or timetables) refer to the systematic attribution and coordination of teachers, student body, classrooms, subjects, and time slots (or periods). The combination of all these components into workable schedules to accommodate the objectives, curriculums, and human and material resources appears to be a crucial task for the teaching-learning process. Time schedules are effortful and lengthy process and affect enormously the course of study. Time schedules service many purposes and functions. According to Rittig and Canady (quoted in Queen, 2003: 40-1) the schedule

Provides a more reasonable workload for teachers and students ...  
determines the number of student/ grades/ records for a teacher must  
be responsible ... can reduce how frequently students and teacher

teams interact on any given day/ term year ... (and) can fundamentally affect the relationship among staff and between staff and students.

Time schedules that accommodate the needs and expectations of teachers and students provide a unique opportunity for teachers and students to interact more effectively. Passions run high when schedules do not live up to teachers' expectations and usually leads to negative attitudes, especially as headteachers start scheduling the scientific subjects first and leave foreign languages (English in particular) one before last.

The school schedule should be designed to include workdays (from Sunday to Thursdays), recess time (two hours from midday to one o'clock pm). Classes start at eight (8 :00 am) till midday (12 :00 pm) ; it is also known as the morning period "الفترة الصباحية". The afternoon period "الفترة المسائية" starts as from 13 :00 pm and may last till 17 :00 pm. It is worth of note that teachers' schedule needs to contain one off-peak session (1 hour) to receive students' parents or plan coordination session with fellow teachers of the same subject or attend an in-class conference "ندوة داخلية" as part of experience sharing among teachers of the same subject. Middle school teachers' workload may vary from 20 hours to 24 hours a week; they need to take two grade levels. What follows is an illustration of a teacher s' timetable.

	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17
Sunday	1ML6	4ML2		1ML5	<b>R</b>	<b>R</b>	4ML1	1ML3	
Monday	4ML1		4ML2	4ML3	<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	4ML2	4ML1	
Tuesday					<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>	1ML4	4LM3	
Wednesday	1ML5	1ML3			<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>		1ML6	1ML4
Thursday	4ML3		1ML6	1ML4	<b>SS</b>	<b>SS</b>	1ML3	1ML5	

**Table 45:** Middle school English timetable.

The total workload of the teacher in question amounts to 21 hours a week among which 11 hours in the morning period (51% of the total time) and 10 hours in the afternoon period (49% of the total time). He is assigned the fourth year middle school (i.e., final year in which students are sit the Brevet) and first year middle school (60% of the class scheduling is in the afternoon period). The schedule clearly contains three off-peak sessions, which goes against the School Legislation.

Most surveyed teachers (for the purpose of this study) nurse negative attitudes toward the repartition of school schedules. They feel frustrated by the way headteachers plan the class time, and for which they have no say. Seldom do headteachers take teachers' needs into consideration, for they are pressed for classrooms, textbooks, shortage of teachers, and furniture (desks, chairs, cupboards, etc.). EFL teachers' complaints about unfairness in distribution and unbalanced schedules are usually suppressed. On occasions, intimidation appears a powerful means to convey the message to EFL teachers that their subject is ancillary in comparison to mathematics, biology, and technology. By and large, EFL class is subordinated to the core curriculum that comprises the three subjects mentioned above in addition to Arabic language arts and history and geography. Although headteachers recognize the importance of teaching English, they frequently and deliberately marginalize the subject and the teachers because of the attitudes that they harbor toward a language that they often ignore. Middle school teachers of English openly expressed their resentment with respect to their schedules because they feel that they are unfairly treated. Ironically, the only people who actually know the importance of EFL in middle schools are EFL teachers themselves, and all the others only pay lip service.

### **3.7.3 Time Allotment**

Time is an important and complex factor in learning in general and in foreign languages learning in particular. As time is important in battlefields, so it is in classrooms. Every instruction, activity, and task requires a specific amount of time in its input, intake, and output. It could be even argued that time is as important as the

(socio)-linguistic content and teaching methodology. Its decisiveness lies in the fact that too soon or too late makes all the difference in the positive processing of recently presented knowledge and responsiveness to the teaching-learning process. One reason that make time a crucial factor is attention span. Research has estimated that attention span does not exceed twenty (20) minutes, then an instruction or activity should be planned within the boundaries of such time limitation (Malone 2003: 18). What is more, it has been estimated that to master a foreign language, an amount of time that varies between 1000 to 1500 hours is absolutely necessary. A popular belief among headteachers/ principals and teachers that certain school subjects (namely, Math, biology, and Technology) can only be covered in the morning while others (languages in particular) only in the afternoon. Such a belief does not seem to be sustained by any scientific grounds. Hence, learning is not to occur at one part of the day only as different people learn at different rates, times, and periods.

The Algerian Ministry of National Education (MNE) segments the school year into 28 weeks and the individual units of instruction into 60 minutes. In the middle schools, English is allocated three sessions of one hour each, which is roughly thirty-two percent (32%) of the required time to learn foreign languages. Additionally, English does not represent more ten percent (10%) of the total teaching time. With the view of providing a quantitative overview of the total time allotted to school subjects every year and over the four years of the middle school.

Subjects/ Allotted	Time	Time Allotted (per week)	Percentage
Arabic		6	20.68 %
French		5	17.24 %
English		3	10.34 %
Social Sciences		2	06.89%

Natural Sciences	2	06.89 %
Technology	2	06.89 %
Mathematics	5	17.24 %
Religious Education	1	03.44 %
Civic Education	1	03.44 %
Physical Education	2	06.89 %

**Table 46:** First year time allotment to the 13 Subjects

The first year middle school counts more time allotted to the fourteen (14) subjects. Students are required to attend thirty three (33) hours a week, which makes nine hundred fifty two (952) hours yearly. The first year represents 25.56 % of the time allotted to the school subject over the four-year period of the middle school phase.

The three following years share the same number of school subjects and time allotment to each subject.

Subjects	Time Allotted in Hours	Percentage
Arabic Language	5	17.24 %
Amazigh Language	3	10.34 %
French Language	5	17.24 %
English Language	3	10.34 %
Mathematics	5	17.24 %
Physics & Technology Sciences	2	06.89 %
Sciences of Nature & Life	2	06.89%

Islamic Education	1	03.44 %
Civic Education	1	03.44 %
History	1	03.44 %
Geography	1	03.44 %
Musical Education Artistic Education	1+1	06.89 %
Physical Education & Sports	2	06.89%

**Table 47:** Second year middle school year time allotment

In the second year middle school, students need to attend thirty three (33) hours of instruction weekly and nine hundred forty two (942) hours yearly. The total time of instruction is estimated at 24.81 % of the time allocated to the fourteen subjects.

Apart from textbooks and timetables repartition, time allocated to the school subjects are retained in the third year middle school.

Subjects	Time Allotted in Hours	Percentage
Arabic Language	5	17.24 %
Amazigh Language	3	10.34 %
French Language	5	17.24 %
English Language	3	10.34 %
Mathematics	5	17.24 %
Physics & Technology Sciences	2	06.89 %
Sciences of Nature &	2	06.89%

Life		
Islamic Education	1	03.44 %
Civic Education	1	03.44 %
History	1	03.44 %
Geography	1	03.44 %
Musical Education	1	03.44 %
Artistic Education	1	03.44 %
Physical Education & Sports	2	06.89 %
Total	33 hrs per Week (924 hrs/ school year)	

**Table 48:** Third year middle school time allotment

Middle school teachers need to cover thirty three (33) hours a week of course instruction. The school year, therefore, counts nine hundred forty two hours. The time estimated to cover the syllabuses is 24.81% in comparison with the four years of the middle school.

The Fourth Year is very much similar to the previous year's except for the contents of the textbooks and repartition of school schedules.

Subjects	Time Allotted (per Week)	Percentage (%)
Arabic	6	18.18 %
Amazigh	3	10.34 %
French	5	17.24 %
English	3	10.34 %

Mathematics	5	17.24 %
Physics & Technology Sciences	2	06.89 %
Nature & Life Sciences	2	06.89 %
Islamic Education	1	03.44 %
Civic Education	1	03.44 %
History	1	03.44 %
Geography	1	03.44 %
Musical Education	1	03.44 %
Artistic Education	1	03.44 %
Physical & Sport Education	2	06.89 %
Total	33 hours per week	

**Table 49:** Time allotted to middle school subjects

The same amount of time allotted to the fourth year middle school: thirty three (33) hours weekly, nine hundred forty two (942) hours yearly, and 24.81% of the time allocated to the school subject in the four years of the middle school.

When the subjects are grouped together in terms of speciality such as languages, exact sciences, and social sciences, the time allotments reveal the focus on direction of the Algerian curriculums in the middle schools. A posteriori, languages appear to have received the lion's share of the time allocated to middle school subjects.

Subjects	Time Allotted/ Week	Percentage (%)
Languages	17	58.62 %

Exact Science/ Technology	7	24.13 %
Natural Sciences	2	03.44 %
Social Sciences	4	13.79 %
Artistic Education	2	06.89 %
Physical Education	2	06.89%
Total Time	34	100%

**Table 50:** Time allotments to middle school subject specialities (First Year).

The first year middle school, languages (i.e., Arabic, Amazigh, French, and English) are allocated the two thirds of the total teaching time. Exact sciences come in the second order of importance with the one fourth of the time allotted to instruction. Social sciences seem to be allocated half of the time allotted to exact sciences and one fourth of the time devoted to the languages.

In the second year middle school, time is slimmed down to thirty three hours a week instead of the thirty four hours in the first year.

Subjects	Time Allotted	Percentage
Languages	16	48.48 %
Exact Sciences/ Technology	7	24.13 %
Natural Sciences	2	06.89 %
Social Sciences	4	13.79 %
Artistic Education	2	06.89 %
Physical Education	2	06.89 %

Total Time	33	
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**Table 51:** Time allotments to middle school subject specialities (Second Year).

Languages have clearly lost about ten (10%) percent of its time. All the other subjects retain the same amount of time, which means that the second year intends to relieve the teachers' and students' of the instructional time.

The Third year middle school is very much the same as the second year in terms of time allocated to the subjects.

Subjects	Time Allotted	Percentage
Languages	16	48.48 %
Exact Science/ Technology	7	24.13 %
Natural Sciences	2	06.89 %
Social Sciences	4	13.79 %
Artistic Sciences	2	06.89 %
Physical Education	2	06.89 %
Total Time	33	

**Table 52:** Time allotments to middle school subject specialities (Third Year).

The fourth year middle school retains the same time amount despite its importance to the students. The students need to obtain a passing final grade and pass the Middle School Certificate (MSC, or commonly known as *Brevet* and 'الأهلية').

Subjects	Time Allotted	Percentage

Languages	16	48.48 %
Exact Sciences/ Technology	7	24.13 %
Natural Sciences	2	06.89 %
Social Sciences	4	13.79 %
Artistic Education	2	06.89 %
Physical Education	2	06.89 %
Total Time	33	

**Table 53:** Time allotments to middle school subject specialities (Fourth Year).

The analysis of the time allotted to subjects in comparison to the available classrooms, number of students, and time allotment to each subject and to core subjects demonstrate that harmony, complementarity, and balance are questionable. An Algerian workdays count forty (40) hours of work, while the active duty of work are between thirty-three (33) to thirty-four (34) hours, demonstrates that students study about 82.5% of the total time. Besides, teachers who have about 23 hours a week of active duty work about 57.5% of the total time. The rest of time is supposedly devoted to lesson preparation and other pedagogical and administrative activities (board meetings, filling marks reports, correction of exams, etc.). Although most schools are wired with internet and equipped with libraries, teachers do not feel the need to conduct teaching-related research. The disproportionate repartition of teachers' worktime, dishearten most teachers, and more specifically teachers of English. Students' time is so overcrowded with classwork and homework. A counter-reaction takes place, only a fringe minority of students devotes time to homework or revision. They spend most of the time playing some kind of outdoor sports or watching TV. Students copy from other classmates the keys to homework exercises when they suspect that the teachers are going to give a round inspection. Students are deprived of real leisure time, and therefore, their responsiveness to teaching is regressing and their resistance is increasing.

### 3.8 Class Organization

By and large, the placement of Algerian students in what comes to be called “pedagogic groups” is performed according to various considerations, their family names alphabetical order at worst and/ or their age at best. Officially, some students whose parents are influential are occasionally grouped in the same class and the best teachers are assigned to ensure a quality instruction. In the same vein, students of poor backgrounds and neighborhoods are grouped in classes whose subjects are attributed to less qualified teachers and supply teachers. Again, these practices are not frequent and never claimed publicly as they oppose the very essence of the *democratization* of public education, a policy established ever since the *Independence* of the country in 1962. The general landscape of the common Algerian middle school class reveals that the formation of pedagogic groups lies on the principle of heterogenization, or more commonly known as mixed-ability classes.

Classroom composition in the middle schools is done at the schools level and teachers’ level. The former formation (namely at schools levels) is the official one wherein students of different abilities are grouped in the same grade and class according to their family names alphabetical order and/ or age<sup>21</sup>. This operation appears to be performed by the headmasters (directly or indirectly involved) and the *Education Counselors*<sup>22</sup>, who are practically the employees in charge of mainstreaming students with the view of organizing and managing classes properly. The latter formation (namely at the teachers level) depends on in-class activities in which students are required to form groups to perform a task or an activity. Different appellations are attributed to this type of grouping: In the USA, they are called *tracking*, but *ability grouping* and/ or *streaming* in Britain and the Commonwealth. This is such an instance wherein students of the same ability, interest, friendship, and needs are organized together to carry on an activity.

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<sup>21</sup> This standard may or may not be decisive in mainstreaming students.

<sup>22</sup> Formerly known as *surveillants généraux* or (المراقبون العامون) in Arabic.

In their message to the students, the authors of the Second English Course Book outline the objectives of the textbook: “You will continue learning English- from its different aspects- with the view of using it to solve problems. It is always preferable to work in groups as it reflects situation similar to real life” (2004: 3) (our translation). Later, they lay down the spirit of the book: “The project is not limited to the fact that it is an objective in its own right, but also the core of the learning process” (*ibid.*) (our translation). It all comes down, therefore, to one thing: the accomplishment of the project through group work. Group work whether organized under the banner of ability, friendship, interests, needs, or whatever poses a real challenge to individual teachers. Most students will attempt to carry out the project at the expense of the target language itself whose application would be limited to some scattered words. The real language that would likely be used is the community language (i.e., Arabic). The reasons are quite obvious: bad behavior (L1 use is easy and shuts away mockery), L2 linguistic and background knowledge paucity, and most importantly overcrowdedness.

### **3.1 Class Overcrowdedness**

Birth rate witnesses an incessant growth every year in most third world countries. According to the Algerian Bureau of Census, about 600, 000 babies are born to Algerian families every year, which in six years’ time adds to the well-over-seven millions school population. A priori, most Algerian classrooms seem overcrowded both in urban as well as rural areas\_ across grades and school stages (i.e., primary, middle, and secondary schools). By way of an example, in one of Tolga’s primary school, a teacher confided that he taught up to sixty (60) pupils in the same class. As a general rule, an average of forty (40) students per class is recorded in most middle schools across the Region of Biskra. Most teachers are required to take between six to seven classes which make them responsible of a total number that varies between one hundred eighty (180) to two hundred twenty (220) students. A comparison with a typical Finnish class, which contains between eighteen (18) to twenty (20) students per class, would demonstrate the Algerian middle school teachers work more than their counterparts in Finland and paid less.

Overcrowdedness in middle schools represents a real challenge for English teachers as they need to organize their courses around a project that required to students to work in groups. Even though projects were meant primarily to provide students with an opportunity to engage meaningfully in FL2 (i.e., English) activities, they often turn to a cacophony in Arabic. On score of that teachers spend most of their time trying to bring calm down for fear of frustrating other classes. Besides being a second nature in Algerians to talk at the same time noisily, overcrowdedness appears to favor such a behavior. Some teachers are frankly annoyed at the fact that they are to play the role of a policeman; others, however, feel at home in organizing group work. They acquired the expertise when they attended a seminar with some American and British teacher trainers. To conclude, the middle school English textbooks present an opportunity for meaningful engagement but due to overcrowdedness this opportunity is often spoiled, affecting, thus, the teachers' attitudes.

### **3.2 Gender-Related Sensitivity**

Gender may be an enduring issue that comes to be underexplored in many parts of the world. Although, society is divided by male-female biological, psychological, and social distinctions, gender relations and roles are frequently taken for granted. In people's minds, men work outdoors, women indoors. It is as simple and complex as that. Basically, gender complementarily or struggle for identity is much more complex all while in the modern society of the 21st century. Paradoxically, gender roles seem to incessantly overlap. Male-dominated or female-dominated jobs are virtually non-existent. Competency is, therefore, not related any more to femininity-masulinity. Instead, commitment, creativity, energy, leadership are among the prerequisites for what can be termed "gender-neutral" jobs. If jobs are gender neutral, people do not seem to be so. Whether in language or in behavior they can barely hide their sexism and/ or gender bias. As gender is to a large extent value laden; people unconsciously react to gender-related issues according to the cultural perceptions of their native societies. A priori, gender stereotypes appear to survive despite the technological progress and democratic education. For better or worse, gender perceptions still govern people's behaviors and attitudes both socially and professionally.

Scholars differentiate between sex and gender, between what is purely anatomical and what is otherwise. Brown (2011: 19) identifies “The term sex (whether someone is male or female) refers to the natural or biological differences between men and women, such as differences in genitals, internal reproductive organs, and body hair”. Drawing upon this definition, sex is congenital and inborn anatomical differences between males and females. As for the social perceptions of men-women, Brown explains “Gender (whether someone is masculine or feminine) refers to the cultural, socially constructed differences between the two sexes. It refers to the way a society encourages and teaches the two sexes” (*ibid.*). Differently couched, gender is a socio-cultural concept of what it means to be male or female in a given society. Each gender is therefore expected to fulfill certain duties and enjoy certain rights. In different terms, males are supposed to play certain roles that females are not. Conversely, females are meant for certain tasks that males are not meant for. This distribution of roles, is often recognized as gender roles. Brown defines gender roles as “... the pattern of behavior and activity which society expects from individuals of either sex” (*ibid.*). People of either sex come to be *socialized* into gender roles.

By and large, teaching has traditionally been considered an exclusive male activity. However, modern times with its sharp needs in education brought about sea changes in schools. The shy inclusion of female teachers in teaching has substantially grown in salient figures. In her book *Teachers, Gender, and Careers*, Ackers ((1989: 3) claims that “teaching has been called a divided profession”. Teaching is no more a male-dominated profession as women’s numbers outnumber men’s and recruitment in schools has become gender neutral. Moreover, women are clearly proved to be just as equally devoted to their outdoors activities. Byrne (1978) has argued that historically:

Women’s commitment to teaching is tradition second only to her domestic role throughout recorded history and in both East and West, and has acquired an aura of ‘inborn gifts’ and extended maternity that seems ineradicable. It is curiously noticeable that from the earliest days of state education, women have gravitated to and concentrated on younger children, on the infant and junior schools, the elementary and

non-advanced sectors within the profession (cited in Drudy 2005: 22).

Like anywhere else in the world, Algerian female teachers are part and parcel of the Algerian educational system. According to the official website of the *Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens* (UGTA<sup>23</sup>), female teachers represent 45% of the teaching community in the primary and secondary schools.

According to the Algerian authorities, the rate of female teachers in the middle schools rose from 45.91% in 1995-6 to 52.71% in 2004-5. It should be noted that the figures of female teachers have constantly increased in recent years. Teaching has proved, therefore, to be a female-dominated profession if we keep in mind the steady increase of female teachers in schools. Gender interaction is still dramatically value laden in spite of the fact that both sexes recognize that their relationships are governed by fair duties and rights. The Algerian Constitution (1990) equates between both sexes in terms of salary, ranking (in Algeria aka *promotion*<sup>24</sup>), and professional status according to the Article 55, Article 6 paragraphs 3 and 4, and Article 84. Nonetheless, the Algerian Arab-Islamic socio-cultural values determine not only the patterns of behavior between both sexes but also attitudes and perceptions. Either gender harbors different, if conflicting, beliefs on the other, whether a fellow teacher, student, or administrator. Human relations, collegial spirit, and teaching practices come to be definitely affected one way or another by these gender-based attitudes.

This intricate kind of gender interplay defines much of the pedagogical relationship within middle schools and has its toll on teaching practices and exchange of experiences. Female teachers appear female teachers-oriented, and in the same breath, male teachers are male teachers-oriented. In seminars, female teachers sit together, while male teachers tend to group themselves where they could be dominant. These gender-oriented attitudes seem to lessen productive exchange of pedagogical

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<sup>23</sup> The Algerian national workers union is also known by its Arabic label *الإتحاد العام للعمال الجزائريين* established during the Algerian Revolution, on February 24th, 1965. (<http://www.ugta.dz>)

<sup>24</sup> In Arabic *الترقية*: This is counted on year- in- position basis.

experiences. Against this backcloth, both male and female teachers define their attitudes toward female and male students. Browne echoes “Teachers also have been socialized into gender roles, and there is evidence that teachers may give different career advice to boys and girls” (*op.cit.* 28). In the following section, we shall elaborate gender sensitivity in middle schools from different assets. The fundamental line of argument thus far is that the very nature of gender interplay in the Algerian pedagogical settings has implicitly shaped teachers attitudes toward fellow teachers and students. It is of an overriding importance to understand this gender role interplay and its impact on teaching practices and transmitting knowledge to younger generations.

### **3.2.1 Female-Male Teacher Gender Sensitivity**

Teacher gender does not seem to be an issue of contention in the Algerian educational circles. People are recruited in teaching positions and paid regardless of their gender. All teachers have practically the same workload : in the primary schools, schoolteachers work up to thirty hours a week ; in the middle school, teachers work as many as twenty-four hours a week ; and in the high school, teachers are assigned eighteen hours a week. Subjects are neither gender-specific whatsoever, nor are promotions and incentives. Teacher mobility is basically experience- and seniority-based: After three years in a teaching position, teachers are legally eligible for mobility (also known as “mouvement or “الحركة”). Regardless of gender, both male and female teachers can be assigned to isolated regions, where living conditions could be extreme. Nonetheless, teachers have their own attitudes, beliefs, and value judgments about the other sex. Female teachers usually expect to be sent to inner-city schools or schools closer to their homes; they also judge that male teachers are more suitable for teaching noisy and overcrowded classes in near and far away schools. Male teachers think that female teachers benefit from their gender more than male teachers do: female teachers have the right to up to three months of maternity vacation and are favored in terms of less busy schedules and less disruptive classes.

For the purpose of this study, a self-completion questionnaire on teachers’ attitudes has been distributed to middle school teachers of English in the Region of Biskra. The analysis of the collected and compiled data revealed outstanding outcomes: teachers

have been able to surmount their own prejudices and judged their fellow teachers not according to the attitudes that they nurse about the other sex, but according to the professionalism that the other sex demonstrates. 70.58% of female teachers perceive male teachers as dedicated, helpful, caring, responsible, skillful, understanding, supportive and fair against 29.42% who believe that male teachers are authoritarian, firm, selfish, reluctant to help, pompous, and sexist. As for male teachers, 64.70% judge that female teachers are devoted to their job, helpful, caring, motivated, skillful, updated, resourceful, and tidy. This positive attitude does not seem to be shared by 29.30% of the male teachers who view female teachers as lax, lazy, careless, uncooperative, selfish, always behind schedule, and demotivated. As a final comment, despite the fact that the figures are practically similar, female teachers clearly have slightly better attitudes toward their male colleagues. A simplistic evaluation may put down this to the fact that male teachers can impose and sustain classroom discipline more than female teachers can afford.

### **3.2.2 Teacher-Student Gender Sensitivity**

A teacher-student relationship in Algerian middle school is intricate and intertwined with the attitudes, beliefs, and cultural values. Teachers are required to be caring, committed, compassionate, conscientious, cooperative, devoted, fair, loving, understanding vis-à-vis their students. In the same vein, they are expected to be firm, condescending class and gender differences, keeping their distances from students, keeping familiarity away from interactions with students, and undertake unacceptable relations with any one particular student. In fairness to the majority of teachers, these standards are jealously observed. Incidents of nepotism and/ or favoritism are rarely reported although they do exist especially in some remote regions or clan-rivalry-torn villages. Teachers' sexual harassment of students of opposite sex is extremely rare mainly due to the local culture unforgiving attitudes to such offences. Teachers are friendly but not friendly enough to allow students to be too close or infringe deference. Teachers of both sexes tend to favor female students in as much as they are law-abiding and respectful. The results of the questionnaire reveal that female and male teachers alike have favorable attitudes towards female students: 79.41% of the

middle school teachers of English perceive that female students as quiet, polite, obedient, thoughtful, calm, tidy, law-abiding, and kind.

Students are supposed to be deferent as far as their teachers are concerned regardless of the gender. In practice, female teachers especially in the middle schools and high schools find it difficult to impose discipline in class. Male students tend to disrupt the smooth running of the class in order to draw the attention of the other sex, which is an indirect self-expression of not being a child any more. In the questionnaire designed to gauge the attitudes middle school teachers of English in the region of Biskra toward male students, the majority of the respondents (85.29%) believe that male students are noisy, rude, disruptive, careless, restless, untidy, rebellious, lazy, and selfish. Female teachers frequently report instances of students of opposite sex who, verbally or non-verbally, display an attraction. By the same token, male students report on various occasions similar instances where female students develop bonds of affection. Students' affection may be explained by their attachment and admiration of their teachers' charisma, charming personality, neat appearances, and the authority and power that they represent. The sensitivity of the issue oftentimes urges the teachers in question to avoid public discussion of those instances of the students' display of affection.

### **3.2.3 Male-Female Student Gender Sensitivity**

The Algerian pedagogical classes are typically co-educational: female and male students study in the same class throughout the educational phases. All-female or all-male classes do not exist in Algerian schools. Co-educational classes are meant to eliminate gender-related conflicts and maximize understanding between sexes as both females and males constitute the backbone of society. Another objective is to prove that gender differences should not influence attitudes and judgments toward gender roles in society. Both sexes complete each other in building a healthy nation and law-abiding citizens. Despite all these efforts, the local culture and gender identities define to large measure female-male relationships. Shepard (2004: 276) captures this fine relationship between culture and self-awareness in his definition of gender identity

“an awareness of being masculine or feminine, based on culture”. Gender-related stigma and stereotypes still have a powerful impact on female-male students’ interactions in the Algerian middle schools. A good example is the sitting plan: male students sit with their peers and like female students. Furthermore, it has been frequently observed that rows are dominated by either sex or males are alternately seated. This policy seems to be deeply anchored in the local culture.

Gender antagonism in adolescence years characterizes the female-male students’ relationships. Adolescence is the period that bears witness of dramatic biological and psychological change. This period is so unlike the childhood period that individuals acquire new, brusque, out-of-habit, attitudes and behavior. Although these appear to be cross-gender, they constitute a watershed in the lives of females and males. Gender ideologies seem to fuel gender antagonism in class. By definition, gender ideologies are gender-specific beliefs. Brym and Lie (2009: 269) define this concept as “a set of interrelated ideas about what constitutes appropriate masculine and feminine roles and behavior”. Male students often perceive female students to be amenable, and this accounts for their close relationships with teachers. Not only they perform some chores on behalf of the teachers, but also they play the role of “spies” and “whistleblowers”. Female students perceive male students as noisy, rebellious, intimidating but not necessarily bullying, and not concerned with respecting laws. It should be noted, however, that these stereotypical attitudes emerge out of the prevailing culture of the society or period. In the past, gender relations in class were tenser than these days. Nonetheless, gender identities still define considerably female-male relations in class.

### **3.3 Teachers’ Burnout**

In one of the unstructured interviews that we have conducted, one of the teachers demonstrated an overt reluctance to answer the questions and later expressed his unwillingness to be involved as a respondent to the questionnaire. We have been struck by his flimsy arguments; he stated that he was a teacher whose interests were outside the school; it was a good deal more lucrative to work outside school hours;

teaching became something like a secondary job to dates commerce (the local agricultural activity). His tone and attitudes, however, suggested that deep down he was not really convinced by what he was saying. In the psychological literature and among practitioners, this type of alienation from one's job is known as *job burnout* or *job depression*. Differently stated, the glamor of the job seems to gradually wane as socio-professional challenges start to emerge suddenly, and job holders prove unable to handle by themselves the demands and burdens of the profession any more.

This debilitating job-related phenomenon was first observed in North America. The pioneer researchers on job burnout were Freudenberger and Maslach whose articles in the mid-70s marked the birth of a new concept in social psychology. "Burnout first emerged as a social problem, not a scholarly construct" (Wilmar, Maslach and Marek, 1993: 3). This may account for the lack of interest of the scholars on burnout as opposed to the practitioners who had to deal with workplace problems which directly bore down on frustrated workers. What is more, the very term "burnout", whose origins could be traced to drug users, might be the underlying cause of the scholars' turn-off and reluctance to undertake serious studies on the matter because it might have sounded as "pop psychology" (*ibid.*). Nowadays, burnout is fortunately widely accepted and investigated in many parts of the world. Burnout affects not only the individuals' psychological well-being but also the economy of the nation.

Like all recent concepts, burnout definition is elusive, and as a matter of fact, there is not any one universal definition that satisfies every one's understanding of this construct. Perhaps the outlining of the various symptoms that characterize job burnout would prove to more convincing as to its nature and identity. Teachers who suffer from burnout demonstrate such signs as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, reduced personal accomplishment, gradual depletion, loss of interest and motivation, and frustration (*ibid.*). Teachers' burnout stems from their ideal prospects while they were in pre-service training programs in the technological *institutes of education* (aka,

ITE)<sup>25</sup> or when they were students at the universities. Their expectations were high then, but once in the field an unexpected reality frustrates them deeply and shakes their beliefs in their own potential to bring about change. They ultimately come to realize that they are no more than pawns on the chessboard of unflinching bureaucrats and disrespectful students.

### 3.4 Teachers' deskilling

Some teachers feel complacent about the positive effect of their seniority on their teaching quality and performance however challenging and novel previous approaches are from more recent ones. They strongly believe that the longer their experience in instruction is, the more efficient they become. Furthermore, the loss of touch only occurs when teachers for some reason or another quit their job for long periods. These are false assumptions since routine work coupled with lack of autonomy and minor control over their teaching practices, negative attitudes and low self-esteem may lead to what psychologists as well as educators term de-skilling. Kanpol (1999: 38) outlines the underlying reasons of deskilling:

By making teachers accountable for state-mandated curriculum ... and by promoting competency-based education, system management, and employing rigid and dehumanizing forms of evaluation along with numerical-rating scales, teachers are controlled and simply march to the tune of the state.

Consequently, teachers witness a loss of touch because “deskilling has to do with teachers executing someone else’s goals and plans” (*ibid.*). According to Kanpol, deskilling is caused by the “*subordinatization*” of the teachers to mere implementers of instruction without a meaningful contribution.

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<sup>25</sup> ITE institutions were officially abandoned in the early 90's. They have replaced by regional Colleges of Teachers (المدرسة العليا للأساتذة)

Richards (2009) defines deskilling as “the loss of skills which a person once had through lack of use”. He also expands his explanation of the term in the teaching profession as follows ‘In teaching, deskilling refers to the removal of teachers’ responsibility and participation in certain important aspects of teaching, leaving the teacher dealing with the lower aspects of instruction” (*ibid.*). The exclusion of teachers from decision-making is likely to be one way to explain the emergence of deskilling. In the same vein, Giroux (2001: 69-70) concurs “Rather than promote conceptual understanding on the parts of the classroom teacher, these curriculum ‘kits’ separate conception from execution”. He illustrates “In other words, objectives, knowledge skills, pedagogic practice, and modes of evaluation are built into and predefined by the curriculum program itself” which reduces the teacher’s role “to merely following the rules” (*ibid.*). Deskilling may also be attributed to over-dependence on a particular teaching practice, materials, or means such as textbooks.

Deskilling not only negatively affects teachers’ classroom performance, self-worth, self-confidence, motivation, but also aggravates his/her sense of helplessness. Failure, therefore, becomes a fixed mindset that accentuates his/her sense of guilt and ultimately leads to emotional disengagement. A desperate situation is engendered wherein the teacher no longer feels responsible for the education, building of the character and intellectual growth of young people in his/her trust. This is a clear betrayal to the very essence of what a teacher is all about. On various occasions throughout our research, many teachers have voiced their inability to make a difference as long as they are practically excluded from playing an active role in decision making. This emotional hijacking deprives middle school English teachers of meaningful engagement in the teaching-learning process.

## **Conclusion**

In the foregoing chapter, we have aimed to capture all those factors that influence both positively and/ or negatively the middle school teachers of English to reach their full potential in their workplace. For better or worse, teachers are the centerpiece of a successful quality education so much cherished in the 21st century. Unfortunately, in

Algeria; teachers appear to be ancillary agents whose main task is to teach the curriculum proposed by the MNE. The government's recent pecuniary incentives may motivate teachers to increase their output, but it does not guarantee for long their commitment and devotion. Still, the teachers' socio-professional context is overbearing and daunting. Worse still, their psychological (both cognitive and emotional) well-being is to a great extent ignored. In comparison with the past, the Algerian middle school teachers' ecological situation seems better, but a close inspection would interestingly be revealing. By and large, they suffer from burnout, deskilling, low self-worth, and lack of job commitment due to long years of neglect and social disrespect. The quality of the students, whose intellectual competence (analysis, critical thinking, problem-solving, independent thinking, etc.) is worrying to most optimistic researchers, reflects beyond doubt teachers' failure to make a difference in the lives of their tutees. The fundamental argument throughout this chapter is that teachers' efficiency can be better optimized by exploring the teachers' inner world and *fix* it. Otherwise the confusion will be even more dramatic between whether teaching in the Algerian middle schools is a "good job" or "good work".

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## **Chapter Four: Attitudes of the Middle School Teachers of English**

### **Introduction**

The following chapter attempts to explore the middle school English teachers' beliefs and attitudes and their effect on their classroom practice. Conversely, it is also within the scope of this chapter to highlight the effects of classroom inputs/ resources on teachers' attitudes and beliefs. It has only recently been recognized that under the mask of the professional, there lies a (socio)emotional dimension that either advances or undermines teachers' efficiency as well as achievement in and outside the workplace. To the classroom, teachers bring a panoply of cognitive and emotional processes such as attitudes, beliefs, anger, frustration, fear, optimism, and so on, which, in case they are positive, lead to job satisfaction, commitment as well as emotional understanding and emotional labor. This is directly reflected in the teachers' quality instruction and pastoral support provided to students, which would eventually thwart students' achievement. Contrariwise, the more negative emotions teachers nurse, the more likely they fail to create a supportive environment where meaningful engagement is set. We have every reason to maximize the importance of investigating teachers' attitudes because (1) they have been ignored for so long, (2) they shape considerably teachers' approaches to their classroom practices, (3) they indicate the degree of commitment to their profession and constituencies, and (4) they are warning signs of potential challenging problems. This chapter, therefore, intends to achieve a better understanding of the middle school English teachers' attitudes toward their teaching context and more specifically toward their instructional materials.

### **4.1 Nature of Attitudes**

Social psychologists deem "attitudes" a powerful, recurrent theme. As a matter of fact, attitudes represent a venerated *leitmotif* in social psychology, a subject that is frequently investigated, reviewed, and enriched all the more as it comes to be

intertwined with every aspect of our social and psychological life. Pioneer scholars such as Allport and Watson consider this field of socio-psychological effects on interpersonal interactions (*viz.*, social psychology) primarily concerned with attitudes. Clearly, other disciplines have a claim on attitudes, Baker (1992: 1) states that “The notion of attitudes has a place in psychology, sociology, anthropology, education, history, human geography and creative arts”. Attitudes are a household term used continuously by laypeople and specialists though with different rates of precision and shades of meaning. Here lies, therefore, its importance: It is an indelible part of our daily language and thought. Baker (*ibid.* 10) concurs that attitudes “... stood the test of time, theory, and taste”. The cherished position of attitudes in this field of study proves that humans *are* what their attitudes *are*. In fact, our favorable perceptions of both the inner and out world considerably define our affect, beliefs, intellect, thoughts, and personality.

The deliberate scientific study of attitudes is short in life- almost ninety years old. Nonetheless, attitudes are impressively mentioned in the social psychology literature. Albarracín, Johnson, and Zanna (2005: vii) corroborate “A recent search for the term attitude in the American Psychological Association comprehensive index ... yielded 180,910 references. This impressive number certainly suggests that attitude research defined social psychology has come a long way since 1918 ...”. In their influential book *The Psychology of Attitudes and Attitude Change*, Forgas, Cooper, and Crano (2010: 6) report that according to a 2007 study by Vesser and Cooper, a social psychology literature search using the term attitude as a search term yielded approximately 50, 000 articles, chapters, books, and dissertations. This impressive popularity leads intuitively to a wide plethora of definitions among social psychologists. A diligent review of relevant literature reveals that pioneer scholars developed one set of definitions that differ substantially from present-day scholars. Allport (1935) collected some six definitions that were offered by pioneer researchers.

1. (An attitude is) *readiness for attention or action* of a definite sort (Baldwin, 1901: 11).
2. An attitude is a *complex of feelings, desires, fears, convictions, prejudices or other tendencies that have given a set or readiness to act* (Chave, 1928: 365).

3. An attitude is a *tendency to act toward or against something in the environment which becomes thereby a positive or negative value* (Bogardus, 1931: 62).
4. An attitude, roughly is a *residuum of experience by which further activity is conditioned and controlled* (Kueger and Reckless, 1931: 238).
5. An attitude is a *mental disposition of the human individual to act for or against a definite object* (Droba, 1933: 309).
6. Attitudes are literally *mental postures, guides to conduct* to which each new experience is referred before a response is made (Morgan 1934: 34). (Re-arranged and **emphasized** from *ibid.*).

As it can be noticed, only Morgan uses the plural form of “attitude”, and all the other scholars tend to perceive this construct as a single entity. What is more, it is sensed that all these definitions believe an attitude to be engendered by the interactions in the social environment to evolve into a value judgment of the latter. Albarracín *et al.* conclude that “... the idea that attitudes are dispositions to behave in certain ways” (*op.cit.*). As a final note, attitudes are apparently imbibed in behaviorist philosophy that judges organism by their overt behavior; attitudes refer, therefore, to covert behavior.

Modern definitions deliberately attribute emotional and cognitive features beside the behavioral aspects to attitudes.

1. An attitude is *an idea charged with emotion which predisposes a class of actions* to a particular class of social situations (Triandis, 1971: 2).
2. An attitude is a *learned disposition to respond to an object* in consistently favorable way (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975: 6).
3. An attitude is a *disposition to react with characteristics judgments and with characteristics goals* across a variety of institutions (Anderson, 1981: 93).

4. An attitude is a *mediating process grouping a set of objects of thought* in a conceptual category that evokes a significant pattern of responses (McGuire, 1985: 126) (re-arrangement and **emphasis** added).

Albarracín *et al.* note that all these definitions appear to faithfully adhere to behavioral tendency of attitudes (*op.cit.*). A priori, both pioneer and modern social psychologists seem to rely on the etymology of attitude in defining the construct. According to the authors of *etymology.com*, attitudes came into English usage in:

The 1660s, via Fr. attitude (17c.), from It. attitudine "disposition, posture," also "aptness, promptitude," from L.L. aptitudinem (nom. aptitudo; see **aptitude**). Originally 17c. a technical term in art for the posture of a figure in a statue or painting; later generalized to "a posture of the body supposed to imply some mental state" (1725). Sense of "settled behavior reflecting feeling or opinion" is first recorded 1837.

The aforementioned modern theorists appear to deliberately ignore the inborn aspect of attitudes. Recent research in child psychology asserts that new born babies seem to favor certain colors, and to react positively to certain voices and places rather than to others. Chamberlain (1998: xiv) echoes "Now science confirms that infants are social beings who can form close relationships, express themselves forcefully, exhibit preferences, and begin influencing people from the start". In the same vein, Jacob (2009: 111) explains that

... babies pay attention to location of sound. They respond to all elements of sound, including pitch, volume, timbre, and rhythm. They can even stop sucking to pay attention to something else. After prolonged exposure, babies stop reacting to irritating stimuli. This helps them shut out disturbing sights or sounds.

Clearly, the great bulk of attitudes appears to be acquired from socio-cultural environment. Still, the raw bulk of attitudes may be claimed to be inborn, at least in the early years of infancy, in order to defend those helpless creatures from the potential harm that may be induced by intruders.

More recent identifications of the construct in question put forward the evaluative, judgmental aspect all while preserving the focus on behavioral aspects.

1. The concept of attitude has an interesting history as a broadly defined construct *combining affect, conation, and belief intervening between stimulus and responses* (Katz, 1989: xi).
2. Attitudes are tendencies to evaluate an entity with some degree of favor or disfavor, ordinarily expressed in cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses (Eagle and Chaiken; 1993: 155).
3. Attitude should be used to refer to the *relatively enduring tendency* to respond to someone or something in a way that *reflects positive or a negative evaluation* of that person or thing (Semin and Fiedler, 1996: 3).
4. We define an attitude as a summary *evaluation of an object of thought*. An object of thought can be anything a person discriminates or holds in mind. Attitude objects may be concrete (e.g., pizza) or abstract (e.g., freedom of speech, may be inanimate things (e.g., sports cars), persons (e.g., Slobodan Milošević, oneself), or groups (e.g., conservative politicians, foreigners) (Böhner and Wänke, 2002: 5).
5. Attitude: a psychological *tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity* with some degree of favour or disfavour (Hewstone and Stroebe, 2004: 241).
6. Attitude is a *disposition to respond favorably or unfavorably to an object, person, institution, or event* (Ajzen, 2005: 3). (re-arrangement and **emphasis**, added).

Individuals appear to follow a predicted pattern : First, they *evaluate* objects and people in the surroundings, then they *adopt a verdict or judgment*, which they later *act upon*. According to Hewstone and Stroebe (*ibid.* 240) “Attitudes are assumed to guide behavior”. Attitudes, therefore, precede behavior, and the latter reflects – though implicitly-the former, and eventually reshapes it in turn. This close connection between the two constructs proves of the overriding importance of attitudes in the socio-psychological study of individuals.

## 4.2 Attitude Formation

In some of the previously reviewed definitions, attitudes are identified as “predispositions”, which means that, in a sense, attitudes unfold over time as individuals grow up and mature. Feral children, although having lived in the nature far from any human contact or possible socialization, developed attitudes toward their surroundings and later their kinspeople when they were retrieved from wilderness. Laming (2004: 153) notes that “... there may be, and probably, more profound developmental changes during childhood which, though common to all cultures, are still dependent on social interactions”. Nguyen (2005: 6) explains “Feral children have a choice of expressive behaviour restricted to anger, shyness, depression, impatience, and joy”. Attitudes appear inevitable in humans’ lives whether socialized or not. Attitudes are constantly formed and re-formed; at times, they are consciously perceived and deliberately encouraged; at other times, they stealthily sneak into individuals’ behavioral systems and overtly dismissed if faced with<sup>1</sup>.

According to Oskamp (1991), the term *attitude formation* refers to the movement we make from having no attitude toward an on object to having some positive or negative attitude toward that object (quoted in Bordens and Horowitz, 2002: 167). For the sake of convenience, I shall adopt this definition henceforth in my discussion of attitude formation. In their introductory book *Social Psychology* (2002), Bordens and

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<sup>1</sup> In the French comedy *Les Aventures de Rabbi Jacob* (1974), Mr. Victor Pivert observes and reports indignantly a mixed-race wedding to his Jewish *chauffeur*. When the latter wonders “Si Monsieur est raciste”. Mr. Victor Pivert fervently denies “Moi, raciste !!!”.

Horowitz acknowledge four mechanisms of attitude formation. In what follows is a digest of the mechanisms:

#### **4.2.1 Mere Exposure**

By being exposed to an object increases feelings, usually positive, toward that object, repeated exposure can lead to attitudes.

#### **4.2.2 Direct Experience**

Attitudes acquired through direct experience are likely to be strongly held and to affect behavior. People are also more likely to search for information to support such attitudes.

#### **4.2.3 Operant & Classical Conditioning**

Most social psychologists would agree that the bulk of the attitudes are learned. That is, attitudes result from experience not genetic inheritance. Through socialization, individuals learn attitudes, values, and behaviors of their culture. Important influences in the process include parents, peers, schools, and mass media.

##### **4.2.3.1 Operant conditioning**

It is a method by which attitudes are acquired by rewarding a person for a given attitude in the hopes it will be maintained or strengthened.

##### **4.2.3.2 Classical Conditioning**

It is a form of learning that occurs when a stimulus comes to summons a response that it is previously did not evoke to form an attitude.

#### 4.2.4 Observational Learning

Attitude-formation occurs through watching what people do and whether they are rewarded or punished. Then, imitating that behavior succeeds. When there are discrepancies between what people say and do, children tend to imitate the behavior (*ibid.* 169-170).

The formation of attitudes is a natural process and, thus, inevitable. Coon and Mitterer (2008: 535) point out “Attitudes are intimately woven into our actions and views of the world”. Whether consciously or unconsciously formed, attitudes are considerably beneficial for social and psychological survival. Smith and Mackie (2000: 250) recognize that “... we develop attitudes because they are useful to us”. Basically, attitudes are pervasive and ubiquitous and manifest themselves in different ways in different situations. Social psychologists widely acknowledge that attitudes are invisible but express themselves in beliefs and emotions. Coon and Mitterer state that “... attitudes are expressed through beliefs and emotions” (*op.cit.*). And eventually, “they predict or direct future actions” (*ibid.*). Differently stated, attitudes are the instigators as well as compass of behavior. Phillips and Gully (2011: 136) conceptualize that *beliefs* lead to feelings ; *feelings* lead to attitudes ; *attitudes* lead to intentions, and *intentions* culminate into *behavior*.

#### 4.3 Types of Attitudes

Social psychologists have identified two types of attitudes: *implicit* and *explicit* attitudes. It all comes down to whether individuals are aware of their attitudinal systems or attempt to suppress unwanted ones. For better or worse, it has been reported that teachers favor dealing with female students rather than male students, although many would dismiss this attitude. As far as this gender-issue is concerned, teachers constantly and passionately defend their attitudes, which they evaluate as fair for both sexes. This seeming disparity and/ or ambivalence in attitudes require two types of measurements: implicit and explicit measurements. It is worth emphasizing the distinction between the types of attitudes. Hewstone and Stroebe (*op.cit.* 240) claim “In a broad sense, the study of attitudes is important because attitudes are

important for our social lives”, and equally important, they are essential to our socio-psychological well-being to redress attitudes according to social situations.

#### **4.3.1 Explicit Attitudes**

Bordens and Horowitz (*op.cit.* 181) identify explicit attitudes in the following terms “An attitude operating in a controlled processing about which are aware of its existence, its cognitive underpinnings, and how it relates to behavior”. People feel in harmony with and live up to their nursed attitudes because they seem to be convinced by the justifications of their existence.

#### **4.3.2 Implicit Attitudes**

According to Breckler, Olson and Wiggins (2006: 202), an implicit attitude is taken to mean “ an individual’s automatic evaluative response to a target, which can occur without awareness. An implicit attitude is a spontaneous, immediate, good-bad response to the target that cannot be consciously controlled. It reflects how the individual evaluates the target at a subconscious level”. Implicit attitudes refer, therefore, to totally disguised attitudes to target objects without the individual’s least suspicion. They crop up when least expected, and they are soon suppressed or clumsily justified.

By and large, implicit and explicit attitudes tend to harmoniously cooperate and manifest as one entity. Breckler *et al.* note that “The distinction between implicit and explicit attitudes will not always be important” (*ibid.*). Nonetheless, conformity may not always be the case. Again, Breckler *et al.* assert “Inconsistency between explicit and implicit attitudes can occur, however” (*ibid.*). The discrepancy between the types of attitude leads to what social psychologists call *cognitive dissonance*.

### 4.3.3 Cognitive Dissonance

Fischer, Frei, Peus, and Kastenmüller (2008: 189) provide the following definition “Cognitive Dissonance is defined as the subjective perception of incomparability between two self-related cognitions”. Frequently, male teachers’ gender preference and sexism transpires from their day-to-day practices despite the fact that they attempt to suppress this attitude. This inconsistency comes to be termed *dissonance* by Leon Festinger. The latter, being the leading figure in the advancement of *cognitive dissonance* for the first time (1957: 2), defends his choice of terms “First, I will replace the word ‘inconsistency’ with a term which has less of a logical connotation, namely, *dissonance*”. Furthermore, he provides his understanding of *cognition* in this much: “By cognition ... I mean any knowledge, opinion, or belief about the environment, about oneself, about one’s behavior” (*ibid.*, 3). According to Festinger, cognitive dissonance precedes behavior “Cognitive dissonance can be seen as an antecedent condition which leads to activity toward dissonance reduction, just as hunger leads to activity oriented toward hunger reduction” (*ibid.*). This may account for male teachers’ assumption that their profession is a lone profession.

### 4.4 Structure of Attitudes

A running conviction among social psychologists is summarized in the following statement: Attitudes are only *inferred*. It is as simple and complex as this much. Semin and Fiedler (*op.cit.* 4) state “An attitude is ... a hypothetical construct in the sense that we cannot directly sense or measure it”. Thus, the only way to identify an attitude and outline its breadth and width is to draw conclusions from certain responses. In the same breadth, they note “Its existence is inferred from certain classes of *evaluative responses* to attitude object” (*ibid.*). Emotions can be another yardstick to measure an attitude “Another way in which we might infer somebody’s attitude is on the basis of their emotional responses” (*ibid.*). Measuring attitudes, therefore, is a complex undertaking as it requires a great deal of effort and energy to obtain trustworthy outcomes.

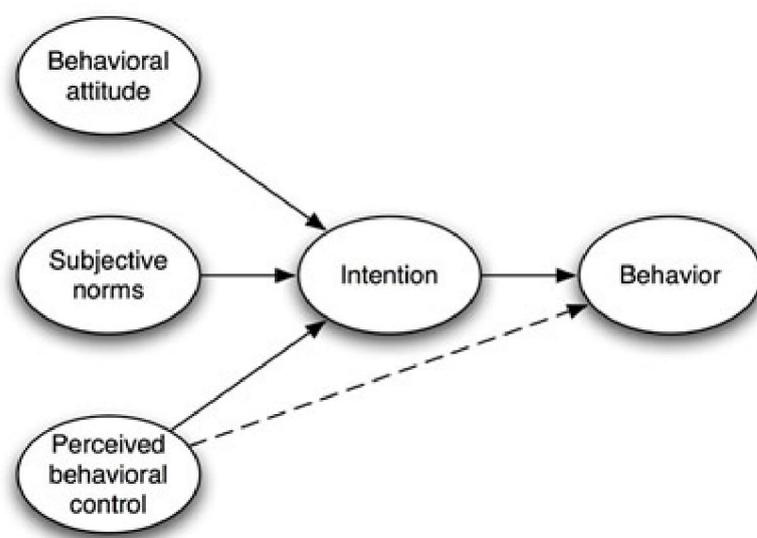
Böhner and Wänke (*op.cit.* 5) conclude “Attitudes may encompass affective, behavioral, and cognitive responses”. It is worth emphasizing that these three dimensions need not be considered mutually exclusive or symbiotically inclusive. Böhner and Wänke corroborate “These three response classes are not necessarily separable from each other, and do not necessarily represent three independent factors” (*ibid.*). They further explain “Moreover, attitude may consist entirely of cognitive or affective components, and it is not necessary all three classes are represented” (*ibid.*). Relying on the overlapping of these evaluative responses, Ajzen (1988) draws the following table:

RESPONSE CATEGORY					
Affect		Cognition		Behavior	
Verbal	Expression of feelings toward attitude object	Expressions of beliefs about attitude object	Expressions of behavioral intentions toward attitude object		
Non Verbal	Physical responses to attitude object	Perceptual responses (e.g., reaction time) to attitude object	Overt behavioral responses to attitude object		

**Table 54:** Different types of evaluation responses (drawn upon Semin & Fiedler, 1996: 4)

According to Ajzen (*ibid.*), attitudes can be inferred from verbal and non verbal responses. The evaluative responses issued by individuals are categorized according to the way that these are performed. Response categories are affect-, cognition-, and behavior-related. When male and female teachers feel that female students are more cooperative and amenable and act accordingly, then their attitude is affect-wise; when male and female teachers express what they believe about male students (e.g., rowdy and disruptive) and act accordingly their attitude is cognitive-wise; and when male and female teachers express the intentions and act of their behavior (e.g., they would resort to corporal punishment among male student population to bring law and order), then their attitude may be evaluated as behavior-wise.

Against this backcloth, in 1985, Ajzen developed his *theory of planned behavior* (TPB). TPB is an extension of the *theory of reasoned action* (TRA) developed by Ajzen and Martin Fishbein in the mid-seventies. TPB has proved over the years to be an influential theory in social psychology (**fig.1**). Manfredo (2008: 121) lays out the nature and scope TPB as follows “This widely used theory proposes that a person’s behavior is a function of attitude and subject norm”. A subject norm is conceptualized as “a person’s beliefs about what important others want one to do and one’s motivation to comply with those others” (*ibid.*) Differently stated, TPB claims that teachers’ attitudes toward class size (e.g., overcrowdedness frustrates teachers’ efficiency) and subject norm (e.g., inspectors’ and headteachers’ pressure for more teachers engagement in in-class groupwork) help define behavioral intentions and eventually the teachers’ readiness to meet those requirements (i.e., the engagement in the execution of the behavior).



**Fig. 3** Representation of TPB<sup>2</sup>

#### 4.5 Functions of Attitudes

It is widely claimed among the social psychology community that people utilize attitudes in a variety of ways in order to accommodate different personal and social functions. Teachers frequently cite their attitudes of being

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<sup>2</sup> <http://publichealthnerds.blogspot.com/2011/06/theory-of-planned-behavior.html>

insufficiently enthusiastic about their profession or lacking sufficient commitment to their job. Teachers' salaries are low, working hours are long, and out-of-school lesson preparation and examination scoring seem interminable. These attitudes clearly demonstrate that teachers are on the defensive. Conversely, teachers can use their attitudes as an offensive policy: school reforms are always top-down, and they are practically never consulted with a process that no one knows better than they do. By the same token, Hewstone and Stroebe (*op.cit.* 240) echo:

At a personal level attitude influence perceptions, thinking, and behavior ... . At the interpersonal level, information about attitudes is routinely requested and disclosed. If we know others' attitudes, the world's becomes more predictable. Our own thinking may be shaped by this knowledge, and we may try to control others' behavior by changing their attitudes. At the intergroup level, attitudes towards one's groups and other groups are at the core of intergroup cooperation and conflict.

Being defensive or offensive, teachers' attitudes point out to the influence which these can have on teachers' personal, interpersonal, and intergroup connections.

Interestingly, social psychologists have identified five functions of the attitudes of the teachers and others for that matter, which span from pragmatic to social functions that enable the individuals from being immaculate members of their society. In the section below, the five functions of the attitudes are outlined.

#### **4.5.1 Knowledge Function**

According to Hewstone and Stroebe (*ibid.* 242), an attitude's function is that of guiding, organizing, and simplifying information process. The more positive attitudes one holds about his intelligence, the more he thinks he can solve intellectual problems.

#### **4.5.2 Utilitarian Function**

It is an attitude's function of maximizing rewards and minimizing punishments in guiding behavior (*ibid.*). Aligning with the attitudes of people perceived as authorities in the subject matter brings more satisfaction than holding opposing views.

#### **4.5.3 Social Identity Function**

An attitude's function of expressing an individual's values and of establishing identification with particular reference groups (*ibid.*). Teachers who teach the same subject matter tend to "flock together", and they may even develop attitudes of their own such as English teachers are usually cheerful, creative, open-minded, understanding, and well-clad.

#### **4.5.4 Self-Esteem Maintenance Function**

It is an attitude's function of setting the self apart from negative objects and aligning it with positive objects (*ibid.*). It has been noticed that teachers oftentimes align with their inspector's views (at the detriment of their own views) because they perceive him/her an authority in TEFL. Thus, their self-esteem is kept safe from embarrassment all while Algerian society is well-known for its face-saving value.

#### **4.5.5 Self-Monitoring Function**

Individuals high in self-monitoring tailor their behavior to fit situational cues and reactions of others (*ibid.*). For instance, female teachers tend to be more self-monitoring than male teachers and would gladly accept inspector's views on teaching and/ or classroom management, even though they may do away with these views once in class.

As a final comment, attitudes are what the world infers and eventually unfolds of the individuals' identities. In other words, they are the visas on the passports that give

the individuals access to social and professional life. To the workplace, individuals bring, among other things, their most established as well as cherished attitudes. These either help individuals to be satisfied with what they perform and, therefore, they will be efficient, or they can be so negative that they eventually frustrate not only the positive integration of the workers in the workplace, but also lead to the frustration of productivity. Buzzan (2001) states that the “US Bureau of Labor Statistics did some research and estimated that negative beliefs and attitudes in the workplace cost the US industry approximately \$ 3 billion per year” (quoted in Neale, Spencer-Arnell, and Wilson, 2011: 70). As Algerian academics, the question that comes to mind: How much money do the negative attitudes of the Algerian workforce cost the Nation’s economy? Attitudes appear to be under-explored by academics, and even if there were some, they are *classified* on library shelves (*double entendre intended*). A tentative answer would be, therefore, “a great deal” of money judging by the fact that Algeria has all the necessary resources to be an affluent and developed society. Yet, unfortunately, she is still lagging behind with the rest of the dyed-in-the wool developing nations.

#### **4.6 Categories of Teachers’ Attitudes**

Teaching behavior may be influenced by various socio-psychological and socio-economic factors. Cooper *et al.* (2011: 5) acknowledge that the major categories of attitudes that affect teaching behavior are four: (a) teachers’ attitudes toward themselves, (b) teachers’ attitudes toward children (i.e., learners, in our case), (c) teachers’ attitudes toward peers and parents, and finally, (d) teachers’ attitudes toward the subject matter.

##### **4.6.1 Teachers’ Attitudes Toward Themselves**

Apparently, teachers who have positive attitudes toward themselves have better opportunities not only to understand their own behavior, but also an outstanding ability to empathize with the people surrounding them. Conversely, teachers who live in self-denial tend to exclude themselves and others from better rapport. A large

literature has accumulated over the last decade confirms that teachers who can *introspect* their own experience as students and attempt to unearth their attitudes, anxiety, expectations, fears, and needs are prone to understand their students and eventually be in consonance with their students' learning behavior. Cooper *et al.* (*ibid.*) state "There is evidence from psychology that person who deny or who cannot cope with their own emotions are likely to be incapable of respecting and coping with the feelings of others". Some teachers still firmly believe that by being severe with their students and use corporal punishment they can lead students to better achievement and better classroom discipline. This attitude seems to stem from their own intolerant upbringing and school experience. This subdued self-image would only lead teachers to be resented by their students, and the outcomes of achievement are uncertain, if not counterproductive.

The investigation led among the middle school teachers of English in the region of Biskra reveals that they have positive attitudes toward themselves despite the deploring circumstances (demanding inspectors, busy schedules, large classes, long files, and pedagogical chores, etc.). In comparison with other teachers, Algerian middle school teachers of English clearly enjoy a favorable image of themselves. They believe that they are more active, creative, cheerful, energetic, fashionable, helpful, innovative, motivated, open-minded, self-disciplined, sympathetic, and tolerant. Although students feel the difference between teachers of English and teachers of other subjects, they appear to be little influenced by those positive qualities. Perhaps this is due to the teachers' commitment to implement the linguistic contents of the textbooks rather than teaching those soft skills (leadership, interpersonal interactions, and empathy, etc.). Inversely, in comparison with the other subjects, English does not seem to enjoy a favorable position as it scheduled one before last in the overall planning of teaching sessions. Thus, despite the positive attitudes of the teachers of English toward themselves, they come to be perceived as "ancillary".

#### 4.6.2 Teachers' Attitudes Toward Children

By and large, teachers have mixed feelings, expectations, and perceptions of their students. Obviously, gender (of the teachers and of the students) and age (of the teachers and of the students) determine much of the teachers' attitudes toward their students. Overall, young male teachers appear to enjoy better rapport and better manage student discipline; elder female teachers find it hard to lead their mid-teenage students (14-15 year adolescents) to behave themselves. This is especially true as most Algerian middle school classes are overcrowded with a minimum of 40 students per pedagogical group. Class size, according to our investigation, represents the major concern for an overwhelming majority estimated at 88.23% of the middle school teachers of English questionnaire respondents. Out of despair and anger, many female teachers communicate their negative attitudes toward and frustration of their student to abide to discipline and order. Eventually, students start to adopt those attitudes characterized by their teachers and "fine tune" their learning and behavior to fit those negative attitudes and expectations. In psychology, this phenomenon is known as *self-fulfilling prophecy*, and according to which students act upon what they believe to be true. Lippa (2002: 96) identifies self-fulfilling prophecy as "Once people believe something to be true, they often act to make it come true". Differently couched, students act as teachers expect of them.

Our investigation among middle school teachers of English led to the following conclusions. Both female and male teachers seem to nurse negative attitudes toward male students. 85.29% of the respondents believe that male students are noisy, rude, disruptive, careless, restless, untidy, rebellious, lazy, and selfish. 23.52% of the respondents think that male students are hardworking, intelligent, perseverant, energetic, cooperative, helpful, and caring. Whereas, only 11.76% of the surveyed teachers believe male students to be quiet, polite, obedient, thoughtful, calm, tidy, law-abiding, and kind. Unlike male student population, female student population enjoys favorable attitudes according to the results of this study. 79.41% of the middle school teachers of English perceive that female students as quiet, polite, obedient, thoughtful, calm, tidy, law-abiding, and kind. Yet another 11.77% consider female students to be hardworking, intelligent, perseverant, energetic, cooperative, helpful, and caring. Only 8.82% of the surveyed teacher nurse negative attitudes toward

female students who are qualified as noisy, rude, disruptive, careless, restless, untidy, rebellious, lazy, and selfish. As a final note, stakeholders' demographics seem to define teachers' attitudes toward students.

#### **4.6.3 Teachers' Attitudes Toward Peers and Parents**

It has become a habit in pre-tertiary education to devote the last day of the week that precedes school holidays to *Open Doors* (أبواب مفتوحة). The Open Doors Day (ODD) represents a unique opportunity in which parents and teachers meet and have an open talk about the students' achievements, behavior, discipline, progress, and marks reports. For better or worse, parents show reluctance to take the initiative to visit their children's teachers unless a serious matter or disruptive behavior occurs. On the ODD, it is incumbent upon parents to fetch their children's marks reports and seize the opportunity to be filled in as far as their children's (mis)behavior, achievements, and failures are concerned. Likewise, teachers feel the need to describe in details their appraisal of the students directly to the parents, which is something of a relief. Although teachers' recommendations are not mandatory, some parents take them seriously especially as more and more parents demonstrate genuine concern about their children's behavior and education. Teachers believe that ODD would be more beneficial if students' admission is conducted through qualitative rather than the current quantitative criteria. Practically all primary students are rushed to middle schools even though they still show weaknesses in the basic 3 Rs ('arithmic, reading, and writing), which complicate the matters for the middle school teachers.

Middle school teachers of English clearly have positive attitudes vis-à-vis their peers. In the self-completed questionnaire which has been designed to test female and male teachers' attitudes toward the other sex, surprising results are obtained. Teachers' gender does not appear to affect the middle school teachers of English. Both female and teachers nourish positive attitudes toward one another especially a solid majority of female teachers (70.58%) say that male teachers are dedicated, helpful, caring, responsible, skillful, understanding, supportive, and fair against

29.42% who perceive male teachers as authoritarian, firm, selfish, reluctant to help, pompous, always behind schedule, and sexist. As for male teachers, 64.70% believe that female teachers are devoted to their job, helpful, caring, motivated, skillful, updated, resourceful, and tidy. This attitude is not shared only by 29.30 % who think that female teachers are lax, lazy, careless, uncooperative, selfish, always behind schedule, and demotivated. As a final comment, female teachers have a better attitude toward their male colleagues than the other way around. Perhaps that accounts for female teachers' readiness to cooperate with the other teachers when it comes to the developing yearly and monthly planning as well as constructing a common examination paper.

Apparently, the school context with all its constraints seems to enjoy favorable attitudes by the majority of the middle school teachers of English. The surveyed teachers (64.70%), regardless of gender differences, think that their professional context is accepting, comfortable, inducing, involving, understanding, encouraging, supportive, caring, secure, trusting, warm, non-judgmental, and non-threatening. Some 32.35% of the respondents do not appear that optimism, especially as they perceive their school context to be stressful, disheartening, hostile, biased, lax, demotivating, preferential (sexist), judgmental, threatening, undemocratic, and overbearing. Dissatisfaction from the socio-professional context need actually not be under-estimated all the more as one third of the middle school teachers of English feel working in extreme professional, psychological, and social conditions. It is worth maximizing that as teachers spend more years teaching, their enthusiasm and job satisfaction with their socio-professional diminishes accordingly. All in all, it appears that teachers' dissatisfaction with their school contexts stems from the socio-professional pressures than the managing personnel.

#### **4.6.4 Teachers Attitudes Toward Subject Matter**

Most of the encountered middle school teachers of English have come into teaching English out of vocation; at least this is what they claim in the unstructured interviews. Teaching English to Algerian beginner students in the middle schools has

its charm on post-baccalaureate students who graduate either from the ITE, or ENS, or university. However, one middle school teacher of English reports that he considers teaching English as “another job”. They all start teaching with commitment and enthusiasm until they encounter omniscient socio-professional challenges (long hours, long syllabuses, overbearing inspectors, and low salary, etc.). Commitment, enthusiasm, and motivation to teaching English decidedly wane due to three major demographics-related and pedagogical factors: age, gender, and instructional materials. It may seem paradoxical that a number of the interviewed middle school teachers of English are the victims of their own choice of and preference for teaching English, especially as everybody around them demonstrates genuine interest to learn English. Dozens of Arab-funded all-movie channels that show practically American movies non-stop have fuel the interest in learning English. Furthermore, social media (facebook, Internet, twitter) are managed through the medium of English language, which makes incessant demands on learning English and inquiries for optimal understanding. Teaching English clearly induces favorable attitudes in both senior and novice all teachers.

Nonetheless, the pedagogical and managerial challenges deflate the commitment, enthusiasm, and motivation of the middle school teachers of English. As it has already been acknowledged class sizes terrifies teachers and puts extra burden on them. Lack of adequate teacher education and training programs turn out to chip away at their professionalism. The use and overuse of instructional materials over long periods of time deskills them and leads them to feel repeating themselves. Long hours (i.e., 22 to 24 hours per week) increase their frustrations and decreases their chances to research, prepare their lessons, and live a normal social life. Expectations are always placed high especially in middle school final year (4th year) when students are to sit a standardized test (BEM) and expected to record high percentages of success; any failure would be automatically attributed to teachers. Backwash becomes irksome for most teachers: They must teach for the test instead of teaching for students’ personal and intellectual growth. Subsequently, it is not surprising that teachers’ attitudes toward their subject matter (i.e., teaching English) become burdensome and eventually daunting. As a final analysis, middle school teachers of English seem to be considerably attached to their subject matter, but because of the discouraging

constraints they develop negative attitudes toward their subjects that ultimately deflate their commitment.

Besides these four categories, it is essential to add a fifth one “Teachers attitudes toward their SES”. Due to the importance of this category to the teachers in general and middle school teachers of English in particular, it is preferable to discuss it in a separate section.

#### 4.6.5 Teachers Attitudes Toward Their SES

By definition, socioeconomic status (SES) refers to the social and financial situations of individuals and families in their societies. The following definition telescopes the dual vectors of SES: “Socioeconomic status <sup>3</sup>(SES) is an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience and of an individual's or family's economic and social position in relation to others, based on income, education, and occupation”. Scholars have identified SES through various facets, which are hereby purposefully grouped (in alphabetic order) in the table below to outline the substance and width of teachers' SES.

	SES Features
Socioeconomic Status	Access to status and power- aspirations- cultural resources (i.e., education)- family's economic resources- economic security- home of one's own- life style- political affiliations-quality of life-savings- work roles

**Table 55:** Features of SES.

An objective observation of SES amply demonstrates that SES is not simply about income and lavish life style. In the final analysis, SES determines the individuals' and

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<sup>3</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socioeconomic\\_status](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socioeconomic_status)

families' status in the social structure and economic prosperity. People with high SES enjoy favorable social standing and better financial and job opportunities, which enables them to participate in the decision making.

In social and economical terms, Algerian middle school teachers, as other teachers, witnessed dramatic changes over time. In post-independence (July 5th, 1962) and until late eighties, teachers enjoyed a privileged position in Algeria: They were well paid, given longer holidays, and respected by all people from all walks of life. The '90s and most of 21st c first decade were difficult times for teachers as their income and social status became lower due to the stifling economic crisis and deteriorated security situations. The mood of the period was characterized by the teachers' belief that they were poor and eligible for the Zakat (الزكاة). Middle school teachers' salary was well below that of their fellow teachers in Tunisia and Morocco. The UGTA estimated that a relatively small Algerian family needed DA 30, 000 (ca. US \$ 300) a month to live decently. Recently, the Government decided a pay rise with a back pay for the last three years; this decision came after long periods of disputes between the teachers' unions and the MNE. However, the social inequality does not appear to end as the teachers still feel that their back pay and pay rise have come to be surpassed by the high prices of commodity goods and the rampant inflation<sup>4</sup> which reached 4% in 2011 according to press releases. Teachers' attitudes toward their SES are noticeably more positive if still not meeting their demands and needs.

#### **4.7 Teachers' Attitudes Toward their Instructional Environment**

Middle school teachers of English nurture ambivalent types of attitudes toward their instructional (i.e., teaching) context. For better or worse, these attitudes, regardless of whether they positive or negative, significantly affect the teaching act and teacher-student, teacher-teaching context, and teaching- students' parents' relationships. This section attempts to overview teachers' attitudes toward different aspects of their instructional environment.

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<sup>4</sup> Unlike historical definition of inflation that defines it as the disproportionate output of goods and currency, modern definition states "Inflation is a persistent increase in the general prices levels" (Myers 2011 :123)

#### **4.7. 1 Teachers' Attitudes Toward School Setting**

Architecturally speaking, Algerian schools especially those built as from the mid-seventies and up are prototypical in that they share similar architectural and organizational patterns. Regardless of the climate differences, topographical discrepancies, socio-cultural variations, and geographical proximity from the metropolis (Algiers, Annaba, Constantine, Oran, and Setif, etc.), the architecture of the educational institutions is obviously replicas of one another. Perhaps, this policy is closely linked to the Government's attitude toward the democratization of national education, which aims at providing Algerian children with equal opportunities to learn in a near-to-home school. Therefore, in post-independence Algeria, school building became a concern of the political leadership in order to accommodate the large number of children. In the rush to build adequate schools, the esthetic and modern architecture seemed inconsequential. It could be argued that the spirit of the time paid little attention to the importance of the architectural features of school buildings on education and stakeholders' attitudes and behaviors. Compelling arguments concur that school building in Algeria is far from being scaled to the age, expectations, interests, and behaviors of Algerian schoolchildren.

It is widely agreed nowadays that current school building ought to mark a breach from traditional perspectives. Kowalsky (2002: 3) notes "While schools were merely intended to be shelters, today's buildings are expected to be modern, accessible, flexible, durable, and efficient". Differently stated, modern-day schools need be so designed to address cognitive, emotional, and social needs of schoolchildren. School design need be learning- and discipline- inducing in order to help students develop positive mindsets and attitudes. The space devoted to learning (namely, classrooms) need to be consonant with students number. Students should have enough space to operate freely in the classroom without infringing another classmate's space. Schools should not only be confined to instruction, other the design and space devoted to recreational facilities such as stadiums, gardens, gymnasiums, libraries, refectories, and the courtyard need to be taken into consideration while designing and building schools. It is uncommon to find adequate museums in Algerian schools filled with artifacts and stuffed animals by students as part of their projects. Obviously, students

develop fond memories because of the excellent teachers not because of the welcoming surroundings of their schools. As for the teaching staff, they often quote other reasons such as an understanding administrator and supportive colleagues rather than the physical environment of their schools.

A quick review on the importance of school design in reshaping and motivating personnel and stakeholders proves that the issue is underexplored. A good number of officials and laypeople think that this aspect is basically inconsequential. This attitude appears to be counter-intuitive: Personnel and stakeholders spend so much of their intellectual and social time in formal settings, i.e., schools, where they interact continually. The authors of the OECD-published book *Motivating Students for Lifelong Learning* (2000: 44) believe “School design can affect the amount of space a student has to develop individually and socially. Students-and teachers- may be more or less motivated by lay-out and design of classroom, workshop, and laboratory equipment and furnishings”. Decidedly, modern-day school architecture needs to take into account the state-of-the-art techniques, scientific breakthroughs, and the culture as well as the spirit of the time. The aforementioned authors corroborate “Clearly, school design has to be responsive to both the dynamic and complicated youth culture and the future needs of both students and communities” (*ibid.*). Modern-day school design and building need to review its basic tenets to leave to personnel and stakeholders sufficient space, easy-access to facilities, and accommodating environment, where healthy interaction occurs.

Technicalities such as how much light and what color to use may influence the engagement, learning, motivation, and productivity of both teachers and students. Brubaker *et al.* (1998: 148) state “There is a general agreement among experts that school environments should have an average light reflectance value of 50 to 60 % and that brightness ratios in the field of view should be uniform”. As for color, both cool and warm colors have clearly different impacts on the effectiveness of instruction and the comfort with which teachers and student feel when interacting. The table below, which is drawn on the findings of Brubaker *et al.*, juxtaposes the benefits of cool and warm colors and where they best fit.

	Benefits	Type of Schools
Warm Colors	They have diverting effect.  They draw visual and emotional interests outworld.	Elementary Schools
Cool Colors	They provide better opportunities for concentration.  They encourage the focus on task	Middle and high schools  Libraries  Study spaces

**Table 56:** Cool and warm colors effects

A priori, elementary students aged 6 through 11 tend to prefer colors that make them feel warm and comfortable, whereas middle and high school students aged 12 through 14 and 15 through 17 respectively, are prone to prefer large spaces where they can study. Colors may, therefore, suggest spaciousness or recession. Wolfrom (1992: 20) notes “Warm colors advance visually, while cool colors tend to recede”. Warm colors are reds, oranges, and yellows; cool colors are blues, greens, and violets.

According to psychological tests, color-form dominance develops from total preference for color in early age to form dominance in adult age. Kopacz (2004: 96) claims “In adults, form dominance is considered a genetically higher level of response than color, accounting for 90 percent of the adult population”. Nevertheless, the surveyed Algerian middle school teachers of English do not seem to be directly affected by their school architectural and aesthetic layout. The underlying reason may be that most of them have been educated in similar schools, where facilities, equipments, furniture, and layout are minimally dissimilar. Clearly, they feel more comfortable when headteacher/ principal-teacher rapport is well established. The respondents to the questionnaire on the attitude of middle school teachers toward their school contexts, 64.70% have declared that they enjoy good relations with the

administration, which seems sufficient for them to feel happy. The physical layout of the workplace does not appear to cause concern for them, although newly inaugurated schools enjoy favorable attitudes. Cleanliness and tidiness of the in-school surroundings are clearly considerably appreciated by the respondents. However, most surveyed teachers (namely, 65.50%) have confided (in the unstructured interviews) that they resent having one *Teachers' Lodge* for both female and male teachers, where all meet at the recession break.

#### **4.7.2 Teachers' Attitudes Toward Inspectors**

By definition, a school inspector's primary task is to inspect what teachers do in class. They inspect the ability of teachers to lead students to learn in most favorable conditions; they inspect teachers' expertise; they inspect teachers' classroom management; they inspect teachers' abilities to prepare lessons, achieve objectives, and write adequate worksheets; they inspect teachers' linguistic knowledge; they inspect teachers' collegial spirit; and they inspect teachers' abilities to implement the curriculum. What is more, school inspectors have the power and right to officially appoint and discharge teachers. For better or worse, this is the most dreaded phase in teachers' lives, when inspectors come to nominate them for the post of permanent teachers. This occasion represents the real challenge for most teachers who would spend long hours keeping their logs up-to-date, their worksheets neat, their students' copybooks corrected, and yearly planning handy. On that occasion, inspectors are clearly more demanding than ever: Although teachers are notified of the inspectors' dates of appoint, the latter practically ignore to familiarize teachers with the *appointment* proceedings, requirements and standards that teachers need to satisfy. Consequently, no wonder that all teachers consider the *nomination* sessions the most stressful in their career.

The second major task of school inspectors is teachers' ongoing education and training. It is incumbent upon inspectors to provide a yearly planning of seminars and the objectives thereof. Most seminars follow a pattern: inspectors as keynote speakers, a model lesson is presented, deliberations, lunch, and dispensation. At the fulcrum of

the periodic seminars is the teaching of receptive and productive skills, and very rarely inspectors remind teachers of they are expect to do: respect the progression of the curriculum. It seems that inspector major concern during the seminars is to urge teachers to complete the files in time. It should be note that inspectors occasionally undergo training by American and/ or British educators and trainers. Apparently, most of the foreign educators and trainers concentrate on introducing games and tips for teaching skills with the ultimate view of motivating and meaningfully engaging students in the teaching learning process. Some surveyed teachers expressed their happiness to being able to use those games and tips provided by their inspectors. As a general rule, inspectors deliberately avoid to introduce theories and methodologies of teaching to middle school teachers of English. First, they themselves have trouble understanding those difficult and complex concepts, and also because teachers are more interested in implementing games than to discuss teaching in its theoretical framework.

Inspector-teacher relationships are modulated by their attitudes, negative experiences, and preconceived ideas that each and every one of them harbors. On the one hand, inspectors feel and usually express their frustration from teachers' inability to follow rules and requirements. They strongly feel that a sizeable number of teachers eschew performing what is required from them such as designing worksheets, keeping the logbooks tidy and up-to-date, and move smoothly from one file to the other without wasting time on unnecessary information or tasks. A surveyed inspector confided that some teachers miss classes when they hear that he plans to pay them official visits. On the other hand, middle school teachers of English report that their inspectors harangue and intimidate them in front of the students. Inspectors are overbearing and too demanding and in total disregard of the teachers' professional and social constraints. For the purpose of the current study, 85.35% of the surveyed middle school of English teachers express the wish that they need inspectors who are compassionate and understanding rather than all-time criticizing inspectors. The unstructured interviews with some middle school teachers of English reveal that they are not satisfied with the content and management of the seminars as they draw little benefit from the inspectors' experience in the field of teaching. They note that inspectors usually demand that one of the teachers present a demonstration lesson with them (i.e., inspectors) as spectators.

Teachers' attitudes toward inspectors' reports on visitations are yet another form of frustration, suspicion, and panic. Inspectors are required to submit reports to the directorate(s) of education (مديرية التربية) of which content the teachers in question are not informed. This administration function of inspectors excludes practically teachers of being informed on their class performance. This procedure increases inspectors' authority and power and equally reduces teachers' self-confidence and self-esteem, and at the same time increases their apprehension, concern for their career, and mistrust of inspectors' phony "professional friendliness". The collected responses of the middle school teachers for the purpose of the present study and with reference to inspector-teacher relations are displayed below:

Questionnaire items	Percentages
I need to cope with the new challenges of the classroom.	58.82%
I need to deal with pertinent issues in periodic seminars.	47.05%
I need more pre-service education and training.	47.05%
I need to be advised by the inspector not criticized.	73.52%
I need to feel more at ease with the inspector's visit.	58.82%
I need to know beforehand of the inspector's visit.	29.41%
I need to deal with an open-minded, compassionate, and understanding inspector not an overbearing and stick-to-the rules inspector.	82.35%

**Table 57:** Teachers views of inspectors' roles and duties.

As it can be observed, middle school teachers of English manifest an apprehension of inspectors' visitations and 29.41% express the wish to be informed beforehand of the inspectors' visits<sup>5</sup>, while 58.82% report to prefer to feel at ease when inspectors decide to visit them. The respondents in their solid majority (73.52%) expect to be professionally advised rather than admonished by inspectors. These figures obviously are epiphanical in that they reveal teachers' concerns and apprehension of inspectors which in turn cause them to develop negative attitudes toward inspectors, their reports<sup>6</sup>, seminars, and visitations.

#### **4.7.3 Teachers' Attitudes Toward Textbooks**

No formal education is textbook-proof, especially as textbooks represent the backbone of the curriculum, the physical realization of the state policy. It is a common knowledge that textbooks are value-laden book in that they are intended to preserve and promote the nation's attitudes, beliefs, and values. The identity of the nation comes to be defined, molded, and propagated thanks to the state's authorized textbooks. Conversely, ideals that contribute to the development and progress of the nation are also included in the materials that learners are supposed to use throughout their career of students. It is unimaginable to all stakeholders the absence of such instructional materials under any pretext. Chall and Squire (1991: 319) state :

Textbooks exist at virtually all levels of schooling in all subjects and in all countries of the world. They are the least expensive tool for transmitting knowledge, the most easily used by teachers, the bedrock structure traditionally employed by schools to provide curriculum coherence. To many parents and community leaders, they remain a symbol of educational achievement.

The omnipresence of textbooks in schools all over the world amply demonstrates that they are an integral part of formal education.

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<sup>5</sup> Middle school teachers are not noticed of the inspectors' visits but they are for the licensure (i.e., the official appointment of trainees).

<sup>6</sup> Inspectors have the power to revoke, sanction, and dismiss a teacher if the latter fails to satisfy the requirements stated by the School Legislation.

Teachers usually develop a bond of affection with the textbooks in current use ; this is particularly true in the early years of the implementation. There are compelling reasons that teachers are equally attracted to the content and graphics of the textbooks. It appears refreshing to work with a book that is colorful, artistically produced, and implentationally challenging because it is, in a sense, power inducing. Teachers feel that students can never get access to the wealth of knowledge without their assistance. Being able to explain difficult linguistic, sociolinguistic, and cultural items leaves a sense of complacency and even vanity that teachers cherish. This exuberant attitude is clearly discernible in novice university-educated teachers, who usually and willingly manifest a sharp sense of identity by showing some of the knowledge that they have learned in college. Oftentimes, novice teachers seem to be fastidious as to the variety of modules that they have studied especially those modules which deal with the American civilization and literature, and, to a lesser degree, phonetics and linguistics. Nonetheless, as time goes by, most teachers start to feel the impact of repeating themselves, which frequently leads them to deskilling.

As far as *SOE* series are concerned, the surveyed teachers have developed distinct attitudes. It should be noted, however, that the implementation of the new series has come after more than a decade of using *Spring* (1+2+3) series, which was produced in low quality paper with dim pictures and drawings, and long syllabuses that needed to be covered in a short time. Furthermore, those middle school instructional materials lacked adequate teacher's guide and audio-visual aids. These constraints limited teachers' maneuvers and quickly induced boredom and deskilling. Inversely, the new proposed textbooks, produced on quality paper with obviously clear, colored pictures, represent a unique opportunity to renew the commitment to motivation and better teaching. Nevertheless, the long, rich, and varied files coupled with the lack of teacher's guide, other extra-curricular aids (such as tapes, CDs, and pictures, etc.), and training appear to compromise that bond of affection after practically a decade of Competency-Based instructional materials. In the unstructured interviews, 60% of the teachers have expressed their resentment of being urged to proceed with the syllabus with the view of completing the required files. One senior teacher has confided that he has spent the first trimester teaching only File One (*SOE* Book 1) due to wealth of items that students desperately need to learn.

#### 4.7.4 Teachers' Attitudes Toward the Textbook Objectives

In CBLT, objectives are specified according to the detailed learning statements and the desired outcomes. Anema and McCoy (2009: 132) outline the learning statements: (1) they address one of the learning statements (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor); (2) they measure one behavior; (3) they contain action verbs to determine the complexity of the task; (4) they focus on the learner. CBLT fosters a criterion-based principle in that individual learners rather learner groups come to be target by the instruction and later assessment. Individual learners need to demonstrate minimum required competency in what they undertake. McAshan (1981: 45) defines competencies as:

The knowledge, skills, abilities or capabilities that a person achieves, which becomes part of his or her being to the extent that he or she can satisfactorily perform particular cognitive, affective, or psychomotor behaviors. They represent the instructional intents of a program and are stated as specific goals to be achieved.

Basically, CBLT is about specific acts that a learner needs to perform well at any given time. The specifications of competencies and the intended outcomes clearly make this approach highly manipulative, and which leaves no room for broad or abstract goals and objectives.

The *SOE* writers have acknowledged some objectives from adopting the CBLT in the middle schools. A thorough investigation of the learning statements indicate they are ideal especially as they are not frequently expressed in action verbs, and do not specify the targeted behaviors and nor are the outcomes specified. The six goals set for the middle are : (1) understand a simple oral message, (2) *understand* the essential information the message contains, (3) look for some precise details, (4) identify various types of messages, (5) find logical makers, and finally, (6) *learn* and remember a few key elements of the messages. The second year middle school, the project becomes the linchpin of the teaching-learning process. The third year middle school, reading and writing are introduced. The fourth year middle school, learner autonomy becomes at the fulcrum of the teaching-learning process. The outcomes of

the questionnaire lay out the mixed attitudes of the teachers toward the pertinence of the set syllabus objectives and the *SOE* contents and tasks. 27.27% on either side of the respondents claim and declaim the relevance of the objectives. 80.36% of the surveyed teachers believe that *SOE* series do not really promote learner autonomy. These high percentages speak for themselves confirming incessantly that middle school textbooks incited negative attitudes and reviews.

#### **4.8 Teachers' Attitudes Toward the Textbook Linguistic Content**

Textbook linguistic content refers to the lexical, phonological, grammatical, and orthographical aspects of the syllabuses. A priori, middle school teachers of English nurse an ill combination of challenge and a feeling of intimidation as far as the linguistic content of the textbooks of English is concerned. This section aims at establishing the attitudinal patterns of the teachers of English vis-à-vis the linguistic input that they are supposed to implement in middle schools to an adolescent population whose main contact with FL is through TV channels.

##### **4.8.1 Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is taken to mean the whole repertoire of the words of a language that none of the native speakers knows in its totality although it comes to be compiled in dictionaries and thesauri. It is compelling to acknowledge that in SLL and FLL, vocabulary teaching has been dramatically overlooked. DeCarrico (2001) (quoted in Ferris and Hedgcock 2009: 283) notes “Vocabulary has not always been recognized as a priority”. Language comprehension is basically about the perception and understanding of vocabulary. Laufer (1997: 20 in Cody and Huckin) echoes “No text comprehension is possible, either in one’s native language or in a foreign language without understanding the text’s vocabulary”. The neglect of systematically teaching vocabulary may be due to the focus on form and phonology in teaching languages in general and foreign and second languages in particular. Surprisingly, foreign and second language learners have proved to be “prescriptivist grammarians” instead of good communicators. Wilkins’ axiomatic statement “the fact is, that without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed”

(*sic*) (quoted in Graunberg 1997: 5) needs to be highly appreciated while developing and designing EFL curriculums, syllabuses, textbooks, and aids.

In SLL and FLL, vocabulary policy needs to be squarely addressed and implemented. To achieve that goal, it is incumbent upon textbook writers (in our case) to take into consideration the quantity of vocabulary that needs to be included and eventually actively mastered by ELLs. According to Cody and Huckins (*op.cit.*), “A vocabulary of 3,000 word families or 5, 000 lexical items is need for general reading comprehension, as this would cover 90-95% of any text”. In order to assist students make studied guesses about the meanings of words, a larger repertoire appears to be acquired. Cody and Huckins (*ibid.*) estimate that “To consistently make good guesses, one should know about 98% of the words in a text. For this kind of coverage, one would generally need a sight vocabulary <sup>7</sup>of about 5,000 word families (8,000 lexical items)”. The aforementioned researchers failed to report the duration that is required to acquire that amount of vocabulary. In Finland, for instance, ELLs should acquire 1,500 lexical items in the first three years, among which 1,300 lexical items are to be actively mastered (Palmberg 1982). Such a sober vocabulary policy does not appear to be part of the policy of the writers of the *SOE* series and *On the Move*, which leaves an ample room for criticism and speculation.

Clearly, a de-emphasis seems to characterize the teaching of vocabulary in the Algerian middle school textbooks of English. The textbooks contain a rich and colorful vocabulary far beyond the capacity of beginners to acquire. Moreover, teachers face a challenge in explaining all the encountered words, because that would too time consuming. A case in point is *SOE* (Book1) that contains more than 1122 words according to the word list attached in the appendix of the textbook. As a matter of fact, the textbook contains many more words than what appears in the word list. Words such as “contest” (p.47), “height”, “top model”, “curly”, and so on are unaccounted for in the word list. Our estimation is that middle school learners of

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<sup>7</sup> “Sight vocabulary words are those words that a reader can recognize automatically and instantaneously during the process of reading” (Cohen and Cowen 2007: 237). It is noteworthy to acknowledge that the reader may or may not be familiar with the meaning of the word.

English need to learn 14.38 words in every session throughout the 28-week school year. Furthermore, 59, 66% of the most frequently typed/ printed words in English are apparently excluded from *SOE* lexical content. We have also administered a questionnaire comprising 442 words (out of the 1122 words from the *SOE* word list) to be translated into Arabic (L1 of all the students), it has turned out that First Year ELLs have only retained 24.82% of all the words they have encountered in the four files. This expected to drop drastically after the summer vacation by virtue of the lack of reinforcement.

However, the emphasis of the middle school teachers of English has frequently been on L2 grammar and phonology rather than on an explicit policy to teach vocabulary and to plan activities for ELLs to ensure retention. Apparently, teachers tend to provide explanation of new words through definitions, synonyms, antonyms, and translation. L2 vocabulary seems to be taught as it is encountered in the contents of the files currently being taught without later reinforcement. This linear approach to teaching L2 vocabulary cannot be claimed to develop students' automaticity in the effortless retrieval and proper use of previously taught and/ or learned. By definition, automaticity indicates that the use of the intended words "comes naturally" to the speaker. Segolowitz (2003, quoted in Long and Doughty 2011: np) explains "Automaticity refers to the way psychological mechanisms operate, with automatic processing often characterized as being fast, unstoppable, load independent, effortless, and unconscious". In other words, automaticity means that the students' ability to retrieve a word from the long term memory (LTM) without applying too much effort in recalling it or feeling lost for words.

Obviously, middle school teachers of English have two ambivalent attitudes toward the wealth of vocabulary in their textbooks. The rich and colorful vocabulary adds to their knowledge and repertoire and motivates them to use dictionaries to enrich their L2 working vocabulary. The different lemmas from different topics and utilized indifferent socio-cultural contexts help them overcome the ever increasing number of new words in English. It should be acknowledged that, according to our investigation, only 50% of the surveyed teachers read novels while 35. 29 % read online articles, 32.35% read EFL reference books, and 26.47% read EFL journals. These figures

prove that at least 50% of the middle school teachers of English have vocabulary repertoires less than 10,000 words, which makes them disheartened to take up reading creative fiction. The low reading rates of academic literature indicates that teachers strive to understand academic and scientific register. Inversely, middle school teachers of English nurse unfavorable attitudes vis-à-vis the rich vocabulary in the textbooks. A priori, it is not easy to teach abstract and hard words to non-native learners in such a limited time; it should be borne in mind that middle school syllabuses of English are lengthy and effortful to implement.

#### 4.8.2 Grammar

Grammar refers to the combination of words from three perspectives: morphology, syntax, and semantics. This tripartite nature of grammar may be the underlying reason of the difficulty of learners to acquire it with the cherished ease. By the same token and throughout the history of language teaching, grammar lessons have almost always occupied a position that could be characterized as pivotal. Sachs and Ho (2007: 75) concur:

Grammar is a very important and essential part of our instruction as language teachers. Whether we isolate the teaching of grammar or contextualise it, or preferably do both, we know that a great part of our instruction rests on mastering the intricacies both implicitly and explicitly of the form, structure and functions of English.

The presence and importance of grammar teaching lie in the fact that the mastery of grammar enables learners to cope with different sociolinguistic situations or *scripts*<sup>8</sup>. Sachs and Ho (*ibid.*) echo “Grammar teaching is about teaching our learners how to communicate effectively in different situations”. Grammar was and is an indelible part of EFL classroom instruction and practice as long as learners learn native and foreign languages.

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<sup>8</sup> According to Schafer (2004: 247 ) scripts “... are mental representations of particular everyday events and the behaviour and emotions appropriate to them”.

The focus on form in teaching native and foreign languages emerged from the structural investigations on human languages in the first quarter of the 20th century. This long tradition amply vouches for the importance of grammar in language teaching; amazingly, this tradition is still very much in use throughout the world. Structural approaches to language teaching take as springboard four (04) assumptions which are outlined below by Saraswathi (2004: 68):

1. *Learning a language is not only learning its words but also its syntax.*
2. Vocabulary is presented through graded vocabulary lists.
3. Skills are presented in the following order: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing (LSRW).
4. *Sentence patterns exist and can form the basis of language courses (emphasis added).*

Subsequently, we may put claim that *Structural Approaches* are fundamentally grammar-focused approaches to language teaching. It appears that this tradition still continues uninterestingly in the Algerian EFL classrooms following the example of others across the world. The review of the Algerian EFL syllabuses, both old and new, reveal that the focus-on-form principle of teaching English is firmly grounded in the Algerian education.

*Spotlight on English* series and *On the Move* textbook revolve clearly around a grammar syllabus. The four-year long grammar syllabus is rich, colorful, and varied though far from being rationally graded. Gradability of grammatical items follows a pattern in the structural, topical, and functional syllabuses. According to White (1988 : 48), each of the aforementioned syllabuses sets a number of criteria in the selection of the grammatical items. These criteria are grouped in the table below :

Structural	Topical	Functional
Frequency	Interest and Affectivity	Need (both immediate and long term)
Coverage	Need	

Availability	Pedagogic merit	Utility
Simplicity/ Complexity	Relevance	Coverage/ generalizability
Learnability/ Teachability	Depth of treatment	Interest
Combinability	Practicability	Complexity of form
Contrast	Utility	
Productiveness		
Generalizability		
Natural Order of Acquisition		

**Table 58:** Criteria for the selection of grammatical items.

Besides those criteria, White (*ibid.*) adds two more: opportunism and centers of interest. By opportunism, White means the usefulness of items to the learners, or which happen in the immediate context or situation. As the Algerian middle school textbooks of English adhere to Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT), which is to a great extent a fusion of functional and topical syllabuses, they need to be consonant with the tenets and criteria *en vigueur* in the design and development of those syllabuses. Mackey (1965) proposes two questions that need to be addressed before the selection of grammatical items: “What goes with what?” and “What comes before what ?” (*ibid.* 45). A case in point is the juxtaposition of simple and continuous present in File Four (*SOE*, Book 1) : collocating both aspects would only lead to confusion, especially as in L1 (Arabic, in our case) the boundaries between the two aspects are virtually blurred.

Similarly, grading grammatical items in EFL textbooks follows rigorous rules. White (*ibid.* 53) report Palmer’s five bases in grading structures for instructional purposes :

1. **Frequency:** more frequent structures in use should be taught first.
2. **Ergonic Combination:** It is taken to mean structural combination.
3. **Concreteness:** According to Palmer, hypothetical structures are too complex and need to be left to later periods.
4. **Proportion:** There should be balance between receptive and active structures.
5. **General Expediency:** Structures taught need to be useful and/ pragmatic to learners as they can be utilized to connect and communicate with people who do not one's L1.

Corpus-based research confirms that present simple and present progressive/continuous appear frequently in native speakers' conversations. Biber and Conrad (nd: 2) report that "... progressive aspect ('the present continuous') is the most common choice in conversation". They also report that "Simple present verb phrases are more than 20 times as common as progressive in conversation" (*ibid.*). Nonetheless, juxtaposing both to non-native speakers in their early foreign language learning (namely, English) and in the same context without prior presentation and practice leads to all likelihood to confusion and misuse.

Middle school instructional materials of English are clearly built around a lexicogrammatical syllabus, which means that they are basically structural syllabuses encapsulated in Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) casing. A thorough review of the syllabuses would lead to the conclusion that students are flooded with new vocabulary, phonological supra-segmental features, and grammatical structures. The following tables illustrate quantitatively the amount of the linguistic components of the aforementioned textbooks.

	First Year Syllabus
Language Forms	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The English Alphabet</li> <li>2. Cardinal Numbers (1 to 19)</li> <li>3. To be (am/is/are)</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Personal Pronouns (I/you)</li> <li>5. Possessive Adjectives (my/your)</li> <li>6. Demonstrative (it)</li> <li>7. Prepositions (in/from)</li> <li>8. Cardinal Numbers (20 to 100)</li> <li>9. Qualifiers (tall/ short, etc.)</li> <li>10. To have (Present Simple)</li> <li>11. Personal Pronouns (He/ she)</li> <li>12. Demonstratives (this/that)</li> <li>13. Interrogatives (with to be)</li> <li>14. Wh-qq and Aux-qq</li> <li>15. The indefinite Article (a/an)</li> <li>16. Ordinal Numbers</li> <li>17. The Present Simple Tense (like's')</li> <li>18. Personal pronouns (we/they)</li> <li>19. Prepositions of time and space (at+near+on)</li> <li>20. Wh-qq with (what time+when)</li> <li>21. Aux-qq (present :do/does)</li> <li>22. Positive and negative answers</li> <li>23. Present Simple</li> <li>24. Present continuous</li> </ol>
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	<p>25. Adverbs of frequency</p> <p>26. Irregular verbs</p> <p>27. Modals can-can't</p> <p>28. Quantifies : some/any</p> <p>29. How much/ many</p> <p>30. Imperatives</p> <p>31. Countable/uncountable nouns</p> <p>32. Past Simple Tense</p> <p>33. Regular/Irregular Verbs</p> <p>34. Did-qq</p> <p>35. Wh-qq with why</p> <p>36. Time Markers (Yesterday,..)</p> <p>37. Equality comparatives</p> <p>38. Future Simple</p> <p>39. Will-qq</p> <p>40. Affirmative+ Negative sentences</p> <p>41. Contracted form of 'Will'</p> <p>42. Superiority Comparatives</p> <p>43. Pronoun (me/us</p>
Total	43

**Table 59:** First year grammatical syllabus

The syllabus of the second year middle school follows in the footsteps of the the previous textbook in its focus on linguistic forms as the table below testifies:

	Second Year Syllabus
Language Forms	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The present simple tense (consolidation)</li> <li>2. The presnt tense (consolidation)</li> <li>3. Ordinal and cardinal numbers (consolidation)</li> <li>4. Present simple continuous (consolidation)</li> <li>5. Present simple +ago</li> <li>6. Possessive ‘s’</li> <li>7. Demonstratives (these+those)</li> <li>8. Synonyms+antonyms</li> <li>9. Possibility (can)</li> <li>10. Polite request (could)</li> <li>11. Plurals (consolidation)</li> <li>12. Prepositions of location</li> <li>13. Possessive pronouns</li> <li>14. The imperative (consolidation)</li> <li>15. Have got (consolidation)</li> <li>16. Must/mustn’t/ should</li> <li>17. Adverbs of manner+time adverbs</li> <li>18. Passive form</li> <li>19. Adverbs (consolidation)</li> <li>20. Time expressions (consolidations)</li> <li>21. Prepositions (consolidation)</li> <li>22. Would like+ expressions : yes, I’d</li> </ol>

	like to/ I'd love to/I'd really.. 23. Time expressions (consolidation) 24. Going to 25. Which one(s) ? 26. Numbers (consolidation) 27. Possessive pronouns 28. Numbers (consolidation) 29. Prepositions of location (consolidation) 30. Adverbs of frequency 31. Wh-questions 32. Wh-questions (consolidation) 33. Would you like (consolidation) 34. Like+ Verb-ing 35. Past simple (consolidation) 36. Present perfect
Total	36

**Table 60:** Second year grammatical syllabus.

The third year syllabus seems to adhere to the same tenet of grammatical importance to teaching foreign language. On score of that a special focus on linguistic forms is still carried out:

	Third Year
Language Forms	1. Questions/ answers 2. To have/tobe 3. Wh-question : How... ?

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>4. Revision of family nouns</li><li>5. Relative pronouns (who/ which)</li><li>6. Contracted form of 'be' and 'have'</li><li>7. Joining words</li><li>8. Modals can/ could in polite requests</li><li>9. Numbers (phone)</li><li>10. Time and dates : in../on.. (revision)</li><li>11. Verbal questions+V-ing</li><li>12. Short answers +Verb-ing</li><li>13. Polite requests</li><li>14. Modal may</li><li>15. Auxiliary do/will/would</li><li>16. Vocabulary related to travel and airports</li><li>17. Can/could</li><li>18. Wh-word : How</li><li>19. Prepositions of place</li><li>20. The future tense</li><li>21. Present continuous with future intent</li><li>22. Modals can/ cannot/ can't</li></ol>
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	<p>23. Must/mustn't</p> <p>24. Sequencers</p> <p>25. Present simple (revision &amp; consolidation)</p> <p>26. Present perfect in statements/questions/ negations</p> <p>27. 'So' in compound sentences</p> <p>28. Present perfect tense</p> <p>29. Have to (modals expressing obligation)</p> <p>30. Modals for giving advice</p> <p>31. Present perfect +yet, already, ever, before and never</p> <p>32. Past continuous +to think, to wonder+Verb-ing..</p> <p>33. Subject+past simple+when+simple past continuous+when+past simple</p> <p>34. Adjectives</p> <p>35. Prepositions of place</p> <p>36. Comparatives+superlatives</p> <p>37. Prepositions of place+time</p> <p>38. Comparatives of equality+superiority with 'more' and 'most'</p>
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	39. Imperatives 40. Prepositions of place+ time 41. Proper nouns 42. Height/weight/shape length/width.. 43. Pro-forms replacing noun phrases 44. Simple past and verbal questions (revision) 45. Exclamations
Total	45

**Table 61:** Third year grammatical syllabus.

The fourth year middle school is the year of the second standardized test known as BEM. The syllabus designers and textbook writers have devoted grammatical items a great deal of space.

	Fourth Year Syllabus
Language Forms	1. Tag questions 2. The imperative (consolidation) 3. Sequencers (consolidation) 4. Comparatives & superlatives of adjectives (consolidation) 5. Modals (can/may/might/ and could) 6. Irregular form of the modals (can/could ; am able/will be

	<p>able/ was able to)</p> <p>7. Modals (must/have to and need to (consolidation)</p> <p>8. Agreement and disagreement patterns (so can I/ neither can I/ neither am I/ So am I/ So have I/ Neither have I</p> <p>9. Time clauses with when/ while/ as soon as/ before/ after/ till and until</p> <p>10. Conditional type I</p> <p>11. Future with will (consolidation)</p> <p>12. Simple past tense (consolidation)</p> <p>13. The semi-modal used to</p> <p>14. Relative pronouns (which/ who/where/ whose/ that)</p> <p>15. Time sequencers (consolidation)</p> <p>16. Conditional type II</p> <p>17. Modal (might/ If I were you.. /would and could in recommendations (I'd really recommend/ I wouldn't recommend..</p> <p>18. Superlatives of adjectives (consolidation)</p>
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	19. The past simple tense (consolidation) 20. The present perfect tense (consolidation) 21. The past continuous tense (consolidation) 22. Interrupted past actions with when/ while/ and as 23. Simultaneous past action with while and as
Total	23

**Table 62:** Fourth year grammatical syllabus.

As a final analysis, the claim may be put that the middle school curriculum is centered around grammar of English language.

The Algerian authors of *SOE* series for middle school learners have not rationally justified their choice of and preference for the American English or British English grammar. The latter transpires throughout the series all the more as the tradition of teaching British English grammar appears to have started ever since the British manuals were first introduced in the sixties and seventies. A glance at the grammatical review at the back of the textbooks reveals that British English grammar is the standard for the mastery of English. It is widely accepted among scholars, at least the British, that both varieties do not represent sharp differences. Hundt (1998: 1) states Greenbaum (1988a):

The difference between the national standards of the United States and Britain are relatively minor for the written language. The national standards of other mother-tongue countries have yet to be fully investigated and codified, but

we should expect them to agree closely with those for the American and British standards.

The written form does not appear to cause confusion as it is practically minor; it is, however, the oral form that distinguishes both varieties phonologically and grammatically. Nonetheless, the authors should have specified their choice of the variety to be taught so that both teachers and students should be consistent when they communicate in English.

Since the middle school curriculum of English centers around linguistic forms (i.e., grammar), overriding questions need to be addressed as yet: How do Algerian middle school students learn the L2 grammar? Conversely, in what way would the teachers of English teach the grammar? Would the use of L1 grammar equivalents make it easier for students to learn L2 grammar? According to Andrews (2007: 51) Rod Ellis asks similar questions “How do learners acquire a second language and what do I (i.e., teacher) do to facilitate it?” At this point, pedagogical challenges such as using explicit or implicit, deductive or inductive grammar teaching come to the fore. The main objective of teachers is to achieve grammatical competence rather than grammatical performance. In other words, the concern is clearly to lead ELLs to internalize grammatical structures and patterns instead of enabling them to use L2 grammar in appropriate sociolinguistic situations. Hence, the reliance on explicit, deductive grammar teaching imposes itself on teachers according to our unstructured interviews with both inspectors and teachers. By the same token, the L1 grammar equivalents of L2 grammar are not altogether prioritized by the textbooks writers. Perhaps that accounts for the inability of the ELLs to achieve grammar performance.

It is striking to notice that all the middle school textbooks of English do not provide a self-access to the linguistic items. ELLs lack the opportunity to check for themselves the content of the textbooks without external assistance. Differently couched, the middle school textbooks of English are student-proof: Without the direct intervention of the teachers, students prove to be strangers to the textbooks, which are specifically designed for them. A priori, self-access features do not seem to be a

priority for the textbook writers, which frustrate eventually both stakeholders to put the textbooks to good use. Apart from using the tasks as homework, most ELLs eschew opening their textbooks due to the difficulty in the use of the linguistic and pedagogical content. Furthermore, all the tasks instructions are written in L2, a metalanguage that is not accessible to beginners and false beginners without a direct external assistance from teachers or parents. Being denied to beginner students, L2 grammar proves to be ELLs' *bête-noire* and the teachers' impediment to lead their students to use the textbooks and their contents both in and outside the classrooms. This disadvantage worsens teachers' attitudes toward their textbooks all the more as the GSD (anglais) writers claim that learners' autonomy is of an overarching importance.

### 4.8.3 English Phonology

Phonology is an indelible part of foreign and second language teaching; it refers to the study of sounds in a particular language. Yule (2000: 54) defines phonology as “essentially the description of the system and patterns of speech sounds in a language”. Unlike phono-tactics, phonology concerns itself with study the cognitive representation of sounds of a particular language. Yule (*ibid.*) argues that “phonology is concerned with the abstract or mental aspect of sounds in a language rather than its physical articulation”. Phonology aims to establish the basis of the sound and its contextual manifestations. Yule (*ibid.*) explains that the objective of phonology is to outline “the underlying design –the blueprint- of the sound type that serves as the constant basis of the variations in different context”. Speech sounds are like genetic prints: They differ from person to person and from one speech community to another. This accounts for the inexistence of perfect speaker of the standard variety. In point in case is the RP, which is a “dialect” that only a minority of British speakers use and mostly in governmental media. Quirk (nd) quoted by Swan (1975: 70) observes:

At the same time, it must be remembered that so far as the English-speaking countries are concerned, this ‘Received Pronunciation’ approaches the status of ‘standard’ almost only in England’s education. Scots, Irishmen, Americans,

Australians, and others have their own different images of standard form of English.

Subsequently, the inclusion of phonological and phono-tactical rules of RP in the EFL curriculums may be haphazardous especially when non-native speakers are in charge of the teaching process.

Amazingly, the English alphabet contains only twenty-six letters to represent some forty sounds among which four vowels (a-e-i-o), two semi-vowels (u-y), and twenty consonants. Phonologically speaking, RP has seven short vowels, five long vowels, eight diphthongs, and twenty-four consonants. Unlike English, Arabic alphabet is more regular and practically what comes to be pronounced is written and what is written is pronounced. The divergence between English and Arabic causes confusion in ELLs in the reception and production of L2 sounds. As a general rule, they appear to impose L1 (i.e., Arabic) phonological and phono-tactical values on L2 sounds. The table below demonstrates the most frequent ortho-phonological confusions that Algerian middle school students of English make:

Received Pronunciation	Arabic/ Berber
/ʌ/, /æ/, /ɑ/	/a/ and/ or / ε /
/e/, /ɑ /	/e/
/ɒ /, /ɔ:/	/o/
/ʊ/	/u:/
/ɑ/	Any of the above
/t <sup>h</sup> /	/ts/
/ɹ/ (retroflexive)	/w/, /r/ or /l/
/p <sup>h</sup> /	/p/ (unaspirated) or /b/ (very rare)

**Table 63:** Algerian ELLs' ortho-phonological confusions.

Therefore, the identification of ELLs' ortho-phonological confusion needs to be prioritized by both the textbooks writers and EFL teachers.

In EFL classes, teaching phonological and phono-tactical rules aim fundamentally to develop ELLs' fluency. The *fluent* implementation of these rules would certainly help establish literacy in comprehension and attaining meaning effortlessly in L2. A posteriori, the middle school curriculum of English clearly fails to meet this *fluent* approach to teaching the L2 ortho-phonological rules. The table belows exposes the phonological and phono-tactical features of the RP in **SOE** (Books 1+2+3) and **On the Move** (Book 4).

First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year
1. Vowel sounds: /ɪ /, /aɪ /, /i:/ and /e/	14. /s/ and /z/	1. Rising and falling intonation	1. Clusters
2. /g/ and /dʒ/	15. /t/, /d/ and /ɪd/	2. /æ/ and /ʌ /	2. Intonation in questions
3. /ʃ/ and /tʃ/	16. /ð/ in <i>the</i> and /θ/ in <i>thin</i>	3. Intonation in wh-qq	3. Intonation in yes (query, doubt, assertion ..)
4. / ð/ vs / θ/		4. Intonation in statements	
5. /ɪ / after /k/ and /g/	17. Stress (1st, 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> syllab	5. Intonation in requests	4. Stress shift in words (increase (n) and increase
6. Final /ʃ/		6. Intonation in yes-no qq	
7. /s/, /z/ and /ɪz /		7. Intonation in short	
8. Assimilation:			

9. Aspirated /h/	le	answers	(v)
10. Final ed : /d/, /ɪ d/ and /t/	18. /f/, /tʃ/ and / ʃ/	8. /ɪ / and /i:/	5. Stress in words ending in -tion
11. -tion	19. /ɪ /, /aɪ/ and /i:/	9. Weak and strong forms	6. Intonation in qq expressing surprise and interest
12. Rising and falling intonation	20. Stress (1st, 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3rd syllable)	10. Sounds unclear	7. Stress in words ending with suffix-tion
13. Stress on the 1st, 2 <sup>nd</sup> , and 3rd syllable	21. /j/ and /g/	11. Silent letters : 'r' and 'b'	8. /e/ and /æ /
	22. /k/ and /s/	12. Contrastive stress : stressed and unstressed prepositions (upon, by, on, in, from..)	9. Weak and strong forms of to be
	23. Stress (1st, 2 <sup>nd</sup> , and 3rd syllable)	13. Corrective stress	10. Clusters
	24. / aɪ / and /ei/	14. Sound unclear	11. Vowel sounds /ʊ /, /u:/, /o/, /o:/,
	25. /ei/ and /oi/	15. Stress in short comparative (er)	
	26. Stress	16. Stress in short superlatives	

	(1st, 2 <sup>nd</sup> , and 3rd syllable)	<p>(the..est)</p> <p>17. Stress and intonation in verbal questions and wh-qq with comparatives and superlatives</p> <p>18. Digraphs: /ph/, gh/ and th/</p> <p>19. Intonation in exclamations</p> <p>20. Stress in two-syllable words (Monday, and Tuesday,..)</p> <p>21. Consolidation in wh-qq</p> <p>22. Stress in three syllable words</p> <p>23. Different</p>	<p>/a:/ and /æ/</p> <p>12. Intonation in wh-questions (consolidation)</p> <p>13. Diphthongs</p> <p>14. Triphthongs</p> <p>15. Silent letters</p> <p>16. Long and short vowel sounds : /I/, /i:/ and /e/</p> <p>17. Intonation in tag questions</p> <p>18. Pronunciation of suffix (ed)</p> <p>19. Stress in</p>
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		<p>pronunciation of (stressed and unstressed)</p> <p>Stress and intonation in sentences containing these forms.</p> <p>24. Consonant clusters /gl/, /br/ and /sp/</p> <p>25. Strong and weak form of was</p> <p>26. Strong and weak forms of were</p> <p>Stress and intonation in sentences containing these forms</p>	<p>words starting with prefixes</p> <p>20. Weak and strong forms of auxiliaries was/ were/can / do/ have</p>
13	26	26	20

**Table 64:** Phonological syllabus of the middle school textbooks of English

As it can be noticed, the phonological syllabus of the *SOE* series is poor. Moreover, it does not include phonemic awareness or phonics activities to help ELLs to recognize ortho-phonological manifestations of the capricious sounds of RP.

Similarly, it should be acknowledged that phonological bias is expected although the authors have not explicitly mentioned which variety of English is considered the standard. Actually, *SOE* writers have not specifically prioritized which variety of English needs to be taken as a model. However, it should be assumed that *Received Pronunciation* (RP) is taken as a model in the same way as grammar and orthography are institutionalized. In fairness, Middle school teachers of English have not been advised to adopt a particular variety. Neither have *SOE* authors justified their choice and preference for the normative variety to the intended population. According to our investigation through a self-complete questionnaire, 50% of the surveyed population declares to speak and use RP, while the other 50% speak and use a combination of RP and General American (GA). These figures demonstrate that at least half of the middle school teachers of English are inconsistent in their use of English; they utilize two linguistic systems (grammatical, phonological, and orthographical) in their classes at the same footing. As a final note, as none of the surveyed teachers is a native speaker, the expectation that they produce fluent ELLs seems to be minimal.

Obviously the production and understanding of the pronunciation of English is problematic for the teachers themselves. The suprasegmental and phonolo-tactical features of the variety used by the native speakers of English imposes challenges on non-native speakers. These challenges can be outlined as follows :

1. **Clustering**: The close gathering of two or more sounds/ letters (such as in the name of this famous British actor : Peter *Postlethwaite*)
2. **Redundancy**: (Well/ You know/ I mean/ You see, and Actually, etc.)
3. **Performance Variables** (self-correction, and hesitation, etc.)
4. **Reduced Forms** (Won't you do me a favor ? is pronounced /wontchyuh do me a favor
5. **Colloquial Language** (informal, jargon, and slang words)
6. **Rate of Delivery** (how fast/ slow native speakers talk)
7. **Stress, Rhythm, Intonation** (Americans are said to drawl when they speak)
8. **Interaction** (excited/ calm/ formal/ informal).

In spite of being enthusiasts of American moving pictures, most teachers of English feel lost without the Arabic and/ or French subtitles. This reality frustrates and causes teachers to harbor mixed attitudes vis-à-vis English pronunciation. On the one hand, the latter is tempting, and on the other hand, it seems insurmountable due to its “capricious” nature. The corollary of this linguistic impediment is a distinctive foreign accent.

#### **4.8.4 Orthography**

Orthography, a word derived from Ancient Greek *ὀρθός* *orthós* (correct) and *γράφειν* *gráphein* (to write), refers to the accepted standardized version of a given language writing scripts. The “acceptness” indicates implicitly the normative nature of orthography, which otherwise means that there are certain “rules” that govern the writing system in question. Joshi and Aaron (2006: xiii) define orthography as “Visual representation of language as conditioned by phonological, syntactic, morphological, and semantic features of language”, such as “Chinese Orthography and English Orthography”. Differently stated, orthography a given language is defined by linguistic and semantic features of that particular language. The “acceptness” is therefore determined by the linguistic and semantic norms. Along those lines, Sebba (2007: 10) defines spelling, a term that she interchangeably uses for orthography, as “Writing of words of a language according to the norms or conventions of that language”. Some scholars, however, distinguish the three terms utilized as yet (i.e., writing system, orthography, and spelling). Baker (1997) identifies writing system as “any means of representing graphically any language or group of languages” and orthography as “... a writing system specifically intended for a particular language, which either already in regular use among significant proportion of that language in native speakers, or which is or was proposed for such use” (quoted in *ibid.*). Some argue that spelling is part of orthography along capitalization, emphasis, hyphenation, punctuation, and word breaks.

It is widely accepted that English orthography and spelling represents a real challenge not only for teachers, but also for learners (native speakers as well as

foreigners). The English alphabet is an extension of the Roman scripts: It counts twenty six letters that stand for forty phonemes (i.e., sounds) or more. Being a morphophonemic language, English manifests a distinctive disparity in sound-spelling correspondence. Some scholars estimate that sixty five percent (65%) of divergence between what is pronounced and spelled in English. Unlike phonemic orthographies of Arabic, Italian, Spanish, and Turkish where sound-spelling is practically one-to-one, English orthography cannot be said to be bijective<sup>9</sup>. The *bijective* nature of English orthography can only be explained in historical terms. The borrowing of the Roman script to codify a Teutonic language such as English with its different consonantal and vocalic values and the introduction of French-Norman orthography added to the orthographic “confusion” of English. According to Hanna *et al.* (1966), half of all English words can be spelled correctly on the basis of sound-symbol correspondence ; another forty percent (40%) would only have one error if they were spelled on the basis of sound-symbol correspondence, and only four percent (4%) of English words were truly fully irregular (quoted in Moates, 2006: 2). Along that perspective, the prospects of teaching the capricious English orthography does not seem insurmountable.

Although the differences between the two great varieties of English are virtually minimal<sup>10</sup>, Modern English (ME) comes to spelled in two types: Commonwealth and American Spellings. Again, the differences in spelling are only explained in historical terms. Thanks to the English *homme de lettre*, Samuel Johnson (1707-1784) also known as Dr. Johnson, that English witnessed the production of its most influential Dictionary (1755). It took Dr. Johnson nine years to finish his *Dictionary*, in which he was much more a spelling corrector than spelling reforms. In the *Preface* to his *Dictionary*, he overtly states that sacrificed usually uniformity to custom. In the following passage, Dr. Johnson justifies his choice of spelling:

In adjusting the ORTHOGRAPHY, which has been to this  
time unsettled and fortuitous, I found it necessary to

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<sup>9</sup> One-to-one correspondence. This term seems to borrowed from Mathematics.

<sup>10</sup> Bryson (1990) estimate that only 4, 000 words make the difference between American and British English (quoted by Kövecses (2000 :142).

distinguish those irregularities that are inherent in our tongue, and perhaps coeval with it, from others which the ignorance or negligence of later writers has produced. Every language has its anomalies, which, though inconvenient, ... must be tolerated among imperfections of human things ... : but every language has likewise its improprieties and absurdities, within it is the duty of the lexicographer to correct or proscribe (quoted in Upward and Davidson 2011: 301).

As it can be concluded from Dr. Johnson's *Preface*, he attempted to correct and "coeval with" English "inherent" "anomalies" and "irregularities". Elsewhere in the newly independent USA, Noah Webster (1758-1843) undertook to reform the English spelling despite his own use of "traditional" and "conventional Johnsonian" spelling. In 1864, the US Government printing office adopted the Webster-inspired spelling that is so characteristic of present-day American English (*ibid.* 305). These two traditions still coexist in media, correspondence, and pedagogy.

As far as EFL teaching in Algeria is concerned, a relaxed attitude appears to be taken vis-à-vis which type of spelling Algerian students should learn. As a matter of fact, middle school teachers of English start teaching spelling as if it were an extension of the French *orthographe*. They mention the phonemic and phonetic values of letters and sounds as they proceed, which means that many graphemes and letter clusters are deliberately ignored. This unsystematic handling of the English orthography accounts for the literacy skills that Algerian students seem to lack. The faulty literacy skills not only prevent both stakeholders from efficient interaction, but also they frustrate them from overcoming reading difficulties. Venezky *et al.* (2005: 2) echo "Reading is about phonics", and since phonics is overlooked, students would be unable to understand and follow instructions in English. Moreover, phonemic awareness is beyond both teachers' and students' understanding, which threatens to produce learners whose ability in recognizing sounds and corresponding letters a frustrating experience. Lewis and Ellis (2006: 2) report the findings of the Australian Reading Report:

The evidence is clear ... that direct systematic instruction in phonics during the early years of schooling is an essential foundation for teaching children to read. Findings from research evidence indicate that all students learn best when teachers adopt an integrated approach to reading that explicitly teaching phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary knowledge and comprehension. This approach, coupled with effective support from the child's home, is critical to success (DEST, 2005).

Hence, the Algerian students' inefficiency in reading and spelling comes as no surprise as they are not properly taught to differentiate between two similar though different orthographies, that of English and that of French.

It may seem paradoxical that the authors of the *SOE* series at no given time mention the *raison d'être* of their choice and/ or preference of either spelling, or neither do they advise teachers to opt for one particular type of English language spelling. The issue of spelling may be purposefully left for the teachers' appreciation, although some *spelling bias* appears to characterize the linguistic content of the textbooks. As far as we can judge, there seems to exist a quiet hope to utilize the British Spelling (aka Commonwealth Spelling) (BS/ CS). In the Second English Coursebook (intended for second year middle school), Bob writes a letter to Susan wherein he describes a trip to the Tassili ; in line 8, he states "... They got green, yellow, and brown colours". Word "colour" is spelled in BS. In the same textbook, both varieties, however, do appear to coexist: On page 9, the instruction to the second task read "Look at these photos. Do you recognize these people ?" where the verb "to recognize" follows American Spelling (AS), while on page 8, student are asked to "Choose one of these people and describe him/ her" as part of "Practise" rubric, where the verb "to practise" retains the verb-noun distinction characteristic of BS. On page 24, the paragraph on Sonia Mekkiou includes "theatre", which is yet another example of BS. On the same page Harry Martin is said to be reporting for a radio "progamme", where the characteristic BS of program is used.

In the unstructured interviews purposefully arranged for this work, two types of Algerian *spellers* come to fore. Those who prefer to use BS in their teaching and writings, and they count the older generation of senior middle school teachers. Those teachers were trained in ITE wherein BS was the only orthography used because most of the textbooks that were available were imported from Britain. Moreover, some of them had the opportunity to stay in England in summer vacation as tourists in B&B<sup>11</sup>, hotels, and youth hostels. They seem to be influenced by their education and experience. The younger generation of middle school teachers of English, and especially those who studied in the university and had the opportunity to watch American movies<sup>12</sup>, are obviously inclined to use AS. Most teachers have expressed positive attitudes toward AS all the more as they perceive it as an attempt to reform the capricious spelling of the English language. For better or worse, many of the interviewed teachers vacillate between AS and BS because they feel unsure of their good command of the spelling of the English language. This attitude may lay claim that a considerable number of teachers still struggle to come to grips with the very many spelling rules of English. As a final note, although the AS represents an opportunity of the Algerian middle school teachers of English, it does not appear to eventually put an end to their tribulations.

#### **4.1 Teachers' Attitudes Toward the Sociolinguistic Content**

Foreign and second language teaching and learning tend to capitalize on *raw* materials produced by native speakers for an audience made primarily of native speakers as a medium of in-class instruction. Non-interventionism in re-adapting instructional materials to language learners comes as a result of many outcries against the excessive utilization of artificial texts that do not appear to lend themselves to real life situations. The socio-cultural and sociolinguistic challenges posed by the inclusion of authentic materials to classroom practices, the latter may open new scopes for learners by bringing them closer to the native speakers' natural use of the

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<sup>11</sup> Bed-and-Breakfast : A **bed and breakfast** (or **B&B**) is a small lodging establishment that offers overnight accommodation and breakfast, but usually does not offer other meals (Wikipedia).

<sup>12</sup> We have counted more than 13 non-stop movie channels on Nilesat to-date.

different cultural and linguistic aspects. Along those lines, Walter <sup>13</sup>(1986, quoted in Day and Bamford 1998: 54) maintains “All the texts in the book are samples of real English ... . None of them was written especially for foreigners. This means that some texts may be easier to understand than others; *but the easiest texts* (italics added by the authors) will help you read better”. The proponents of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) believe that ELLs learn better by learning the same linguistic input that they can encounter outside the classroom. Williams (1984) (*ibid.*) advances “If the learner is expected eventually to cope with real language outside the classroom, then surely the best way to prepare for this is by looking at the real language inside the classroom”. The middle school textbooks of English are built upon the belief of the utility of authentic materials in the Algerian classes.

Apparently, authenticity in foreign and second language teaching and learning can be qualified as troublesome. What is at issue is how authentic is the authentic materials once introduced to language classrooms. Kramsch (2004: 178) states Widdowson (1979) who lays out the outline of authenticity of texts and language:

It is probably better to consider authenticity as a quality residing in instances of language but a quality which is bestowed upon them, created by the responses of the receiver. Authenticity in this view is a function of the interaction between the reader/ hearer and the text which incorporates the intentions of the writer/ speaker ... Authenticity has to do with the appropriate response.

In different terms, it is the reactions to the exchanges of language use that define whether authenticity has been deliberated. Frequently, native speakers of English and ELLs react differently to jokes, comments, and piece of literature. A point in case is the dialog on *OTM* (Book 4, p. 165) : The twelve-turn taking dialog between Abdelkader (clearly and Algerian young man) and Ronald (an English-speaking friend) uses eight times (i.e., 66.66%) question- tags. For a native speaker, the conversation between Abdelkader and Ronald sounds tense and meant for teasing.

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<sup>13</sup> This text is an excerpt from Catherine Walter’s *Introduction to the Student* in her book *Genuine Articles : Authentic Reading Texts for Intermediate Students of American English*.

ELLs would perceive that question-tags are utilized to tease one another in EFL, and therefore, derails the real use from its authentic use.

*SOE* series have been developed to bridge the gap between mastering language and being aware that culture shapes outside life. Achour (2003: 8) points out “Being exposed to extract from real life, cultural facts and events both in Algeria and abroad, the learners will be able to able to observe life as it is organised in various countries”. The socio-cultural and sociolinguistic aspects manifest themselves in different ways. Byram and Morgan (1994) (quoted in Ziębka in Arabski and Wojtaszek 2011: 266) distinguish seven aspects of culture : (a) everyday activities, (b) personal and social life, (c) the world around us, (d) the world of education, training and work, (e) the world of communication, (f) the international world, and (g) the world of imagination and creativity. The notions and themes outlined in *SOE* series (1+2+3) and *On The Move* (Book 4) obviously introduce ELLs to the seven aspects of culture. For the purpose of our research, a self-complete questionnaire that targets middle school teachers of English reveals that 45% of the respondents recognize that the target culture (TC) is compared and contrasted to the local culture (LC). As yet, it needs to be acknowledged that the surveyed teacher feel that cultural bias in favor of TC transpires from the content of *SOE* series. The *souçon* of the superiority of TC causes the teachers to feel constantly uneasy.

#### **4.2 Teachers’ Attitudes Toward the Methodological Procedures**

It should be mentioned that the Algerian tradition in the use of terminology stems primarily from the Continental European usage (namely, France). Unlike the French tradition, the Anglo-American perception pedagogical-didactic concept is usually referred to as language teaching methodology (LTM). It is this appellation as well as understanding that come to be adopted throughout this section.

#### 4.2.1 Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT)

Competency-based language teaching (CBLT) targets the development of FL learning hands-on, i.e., practical knowledge and performance of the foreign language. This probably accounts for the use of authentic materials and real-life tasks in this approach to foreign language teaching. Although this section nourishes a quiet hope that it will be comprehensive in scope, it is in concrete terms not exhaustive.

##### 4.2.1.1 CBLT Syllabus

The kind of CBA content in the Algerian middle school textbooks of English is demanding, lengthy, and effortful. The teachers are required to furnish extra effort to help ELLs come to grips with the multifarious facets of learning foreign languages through situational interactions that resemble authentic native speaker-native speaker interactions. Richards (2001: 157) lays out CBLT as “an approach to teaching that focuses on transactions that occur in particular situations and their related skills and behaviours”. By definition, a syllabus is a list, and in the case of CBLT, it is considerably a long list of linguistic items, social skills, and behaviors. Thus, the CBLT syllabus proves to be *loaded* in order to resemble a genuine interaction that occurs in social settings of the foreign language currently being taught. Both teachers and ELLs need to consider all potential as well as possible behaviors and skills required to fit in a social act in a native-like manner. Moreover, CBLT syllabus is criterion based, which means that individual students need to feel progressing to attain the set criteria for achievement. Still, most teachers stick to the old practice: normative-based teaching and assessment. Without appropriate education and training programs, middle school teachers of English clearly face daunting challenge in the implementation of CBLT syllabus.

Apparently, the Algerian middle school teachers have developed ambivalent attitudes toward their textbooks. In our M.A. investigation, the aforementioned population seems to be torn between the feeling of being controlled or not by the *SOE* series. 40% of the respondents complain of being controlled by the lengthy syllabus ; another 40% reports to be free especially as “they have the possibility to bring

changes and adopt new tasks according to their learners' needs all the more sticking to the syllabus''. A minority of the respondents (i.e., 20%) feels that they are only occasionally controlled by the textbooks. The investigation also reveals that the surveyed teachers feel more or less alienated by the CBLT syllabus. 45.45% of the respondents claim that only occasionally they identify themselves with *SOE* series. 36.36% of the surveyed population seems to be utterly alienated as it does not altogether identify with the textbooks. ; one of the teachers has declared ‘‘*When using SOE series, I feel that I do not belong to it. I feel it is not me who is teaching*’’. The feelings of alienation and depersonalization prove that middle school teachers of English have developed negative attitudes vis-à-vis the MNE proposed textbooks. The feelings of frustrations clearly stems from the teachers' inability to cope with the new situation\_ lack of training programs in language teaching.

#### **4.2.1.2 Teachers' Attitudes Toward the Textbooks Tasks**

At different periods of time, different approaches to language-teaching coined different and colorful terms for practice according to the linguistic or communicative focus of the act undertaken. Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) advocates favored the term *exercise*; Audio-lingual Method (ALM) adopts *drill*, a military jargon for practice; Communicative Approach (CA) takes practice for *activity*, and Task-Based Approaches (TBA), CBA among others, utilize *task* to mean practice. Furthermore, Nunan (2001: 3) outlines the characteristics of each of the aforementioned concepts:

A task is a communicative act that does not usually have a restrictive focus on a single grammatical structure. It also had a non-linguistic outcome. An exercise usually has a restrictive focus on a single language element, and has a linguistic outcome. An activity also has a restrictive focus on one or two language items, but also has a communicative outcome.

Hence, tasks emulate real life, authentic interaction whereas the other terms tend to be genuine, pedagogical acts. Ellis (2003, quoted in Nunan 2004: 3) further elicits the technical features of task:

A task is a workplan that requires learners to process language pragmatically in order to achieve an outcome that can be evaluated in terms of whether the correct or appropriate propositional content has been achieved. To this end, it requires them to give primary attention to meaning and to make use of their own resources, although the design of the task may predispose them to choose particular forms.

To conclude, tasks aim to involve learners in real life communication wherein they use not only what they have already learned, but also they are encouraged to use other creative and inducive resources of their own to contribute positively to social interactions and to be functional in their local and host societies.

In spite of being advocates of Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT), the writers of *SOE* series have clearly avoided to use the term *task* in the textbooks. Instead, they labeled “Practise” the rubric where students train themselves to use linguistic structures. This “Practice” rubric is “A series of exercises related to the lesson to make you practise the spelling, grammar and vocabulary items you have just learnt” (*SOE* Book 2, p.4). According to the criteria outlined by Nunan, the *Practise* rubric in the middle school textbooks of English presents restrictive foci and aim to achieve linguistic outcomes. At best, this series of exercises attempts to attain communicative outcomes. The instructions are all-English couched, and therefore, learner-proof in that ELLs cannot undertake the initiative to respond to the exercise prompts without the external help of the teachers. The following table exposes the action verbs used in the *Practise* rubric:

Action Verbs in <i>Practise</i> ( <i>SOE</i> series)
Ask- Imagine- act out-tell-guess- read- complete-fill in- listen- mark out- write-build dialogs-match-replace-use information-re-arrange-find information-draw a map-underline

**Table 65:** Action verbs Used in *SOE* series practise rubric.

The list is by no means exhaustive, and nonetheless it outlines the types of practice ELLs are assumed to carry out in class. The *Practise* rubric may be made more

compelling when the teachers are specifically trained to implement them in large, overcrowded classes whose population has been made to overcome face-saving shyness, noise, and the eager use of L1. True enough instructions are clear but not easily implemented by deskilled, less motivated, and novice teachers.

Middle school teachers of English harbor unfavorable attitudes toward *SOE* series *Practise* rubric. In our M.A. thesis (2005), we surveyed teachers' attitudes vis-à-vis the tasks in their textbooks. The figures obtained are compelling as far as teachers still appear to be consistent with what they thought of the tasks two years after the implementation of the CBA. 54.54% of the respondents think that these tasks are occasionally engaging; 18.18% think that SOE tasks are often engaging, while another 18.18% believe that these tasks are not at all engaging. The underlying reason for such negative attitudes lies in the fact that the linguistic and sociolinguistic content of SOE series does not reflect the Algerian middle school ELLs' age. Nor does it encourage interpersonal interaction due to its demanding nature. 50% the surveyed teacher feel strongly that the selected material only occasionally reflects students' age, and 72.72% of the sampled population deems that *SOE* material only occasionally encourages pupil-pupil in-class interaction. Decidedly, middle school teachers of English have trouble implementing *SOE* tasks owing to the very nature of the pedagogical contents of the proposed textbooks: They put claim that only good achievers in all the subjects can follow SOE instructions. All in all, *SOE* series (Book1+2+3) and On the Move (Book4) are *élitist*.

#### **4.2.1.3 Teachers' Attitudes Toward Test Construction**

Instruction and assessment are indelible as well as inseparable to the teaching-learning process. In the same vein, Basanta (1995: 57) echoes "teaching and testing are two inseparable aspects of the teachers' tasks". At every stage of instruction, teachers ought to identify learners' degree of performance and progress in order to plan subsequent remedial and/ or implementation of new input. By the same token, these measurements indicate the extent whereto instruction and ultimately the curriculum are efficient and relevant. In brief, well designed and well-administered

measurements predict the final outcomes of education and educational reforms. Nevertheless, teachers are rarely adequately trained and/ or made aware of the importance of designing and implementing useful tests and planning relevant feedback. Most teachers do not appear to appreciate the fact that tests are not an ancillary part of instruction but another type of instruction. It is disconcerting to note that teachers consider measuring students' performance and progress as an end in itself. This failing attitude frustrates them from considering and planning feedback as an integral part of instruction. To labor the point, test construction and administration are linchpins in the teaching-learning process in the same way teaching grammar is.

The review of testing literature reveals that various approaches to language teaching and learning address different testing formats. These formats reflect the underlying assumptions of the theories and methodologies of teaching and their primary foci. In the table below, Cohen (1980), displays the primary focus of some approaches to language teaching.

Types of Syllabus	Primary Focus
Structural Syllabus	Grammatical structures of the language (simplicity, regularity, frequency, contrastive, and difficulty)
Situational Syllabus	Language use in a given situation (landing at the airport, finding a place to live, etc.)
Topical Syllabus	The interests and communicational needs of the given learners (communicating about sociological problem, bank management).
Notional Syllabus	The semantic content of language to ensure students know how to express different types of meaning, grouped by common function (judgment and

	evaluation, situation, argument, rational inquiry and exposition, personal motions.
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**Table 66:** Primary focus of language teaching syllabuses according to Cohen (1980).

Obviously, a gradual shift in focus is marked in language teaching and language testing. At first, learners come to be exposed to form, which simply means that the whole point of the syllabus and tests are discrete points, grammar oriented, and grammar driven. Differently couched, test makers aim to test takers' linguistic competence (knowledge and accuracy of linguistic rules). Later, the semantic aspects of language have proved to be the primary concern of syllabus designers, teachers, and test designers. Finally, the functional and notional aspects of language appear to occupy the primary focus of the teaching-learning process. As it can be noted, students' performance and abilities to survive in real-life experiences do not seem to be part of language tests.

Running through the literature produced by the GSD (anglais) on their choice of CBLT in the pre-university stages is an ongoing concern over the survival of Algerian ELLs in real-life experiences where they will be forced to put the FL (English, in our case) into good use. Therefore, the members of the GSD (anglais) seem to be faithful to the tenets of CBLT (at least theoretically) in that they commit themselves to producing materials that targets the end results of teaching English in the middle and high schools. As CBLT proponents advocate that this approach is criterion-referenced in nature (as opposed to traditional approaches, which are norm-referenced), they aim to address the following question "How well can ELLs use what they know?". The premise is to assist ELLs move from book knowledge into real engagement in the socio-professional life. Bowden *et al.* (1998: 100) corroborate "There is a commonly expressed belief that institution-based courses too often emphasize *theoretical or 'book' knowledge* at the expense of the *ability to apply knowledge to perform practical tasks and fulfil workplace roles*" (italics added). Hence, what ELLs know and they can perform in real-life experiences appear to be differentiated by CBA/CBLT advocates. Hibbard *et al.* (1996: 2) distinguish between "Do-you-know-it?"-

tasks, such as recall, identify, list, and match and “Can-you-use-it?”- tasks, such as classify, compare, analyze, and evaluate.

Recent task-based approach to language teaching and learning clearly equate between theoretical and practical knowledge. Spolsky (1968, cited in Basanta, *op.cit.*) recommends “We should aim not to test how much of the language someone knows, but also his ability to operate in a specified sociolinguistic situation with specified ease or effect”. Ease and efficiency in real-life situations should define not only the content but also the types of tasks to be performed in the tests. In the following table, task-based activities are grouped with the premise of singling them out from traditionally used ones.

Do-you-know-it Activities	Can-you-use-it Activities
Identify	Analyze
List	Classify
Match	Compare
Recall	Discover
	Deduce
	Evaluate
	Guess
	Predict

**Table 67:** CBLT activities versus traditionally-used activities.

As it can clearly be noted, in the first column activities target memory-internalized input whereas in column two ELLs are encouraged to manipulate language and discover for themselves the use and practice with the help of the teacher. For the purpose of this study, we have analyzed some test papers from three middle schools in Tolga throughout the three trimesters. The data are gathered in the tables below with

the view illustrating the main concern of the middle school teachers when it comes to teaching English to beginner teenagers:

Trimester One :

Middle Schools	Comp. Activities	Mechanics Activities	Lexical Activities	Grammar Activities	Phonology Activities	Meaning Activities	Comm. Activities
Chabani	00	03	00	01	01	00	01
Daas	00	02	00	02	01	00	01
Kheider	00	00	01	01	01	00	01

**Table 68:** Test activities in the first trimester.

As it can be concluded from the number of activities included in the tests of first year middle school, students' knowledge of linguistic features (i.e., spelling, grammar, and phonology) receive most focus and, therefore, give priority over what students can do with language. Mechanics of writing appears to receive test takers' full attention, which explains their concern over their students' ability to recognize letters, capitalization, and punctuation. It also accounts for their interest to develop students' literacy skills (reading and writing). Lexical activities are shyly introduced in the first semester may be because students are not yet familiar with the very many words encountered in *Spotlight on English* series. Still, the main concern of the middle school teachers of English in the first trimester is to familiarize students with the linguistic aspects of English.

Trimester Two :

Middle School	Comp. Activities	Mechanics	Lexical Activities	Grammar Activities	Phonology	Meaning Activities	Comm. Activities
---------------	------------------	-----------	--------------------	--------------------	-----------	--------------------	------------------

ol	y	Activities	s	s	Activities	s	vities
Cha	02	00	02	03	00	00	00
bani							
Daas	02	00	01	03	00	00	01
Khei	02	01	01	01	00	00	01
der							

**Table 69:** Test activities in the second trimester.

Trimester two examination paper includes comprehension activities at the expense of mechanics, meaningful (i.e., information-gap), and phonology activities. Grammar gains in momentum as more activities are added, whereas communicative activities appear to lose their attractiveness as they diminish in number in favor of language forms activities. Clearly, teachers have introduced more grammatical input. Lexical activities have a stronghold in the second semester, which may mean that ELLs have been exposed to more words in English.

Trimester Three :

Midd	Comp.	Mechani	Lexical	Gramm	Phonolog	Meanin	Com
le	Activiti	cs	Activiti	ar	y	g	m.
Scho	es	Activitie	es	Activiti	Activitie	Activiti	Activi
ols		s		es	s	es	ties
Chab	01	00	00	04	00	00	00
ani							
Daas	01	00	00	03	00	00	01
Khei	00	01	01	01	00	00	01
der							

**Table 70:** Test Activities in the third trimester.

Third trimester tests reinforce grammar activities at the expense of phonology and meaningful activities. Mechanics (of writing) and lexical activities are shyly preserved, while comprehension activities seem to be an integral part of the tests. All

in all, grammar activities clearly occupy more than 60% of the test activities in the last trimester, which proves that middle school teachers of English redirect their attention to knowledge about the language (namely word order, verb forms, and pronunciation, etc.). In short, the linguistic competence overrides the pragmatic competence that CBLT and the authors of the SOE series have repeatedly stated to target.

Middle school teachers of English have developed negative attitudes toward students' inability to respond properly to tests. In the unstructured and informal meetings, most teachers voiced their resentment as to the bad results obtained by most of the students regardless of age and/ or gender. On various occasions, the interviewed teachers expressed their annoyance and even anger to the fact that by bringing minor changes to instructions, students did not appear to discover "the trick". This disappointment may be attributed to the mismatch between the activities introduced in class and those included in the tests. Moreover, the periodic tests need to replicate the BEM format so that students develop the right habit to respond to a standardized test. The corollary washback effect affects teachers' attitudes toward the testing systems as they become enslaved to a system that they have not participate to create, nor does it resemble what they do in class. The grammar-focused tests clearly put more pressure on teachers to construct grammar-driven tests at the expense of the "survival skills" which they are supposed to develop according to the authors of *SOE* series. The interviewed middle school teachers of English expressed their disappointment when they receive inspectors. The latter seem more interested in pedagogical and linguistic errors perpetuated by the teachers rather than on addressing pertinent issues in language teaching and language testing. All the surveyed teachers (n=70) assert that they have never been introduced to constructing tests according to CBLT standards in the periodic seminars.

#### **4.2.1.4 Teachers' Attitudes Toward *Teachers' Guides***

It would be counter-intuitive not to claim that teacher's guides (TG) are as crucial to effective instruction as students' textbooks. Nevertheless, they are amazingly

underexplored judging by the few studies conducted on and the little literature devoted to them. The heavy emphasis seems usually to be placed on the study of textbooks and their different implications on instruction, students, and teachers' attitudes and practices. The premise is to eschew teacher-proof materials that would exclude them from contributing to the improvement of instruction. Clearly, TGs come to be rated "ancillary" to the teaching-learning process, which simply means that teachers' are relieved of their yoke. This shift in focus has come as the result of teachers' complaint of being enslaved by the various TGs and the rules as well as procedures included in them. The FL textbooks produced in the West are still accompanied by the whole package: TGs, Workbooks, CDs, and realia. In developing world, locally produced instructional materials are telescoped in the Student's Textbook, which appears to be the whole curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to develop their own aids, write their own worksheets, and produce their own realia. Teachers, both novice and senior, face an awkward situation: How can they achieve this goal while they have never been trained to do so?

In the first years of the implementation of the CBA-related textbooks of English, practically all the middle school teachers proceeded with pedagogical content single-handedly. Clearly, there was very little that they could rely on: There were no TGs, no accompanying aids such as CDs, and no assistance from the textbook writers (no official website, or national and/ or regional seminars or workshops). Inspectors brought new directives and demands rather *procedures*<sup>14</sup> to help perplexed teaching community cope with the challenges posed by the newly implemented textbooks. In *SOE* (Book 1+2), the authors addressed both teachers and students in Arabic explaining the aims and layout of the textbooks. In *SOE* (Book 3) and *On the Move* (Book 4), English is used as a means of address to both stakeholders, where they are informed of the structure, book map, and the objectives of each rubric. Although these introductions are a point to start, they constitute a meager ration for especially novice teachers whose inexperience and lack of adequate education and appropriate training prevent them from efficient interaction with their textbooks. Middle school teachers

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<sup>14</sup> Richards and Rodgers (2007 :31) identify procedure "At the level of procedure, we are concerned with how these tasks and activities are integrated into lessons and used as the basis for teaching and learning".

of English are autonomous as far as they go all the more as they can proceed with the files as these are conceived by their authors. The textbooks are not, therefore, teacher-proof.

In recent years, some TGs have been produced for the middle school teachers of English with the view of reaching for those teachers interested in effective instruction and coming to the assistance of those who are frustrated by their inexperience. The first TG is entitled *Teacher's Handbook* (1st Year Middle school) authored an former inspector-general Mr. Khelifa Achour. The Handbook is intended for first year middle school teachers of English ; it seems that it has been written in the aftermath of the official implementation of CBA-related textbooks, i.e., in 2003-2004. Some years later, the first Handbook was followed by *SOE Book 2 Teacher's Guide* ; the Guide is written by Mr. Farouk Bouhadiba, Mrs. Wahiba Guedoudj, and Mrs. Zehour Torche, and the head of the project is Mrs. Lakria Merazga. Both the Handbook and the Guide are intended as reference material:

The main aim of the teacher's handbook is to serve as a reference document to be consulted by teachers. It contains information about the syllabus and its accompanying document, which will be made available to all, to help grasp the new elements and concepts vehicled by competency-based approach. It also draws the broad lines of the new textbook and describes the way it is organised together with its contents. It even supplies information about various aspects of methodology and class life and classroom management. Finally it suggests a few ways and procedures to conduct the routines of everyday class.

A thorough reading of this “reference document reveals that the expectations expressed above are wishful thinking, because the *Handbook* is too short to achieve all that. The Guide appears less optimistic and more realistic:

This document is a reference document to be consulted as a complement to the programme, together with its support

document and the coursebook itself. It describes the rationale for the methodology of the course and provides extensive guidance on how to use the material effectively.

Similarly, the *Guide* does not appear to provide that “extensive guidance” as it claims. It only explains “how to deal with a file” and later provides keys to all the files.

A posteriori, middle school teachers of English have higher expectations of TGs that match the challenges imposed by the class size as well as the gradation, richness, teachability of the syllabus. They envisage TGs which meet their needs and fulfill their expectations. Better still, they look forward to being able to participate in the conception and design of TGs so that they can efficiently interact and implement the socio-cultural and sociolinguistic contents of the textbooks. In the questionnaire intended to identify the needs of the teachers, 61.76% of the surveyed teachers express the wish to receive a *detailed* TG to help them implement efficiently the middle school textbook syllabus. This high percentage indicates that the teachers harbor negative attitudes toward the current *Handbook* and *Guide*. This attitude is confirmed in the unstructured interviews wherein most teachers express their unhappiness with the structure and content of the TGs in their possession. The middle school textbooks of English are obviously difficult to implement particularly in large classes that characterize the Algerian schools. The current TGs do not come close to meeting teachers’ needs and expectation as they present inconsistent and failing guidance. The requested TGs need not be teacher-proof, nor need they be too loose if teachers’ positive attitudes are sought.

## **Conclusion**

Throughout this foregoing chapter, we have attempted to corroborate that the middle school English teachers come into their workplace with daunting psychological and professional paucity which ultimately has caused negative attitudes to germinate. Teachers’ attitudes play key roles in shaping teachers’ in-class behavior. Oftentimes, teachers themselves ignore the effects of attitudes on the way they

perceive themselves, their roles as educators, their teaching practices, the way they manage their classes, and the way they instore discipline. A plethora of research on attitudes has widely reported in recent years an alarming rise in teachers' dissatisfaction about and decrease in their commitment to their job. The sum of all fears is the enduring effect of unfavorable attitudes on the working force in general and the teachers in particular. Negative attitudes alone cannot account for teachers' maladjustment to their socio-professional environment. Nonetheless, those deep-rooted negative attitudes considerably contribute to the frustration of the proper enhancement of teachers' efficiency in, and commitment to the workplace as well as the frustration of the management of the teachers' teaching talent. Teachers' attitudes, therefore, mirror their identity as major agents in the teaching-learning process. Teachers need, thus, to be made fully aware of how they can strengthen their positive attitudes and minimize the interference of their negative attitudes in their mission of educating 21st century students. It is of overriding importance to pay attention to those negative attitudes that seem to overshadow the teaching community, if the Nation should look forward to safeguarding the already frail economy from total collapse.

## **Chapter Five: Fieldwork & Data Analysis**

### **Introduction**

The current chapter undertakes to investigate attitudinal information and eventually report quantitatively as well as qualitatively the data which have been collected and compiled through the questionnaire. The questionnaire has been administered earlier to the middle school teachers of English in the Region of Biskra and the neighboring Wilaya of Oued Souf. The inclusion of the neighboring wilayas has been undertaken purposefully. The premise behind such a decision is to identify the extent to which teachers' attitudes are shared or region-specific. The aforementioned metrics tool is a self-completion questionnaire by survey participants. The 35-item questionnaire has been completed by middle school teachers of English from different schools and from different parts of the Wilaya of Biskra. The demographics have been obtained thanks to "filler questions" of the respondents, which have eventually revealed that the surveyed population appears to be of different ages, educational backgrounds, gender, and seniority. The questionnaire is composed primarily by closed-ended questions in which options are offered and answers are predetermined. We have avoided including open-ended questions as teachers would like to have opportunities to answer the question-items all the more being provided with intelligible clues. The premise has been to hedge uneducated guesses and/ or confusion. In designing and administering the questionnaire, we have strived to honor research ethics; we have used simple and direct statements all the more avoiding offending or patronizing the respondents.

### **Ethical Precautions**

Here are outlined the ethical guidelines that have been honored while the questionnaire was in the designing and administration phases:

1. We have attempted to eschew intimidating respondents: the questions are not too personal and the questionnaire is to be completed at home at leisure

(Respondents have been given sufficient time to respond to the questionnaire, i.e., 1 week).

2. We have avoided patronizing the respondents; they have been urged to respond the way that they feel and not necessarily adopting and/ or being influenced by our views on the topics.
3. We have made every precaution to pay special care for the wording of the question- items; they are simple, direct, and specific.
4. We have opted for short statements to avoid ambiguity and confusion.
5. Every effort has been made to avoid falling into false assumptions (thus, different options have been given).
6. The respondents' identities have not been collected or revealed.
7. Finally, the respondents have been invited to express freely their appraisals of the questionnaire and provide suggestions.

### **Debriefing**

By definition, debriefing is a brief account on something. In research, debriefing refers to the phase post the administration of questionnaire wherein the researchers explains to the potential respondents the objectives, content, and method of completion of the questionnaire. As a considerable number of teachers could not be reached either personally or in seminars (some were missing), we have judged it essential not to debrief those teachers who have been in direct contact in order to avoid influencing them in the upcoming questionnaires and interviews. It needs to be acknowledged from the outset that the outcomes of the other questionnaires (one testing teachers' needs and the other one testing teachers' attitudes) and the unstructured interviews have been included in the theoretical part to substantiate our claims.

## **Objectives of the Questionnaire**

In the abstract, questionnaires are constructed, piloted, re-administered, analyzed, and reported with the view of establishing paradigms and patterns. In the same vein, the various questionnaires and interviews have been conducted to search for the attitudinal pattern of the middle school teachers of English. Besides, the questionnaires fundamentally aim to test the hypotheses that we have formulated at the introductory chapter. We have devised three main hypotheses that target three aspects that are of overarching importance to the middle school EFL teaching community: involvement in the development of the EFL course, accommodating socio-professional needs, and receiving appropriate EFL education, training and in-service professional counseling.

1.           **Hypothesis 1:** The teachers' commitment to their job depends considerably upon the involvement of the teachers in the development and accountability of the EFL course program, syllabus design, and instructional materials.
  
2.           **Hypothesis 2:** If the socio-professional circumstances are improved, teachers' attitudes vis-à-vis their socio-professional environment will improve accordingly.
  
3.           **Hypothesis 3:** If teachers' receive an adequate pre-service and in-service education, training, and professional counseling, the attitudes toward their teaching behavior, teaching practices, and ELLs will be significantly more favorable.

To achieve our goal, we have constructed different questionnaires and organized unstructured interviews with the targeted population whose willingness to cooperation to identify their ambivalent attitudes can be characterized as promising, if not necessarily fully satisfying.

## Structure of the Questionnaire

Unlike the other questionnaires, whose results have been reported in the review of literature, the current questionnaire is structured in such a way as it reflects the aims of this PhD dissertation. The three sections contain thirty-five question items categorized in five divisions: two in the Section One and three in Section Two. All in all, there are as many as thirty-five closed ended question-items.

Sections in the Questionnaire	Titles of the Sections	Number of the Items
Section One	The Instructional Materials	12
Section Two	Teachers' Attitudinal aspects	23
Section Two : Divisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. English Language</li> <li>b. Training programs</li> <li>c. Teaching and Learning Context</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 4</li> <li>b. 6</li> <li>c. 13</li> </ul>

**Table 71:** Component Items of the *Questionnaire for Teachers*.

The construction and designing of the present questionnaire took practically two years before it came to be administered to the targeted population. Extensive readings and unstructured interviews were undertaken with the view of refining the wording and content of the questionnaire. Furthermore, a pilot form of the questionnaire was first administered to some teachers in the Region of Tolga before the final version produced.

## **Geographical Catchment Area**

Our pressing concerns have been from the beginning to identify and report the attitudes of a large population of the middle school teachers of English. Owing to the cultural, economic, physical, and social resemblance, 20% of the surveyed population of the middle school teachers of English comes from the neighboring Wilaya of Oued Souf. However, the overwhelming majority of the respondent teachers (80%) are originally from the Wilaya of Biskra. Practically, middle schools from the four regions of Biskra (Ouled Djellal, Sidi-Khaled, Tolga, Biskra, Zeribet El-Oued, and Djammoura) represent our main samples.

## **Methodology**

As the work adheres to the descriptive-interpretive methodology, we have relied upon a series of questionnaires, which has been deemed to be an appropriate form of data collection and analysis for such type of research. At the descriptive phase, we have attempted to outline the *etic* understanding of the teachers' attitudes toward their socio-professional milieu. Differently stated, we have tried to overview the literature concerned with the teachers' attitudes toward their workplace. At the interpretive phase, we have outlined the *emic* understanding of the teachers' attitudes toward their socio-professional milieu with a particular reference toward the instructional materials. Hence, an insider's perception of the attitudes vis-à-vis the multifarious aspects of their workplace has been outlined. The questionnaire in question has been constructed with the view of collecting the attitudes of the middle school teachers of English toward their socio-professional environment and with a particular reference to the instructional materials (*SOE* Books 1+2+3, and *OTM* Book 4). For convenience sake, the main questionnaire is made short and contains 35 question-items that purport to identify the surveyed teachers' attitudes vis-à-vis the different facets of their socio-professional life. The respondents have been requested to circle the items that best correspond to their views.

## **Respondents' Demographics**

The targeted population of the questionnaire has been primarily the middle school teachers of English in the region of Biskra. The rationale for this purposeful selection of this section of teachers is premised by the fact that they teach English to Algerian beginners and false beginners learners. Moreover, they use a new series of textbooks (*Spotlight on English 1+2+3*, and *On the Move Year 4*), which were designed according to the new approach known as Competency-Based Approach (CBA). It should be emphasized that teachers' introduction to CBA was abrupt; they started the implementation the textbooks without being properly trained in CBA and without prior noticed. The demographics of the surveyed such as gender, seniority, training period, favorite skill to teach, favorite readings, variety of English used were collected, classified, and analyzed. 70 out of the 100 questionnaires were returned resulting thus in a response rate of 70%.

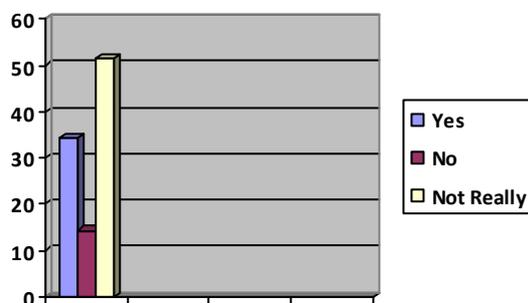
It is not surprising to disclose that the respondents are predominantly female teachers (60%), which may be attributed to their sharp sense of responsibility, commitment to respond to questionnaires, and in so doing live up to what is expected from them. The questionnaire outcomes report that 64.70 % of the surveyed teachers attended the university while 38.23% of them attended the ITE. All of them are native speakers of Arabic. 50% of them prefer to use Received Pronunciation (RP) while another 50% of the teachers report to utilize a combination of RP and General American (GA). As for the in-service years, noticeably a majority of teachers, i.e., 65.71 % has less than five years of seniority in teaching. It is compelling to acknowledge that a new generation has taken over teaching English in the middle schools, and it is predominantly female. ITE-educated teachers are decreasing especially as these institutions have been shut down in the '90s because of the economic crisis that struck the country. A priori, male university graduates are requested to satisfy their national service obligation before being enrolled in teaching positions, which may account for the decreasing number of male teachers in the middle schools.

**Part One:** The Instructional Materials

**Division A:** The Textbook Series

1) Middle school English textbook series are esthetically appealing:

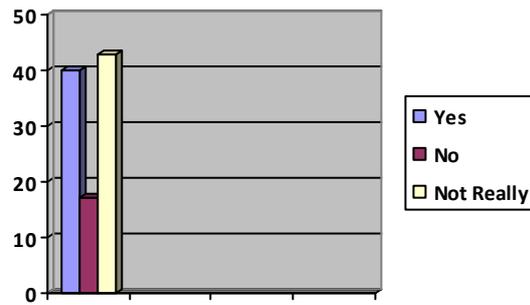
Yes                      No                      Not Really



**Graph 1.** Teachers' attitudes toward *SOE* esthetics.

This question item attempts to test teachers' perception and evaluation of the artistic and esthetic aspects of the middle school textbooks of English (*SOE* Books 1+2+3 and *OTM* Book 4). Attractive textbooks are a response to the needs of the human mind; the latter appears to favor "beauty" in order to be receptive and eventually engaged in tasks. Langfeld (1920: 3) echoes "The appreciation of beauty is not only an important but fundamental reaction of the human mind". In the same vein, Griffin (1995: 51) substantiates "Students react more favourably to bright, colorful (*sic*), interesting well-illustrated material". Despite being printed on quality paper, with a variety of colored and well-designed pictures, and different type fonts, the results amply demonstrate that the surveyed teachers in their majority (51.42 %) believe that the MS textbooks of English are not really esthetically appealing. Only 34.28 % of the respondents think that the textbooks currently in use in their classrooms are graphically attractive. A tiny minority estimated at 14.28 % definitely perceives the textbooks as lacking the appropriate visual pleasantness. Overall, we may put claim that the respondents have negative attitudes toward the esthetics of the proposed middle school textbooks of English.



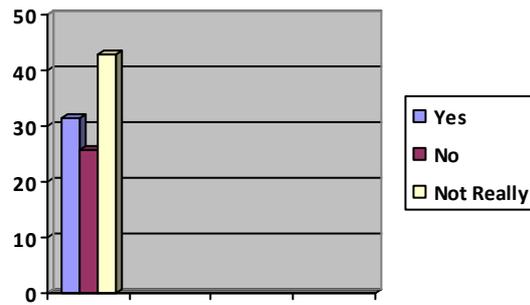


**Graph 3.** Teachers' Attitudes Toward Easy Access to *SOE*

It may seem paradoxical to claim that it is uncommon to hear stakeholders inquire about how user-friendly the textbooks are. These issues are practically esoteric, especially as the textbooks have been conceived, developed, and produced by other people than middle school teachers. Overall, user-friendly school textbooks encourage active engagement, self-directed learning, and initiative. The easiness in the use of textbooks facilitates learning and makes the teaching-learning process smooth and enjoyable. Our investigation discloses that 42.85 % of the respondents fail to see that the middle school textbooks of English are easy to use. Inversely, 40 % of the surveyed teachers believe that these textbooks are user-friendly. A minority of the respondents estimated at 17.17 % denies the user-friendliness of the instructional materials. These figures show that the surveyed middle school teachers of English nourish negative attitudes vis-à-vis the easiness of use of the textbooks, which sustains the results obtained in the previous question-items. Apparently, the user-unfriendliness of the *SOE* series lies in the richness of the language used and lack of L1-backed instructions, which causes the students to put off the initiative to rely on themselves to learn on their own. The absence of user-friendliness criterion while designing the textbooks has resulted in the consecration of student-proof attitude.

4) Middle school English textbook series are complimentary :

Yes                      No                      Not Really



**Graph 4.** Teachers' Attitudes Toward *SOE* Complimentarity

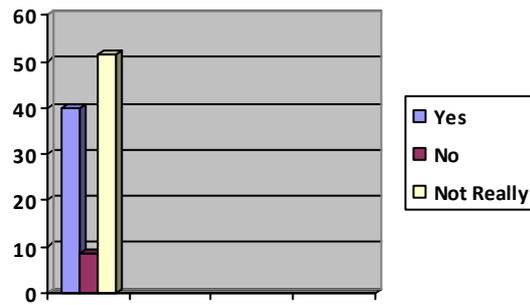
School textbook series are ideally complimentary; each package picks up where the previous one has left off. GSD (anglais) authors of the middle school textbooks of English never fail to mention that the new textbook is built upon the previous one with some minor if complimentary sections. In *To the Teacher*, **OTM** authors (2008 : viii) claim “*On the move takes up from spotlight on English, Book Three while developing features of its own..*” (*italics and underlines* in the original). It appears that only 04.44 % of the surveyed teachers agree with the view that **SOE** series and **OTM** are complimentary, while 52.71 % deny altogether the complimentarity of the textbooks, and the majority of them, which is estimated at 42.85 % believes that the complimentarity of the textbooks is not really existent. Again, the figures obtained through the current questionnaire demonstrate that the surveyed teachers do not seem to feel that the series of the middle schools is a continuum. The lack of complimentarity may account for the students' inability to cope with the different socio-cultural situations where they are supposed to utilize the language. Not being able to properly function in the target language proves that the aforementioned textbooks are clearly not complimentary.

5) Middle school English textbook series and CBA objectives are compatible :

Yes

No

Not Really



**Graph 5.** Teachers' Attitudes Toward *SOE* and CBA compatibility of objectives

School textbooks have always adhered to the tenets of a certain approach. *SOE* series and *OTM* textbooks for middle school teaching of English have been developed according to CBLT tenets. Achour (2003: 3) states that “.. the competency-based approach to learning has been adopted for English teaching ... to ensure *interdisciplinary coherence*” (*emphasis added*). For Algerians' vantage point, CBA targets the complementarity of the school subjects. As a matter of fact, CBA is essentially experiential in that it provides learners to practice real life tasks in order to function properly in their native and host societies. Larsen-Freeman (2000: 142) notes “Competency-based instruction .. offers students an opportunity to develop their second language skills at the same time that they are learning vital ‘life-coping’ or ‘survival’ skills ...”. To be able to survive in the society where the foreign or second language is used, in-class tasks need to mirror as faithfully as possible real-life interactions. Learning is, therefore, contextualized to achieve optimal demonstration of the learning experience. The outcomes or outputs are clearly at the crux of the language teaching-learning process. Spady (1994, quoted in Killen 2007: 49) defines outcomes as “*high-quality, culminating demonstrations of significant learning in context*” (*emphasis added*). Differently stated, CBA is ultimately criterion-referenced.

The data that have been collected through the present questionnaire display compelling findings on the teachers' attitudes and perceptions of the objectives that need to be attained thanks to the middle school textbooks of English. A minority of the respondents (40 %) think that the objectives of CBLT and *SOE* series and *OTM* are compatible, whereas 8.57 % deny that claim and 51.42 %, representing thus the



cover in due time the English syllabus. Fiszbein (2001: 22) observes “Teachers are expected to cover the prescribed curriculum with a certain time frame. The time assigned for each topic does not leave much room for creativity or innovation, and the teacher is seen as a mere transmitter of information”. We should acknowledge that in this section “innovation” equates with “creativity” in that teachers include novel and ingenious ways to drive their points. This perspective is reflected in O’Brien and Shennan’s (2010: 3) definition of innovation, which is suggested to be “something new and different”. Therefore, curriculum developers and textbook writers need to make provisions for teachers to search for new ways to implement the curriculum and establish rapport with students.

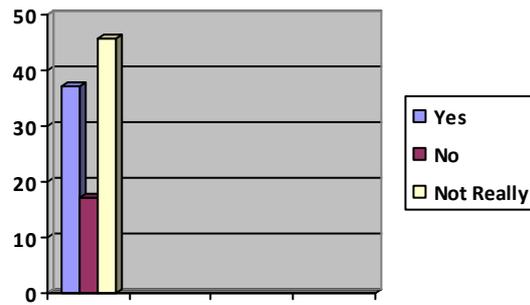
The surveyed middle school teachers of English appear to be divided whether the instructional materials provide or deny some room for personal innovation. 40 % state that *SOE* series and *OTM* do allow much room for creativity and innovation whereas a significant majority of the teachers (namely 48.57 %) expresses their doubt as to whether they feel free to introduce innovation in their classrooms. If this figure is coupled with those 11.43 % of the respondents who feel that the middle school deprive them of being innovative, the result would lead us to claim that the predominant percentage of teachers feel “enslaved” by the textbooks. Again, these figures sustain the fact that the surveyed teachers have not developed favorable attitudes toward the proposed textbooks. Innovative teachers can be characterized as an “asset” that is valuable to a society in transformation such as in Algeria. Hamilton (1996: 8) states “The reason why innovative teacher outvalues the excellent teacher in the long run is that innovation is a driving force which enhances a career and makes it constantly self-renewing and worthwhile”. Perhaps, inspectors of English should make it sufficiently clear for teachers that their in-class innovations are inalienable rights.

7) Middle school English textbook series are easy to implement :

Yes

No

Not Really



**Graph 7.** Teachers' Attitudes Toward Easy Implementation of *SOE*

Apparently, middle school teachers of English face a complex challenge: overcrowded classes, mixed-ability classes, lengthy syllabuses, limited time, and pedagogically demanding textbooks. What is more, they have not been trained to implement the content of the textbooks according to CBA tenets despite the quiet promise of the GSD (anglais) writers of *SOE* series and *OTM*. Achour (2003: 3) states “An adequate teacher training course is undoubtedly the necessary step to implement an efficient educational policy to familiarize our teachers with the innovative methods”. The innovations in the textbooks such as the teaching of the English phonology and the projects are left to teachers to cover according to their intuition. Audio-visuels where native speakers of English demonstrate the phonological syllabus in *SOE* and *OTM* are practically inexistent and unaccounted for. As for projects, teachers are clearly confused, and in most cases they ask students to bring a ring-bound print no matter wherefrom; students, therefore, buy the projects from cybercafés. As from the second year, projects represent the focus of the files, and nonetheless they come to be treated as cut-and-paste from the Internet sites.

The respondents to our questionnaire provide almost the same answers and figures as in the previous question-items. In fact, 45.71 % of them believe that the middle school textbooks are not really easy to implement. To this high figure, another percentage of teachers estimated at 17.14 % sustain that these textbooks do not see that they are easy to implement. Some 37.14 % of the surveyed middle school teachers of English think that the content is easy to implement. These results prove







and how they are learning. Evoking and sustaining learners' interest to learn and actively participate should be considered teachers' primary concern. Conversely, teachers themselves need be interested in the first place in what they provide, how they provide it, and to whom they provide it. Excellent teachers are said to inspire interest in their learners otherwise the teaching-learning process may be compromised.

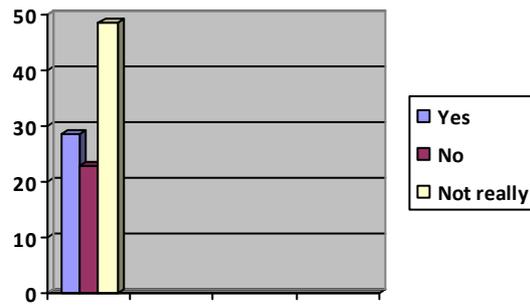
The tenth question-item is asked with the previous knowledge in mind. The majority of the respondents (48.71 %) indicate that they are not really able to evoke and sustain their students' interest through *SOE* series and *OTM*; another 17.14% of them cannot induce interest in their students the same textbooks. However, 37.14 % of the surveyed teachers recognize that they can engage and induce their students' interest using the proposed textbooks. Once again, these results prove that the respondents do not exhibit positive attitudes toward their textbooks, especially as they feel unable to engage their students in the tasks proposed in the textbooks. What is more, the contents of the textbooks seem to be condensed and challenging, and at times daunting. With such unfavorable attitudes, teachers cannot evoke and sustain ELL's interest as they themselves need to be brought -through training and education- to like their profession, what they teach, how they teach, and whom they teach.

11) Middle school English textbook series make provisions for relevant rubrics :

Yes

No

Not Really



**Graph 11.** Teachers' Attitudes Toward Rubrics in *SOE*

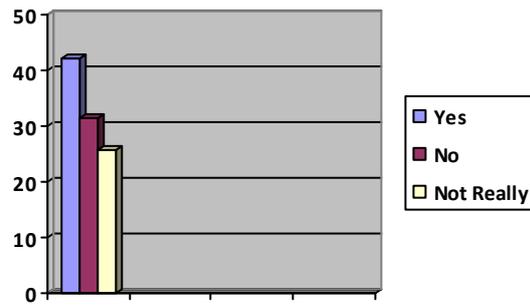
In this context, rubrics are taken to refer to the interconnected sections in the textbooks that are easily accessible to, and whose instructions are sufficiently clear for the learners. This question-item is basically connected to the previous ones and with particular reference to the one on the textbooks layout. Decidedly, the respondents' collected attitudes appear to be consonant with the results of the previous question-items in that the majority of them (i.e., 48.57 %) thinks that the middle school English textbooks do not really provisions for relevant rubrics; this result is coupled with another important section (22.85 % of the teachers) which do not at all think the textbook make provisions for relevant rubrics. Only 28.57 % of the surveyed population believes that relevant rubrics do exist. As a final analysis, the rubrics are student-proof: Without the teachers' intervention students do not seem to be able to respond to the instructions of the different rubrics. L1 is virtually discouraged even at the beginning stages where students expect their teachers to inform them what to do. Thus, teachers' attitudes toward the various rubrics are clearly negative as an extra burden is cast upon them. For better or worse, EFL teaching seems to be still teacher-centered, however hard the authors of the textbook try to prove otherwise.

12) Middle school English textbook series are your primary source of input :

Yes

No

Not Really



**Graph 12.** Teachers' Attitudes Toward *SOE* as Teachers' Primary Source of Input

It is customary among the majority of the teachers to have a divine faith in the instructional materials currently in use. The divine reification of the textbooks stems from the excessive demands of the authorities (ministries and inspectors) and possible use of chastisement in case of non-compliance. Furthermore, teachers have an unreasonable creed that textbook writers are definitely highly knowledgeable. They are usually intimidated if they attempt to provide their thoughts about the content, layout, objectives, teachability, and viability of tasks. Self-flagellation in case of failure to rise to the expectations of the authorities seems to be the logical practice of a considerable number of teachers. These circumstances account for the teachers' reliance on the textbooks as their primary source of input. 42.28 % of the respondents admit that *SOE* series and *OTM* are their primary source of input. 31.42 % of the surveyed teachers do not appear to rely on the input in the textbooks, while 25.71 % report that the textbooks are not really their primary source of instruction. It should be noted that these figures confirm how little innovative teachers are made to feel. The dependence on textbooks is common elsewhere, for instance, Sigugeirsson (1990) puts forward even higher figures. Pettersson (1993: 49) reports that "He (i.e., Sigugeirsson) found that no less than 70-90% of all teaching rely on the use of textbooks and various worksheets". For better or worse, teachers across the world schools seem to have unshakable faith in their textbooks, and hence, reify them and accept to be nothing more than servile subjects.







A posteriori, English appears to be unique among the modern languages of the world in that it is both an international language and a language of wider communication. English is among the five most spoken languages (by native speakers) and at the same time spoken by many more non-native speakers. MacKay (2002: 5) comments “It is in this sense, as a language of wider communication, that English is an international language *par excellence*”. Apparently, it is the uses and functions of English that have made it the double-status language. According to Kachru (2005: 21), “There is nothing like an international English, but international functions of English”. The international functions of English are various and complex; they vary from entertainment to science and technology. Ostergren and Le Bossé (2011: 179) expose the functions of English at the international level: (1) English is the main language of books, newspapers, airports and air traffic control, international business, and academic conferences, science and technology, diplomacy, sport, international competitions, pop music, and advertising, (2) over two-thirds of the world’s population scientists read in English, (3) three fourth of the world’s mail is written in English, (4) eighty percent of the world’s electronically stored information is in English, and (5) of the 200 million users of internet, some thirty six percent communicate in English.

The results obtained through the questionnaire for the middle school teachers of English reflect this population’s awareness to the instrumentality of the English language in the international arena. In fact, 60 % of the respondents agree that English is included in the national curriculum because it is a global language, i.e., *lingua franca*, used for global issues. 14.28 % of the surveyed teachers deny the fact that English is included in the national curriculum because it is used for global issues. 25.71 % of the teachers recognize that it is not really that argument that has led the Algerian political class to include English in the national educational system. We have felt throughout the unstructured interviews that the middle school teachers of English highly appreciate the international standing of English, although they resent the fact that English is not properly promoted through the Algerian public education.















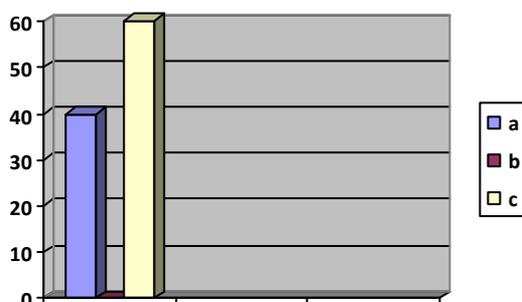
antagonistic attitudes vis-à-vis one another. In an earlier questionnaire for the purpose of this thesis, 82.35% of the middle school teachers of English respondents reported to be in need of being able to deal with an open-minded, compassionate, and understanding inspector not an overbearing and stick-to-the rule inspector. This attitude indicates that the teachers nurture reserved attitudes toward their inspectors, who appear to be too demanding and intimidating. Conversely, inspectors believe that teachers, and particularly novice, university-graduated ones, are less prepared to assume teaching positions. Inspectors usually criticize failing teachers to rise to their expectations and standards in the presence of other teachers in the periodic seminars, which eventually induces self-fulfilling prophecy in the novice and female teachers. As teachers are thought to be lacking the knowledge and skill of teaching in the middle schools, they start to behave according to the attitudes held by their inspectors of them.

The results obtained give credit to our justification of the middle school teachers' attitude of themselves as less qualified than their inspectors, and by the same token, they appear to reify the inspectors. 77.14 % of the respondents report that they qualify their inspectors as highly qualified and motivated, while 14.28 % think that their inspectors are neither highly qualified nor motivated. This figure is backed by 8.57 % of the surveyed teachers who state their inspectors are not really highly qualified and motivated. These results are an outcry to a better and sustainable partnership between inspectors and teachers for better rapport, collaboration, and cooperation. The antagonistic attitudes between inspectors and teachers may negatively affect students' achievement in the long run. As a final analysis, section B attests that the surveyed middle school teachers of English are fully aware that they need sustainable teacher training programs both in pre-service and in-service periods. By the same token, inspectors need to be aware that training teachers is a lengthy and effortful process wherein teachers are not condemned but meaningfully involved as an indelible part in the teaching-learning process as active, positive agents, and certainly not as curriculum consumers.

### **Division C:** Teaching and Teaching Context

23) Teaching is a profession which is :

- a. Equitable, just, and respectful of you ;
- b. Unfair, unjust, and disrespectful of you ;
- c. Noble but degrading in the long run.



**Graph 23.** Teachers' Attitudes Toward Equity in the Teaching Profession

This question-item appears of considerable interest all the more so as it tests the attitudes of the middle school teachers of English vis-à-vis their profession. It may appear paradoxical to claim that despite long vacations and relatively pay raise, teachers prove to be less satisfied with their profession if compared with other profession (bank clerks, Sonelgaz and Sonatrach executives, etc.). In a study, Travers and Cooper (1996 : 100) conclude “Teachers reveal the highest rates of dissatisfaction with ‘extrinsic’ aspects of their job (i.e., their ‘rate of pay’, ‘chances for promotion’, and working conditions’”. The *raison d’être* of such high rate of job dissatisfaction lies in the fact that teachers feel that they are entrapped, helpless, hopeless, and under-estimated. Besides, they feel deskilled, underpaid, and stressed over the years. Although teachers most often recognize that the teaching profession is equitable, just, and noble, they admit that eventually it dehumanizes them and causes them to lose their self-esteem. The majority of the surveyed middle school teachers (*viz.*, 60%) declare that their profession is noble but degrading in the long run, while 40% of them report that teaching is equitable, just, and respectful of them. These

negative attitudes certainly account for the middle school teachers' significant lack of job commitment.

24) Teaching seems to be a:

- a. Lonely profession as teachers work alone ;
- b. Group profession as teachers work together as a team ;
- c. Both.



**Graph 24.** Teachers' Attitudes Toward the Nature of the Teaching Profession

This question-item aims to inquire about the attitudes of the middle school teachers of English toward cooperation with the other fellow teachers. Lesson preparation and delivery are certainly carried out by individual teachers, which *au fond* makes teaching a lonely profession (Gebhard & Oprandy 1999, Ben-Peretz & Schonmann 2000, Burnaford *et al.* 2001, Nieto 2003). Similarly, teachers in the same school are required to attend one-another's session at least once a week as part of experience sharing, professional counseling, and formative evaluation ; this activity is usually referred to as "ندوة داخلية" (i.e., peer coaching) and followed by administrative paperwork. For better or worse, this means that teaching is also a team profession. The results of the current questionnaire suggest that the overwhelming majority of the sampled teachers (74.28 %) perceive teaching as both a lonely and team profession, whereas 20 % of them believe that teaching as a group profession as teachers work together. Only a tiny minority estimated at 5.71 % thinks that teaching is a lonely profession as each individual teacher works alone. This percentage confirms the

results obtained in a previous questionnaire wherein teachers, regardless of gender and seniority, seem to enjoy one another's company and partnership. Friendly if professional bond clearly characterizes teacher-teacher relationships in and outside the school context. Certainly, cooperation and collaboration among the middle school teaching of English community significantly reduces the lonel character of the profession.

25) The primary purpose of teaching and the basis upon which teachers should be evaluated is :

- a. Good teachers make good students ;
- b. Good students make good teachers ;
- c. Good textbooks make good teachers and students.



**Graph 25.** Teachers' Attitudes Toward the Evaluation of Teachers

Basically, the two last assumptions were at the fulcrum of our M.A. thesis (2005). The results of that work indicated that *assumption c* (viz. good textbooks make good teachers and students) proved utterly false; teachers and students be motivated by the high quality textbooks, but other social, professional, and psychological were more important). Similarly, *assumption b* proved relatively false as most teachers reported to frustrated by the achievement gap. The third assumption (i.e., *assumption a*: good teachers make good teachers) is at the focus in our present work. Knowledgeable, skilled, and positive-minded teachers significantly affect learners' achievement, and prove to be a key to bridging the achievement gap. Kaplan

and Owings (*op.cit.* 1) argue “better teaching is the key to higher student achievement, if teachers do not know enough, students cannot learn enough”. The majority of the surveyed middle school teachers of English clearly appreciate the first assumption especially as 68.57 % of them believe that good teachers make good student against 22.85 % who strongly feel that good textbooks make good teachers and students. Only a tiny minority calculated at 5.72 % thinks that good students make good teachers. Against all odds, it is the teacher who makes instruction appealing, the textbook interesting, and the students interested.

26) The major agent in education is the :

- a. Teachers ;
- b. Students ;
- c. Textbooks.



**Graph 26.** Teachers Attitudes Toward Major Agents in Education

In the teaching process, teachers are the major agents; in the learning process, learners are the key agents, and in the content area, textbooks are the core of instruction. The centrality of these agents oftentimes overlaps, conflicts, and self-imposes. Even in learner-centered approaches, teachers have a privileged position. Carter (2006: 19) elicits :

The redefinition of teacher’s roles is to be accompanied by a parallel redefinition of learners’ roles, for learners in the

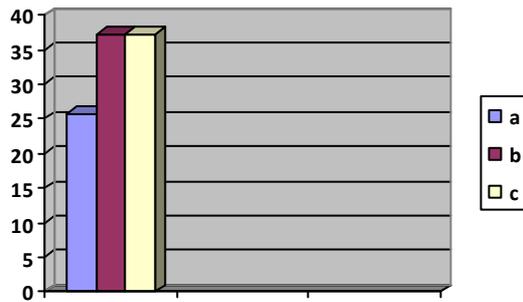
learner-centered classrooms are to be active agents of their own learning. It is still the teacher, however, who assumes primary responsibility for the instructional process, for it is she who controls the learning process, albeit while encouraging greater learner participation. Thus, while learner-centered approaches represent a considerable shift from transmission models of teaching, the locus of control for teaching and learning still lies mainly with the teacher.

However dramatic changes in paradigms prove to be, teachers' roles in the overall teaching-learning process change accordingly, and never appear to be undervalued. Oxford (1996: 110) summarizes it in these words "... teachers are the key agents in the teaching-learning process". In wide brief, even when teachers lose ground as far as their roles and responsibilities are concerned, they remain an indelible part of the instructional process.

The attitudes of the surveyed middle school teachers toward the centrality of their responsibility seem to have developed into a firm belief that they are the cornerstone of the teaching-learning process. The results of the present questionnaire certify that the majority of the respondents (i.e., 57.14%) believe that teachers are the major agents in the instructional process despite the shifts in paradigms. While 34.28 % of the surveyed teachers think that students represent the major agents of the teaching learning process, 8.57 % perceives textbooks as the major agents of the teaching-learning process, for they are self-contained course programs, and the teachers' main concern should be to cover the syllabus items in time. The attitude of the teachers vis-à-vis their roles and responsibilities proves that they are still committed to their job and its subsequent burdens despite the various challenges that frustrate them and chip away at their self-esteem..

27) The largest impact on students' achievement comes from :

- a. Small class size ;
- b. Students' abilities ;
- c. Teacher quality.



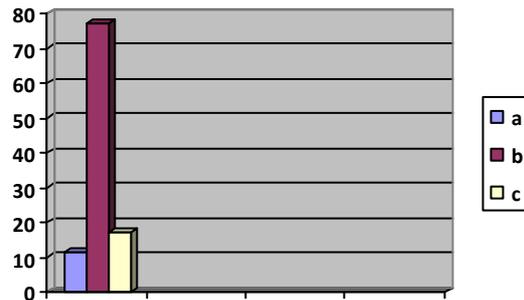
**Graph 27.** Teachers' Attitudes Toward Impact on Students' Achievement

The current question-item is clearly a follow-up to the previous question-items; the premise is to verify the surveyed teachers' consistency in their attitudes toward their own roles and responsibilities and how they affect learners' achievement. Research literature that accumulated recently continues to provide evidence that students' achievements are closely related to the quality of teachers and quality teaching. Darling-Hammond (2010: 106) quotes Ferguson "Skilled teachers are the most critical of all schooling inputs". The surveyed middle school teachers seem to recognize that the impact of both teachers and students represents 74.28% on students' achievement. Differently stated, 37.14% of the respondents believe that students' (cognitive) abilities represent the largest impact on students' achievement comes from small class size. Another 37.14% of the surveyed teachers think that teacher quality seems to be the major impact on students' achievement. Only a quarter of the middle school teachers (*viz.*, 25.71%) perceive the large impact on students' achievement comes from less crowded classes. It should be interesting to acknowledge that despite the teachers' belief that overcrowdedness is the major impediment to effective teaching (88.23% expressed concerns about overcrowdedness), they still harbor positive attitudes toward their roles and responsibilities.

28) Much of the input that the students receive comes from :

- a. The textbooks quality;
- b. The teachers quality;

c. Dictionaries, movies, and songs.



**Graph 28.** Teachers' Attitudes Toward the Source of Students' Input

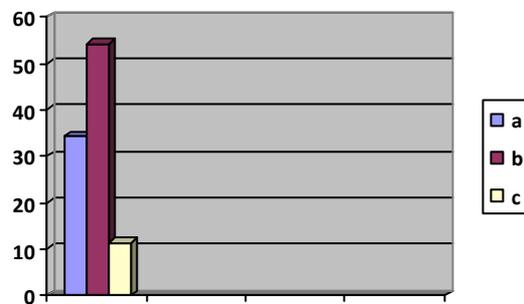
The impact of teachers' quality teaching on students' proves to be immeasurable. Findings from different research works continue to sustain that teachers are the most influential factor on students' psyche, cognition, emotions, and social behavior. According to a study conducted by Zbar *et al.* (2007: viii), teachers' knowledge, performance, and caring behavior accounts for 30% of the students' variance in achievement, which is the highest in comparison with other external factors such as parents (5 to 10 %) and school (5 to 10 %). The overwhelming majority (estimated at 74.28 %) of the surveyed Algerian middle school teachers of English report that most of the FL linguistic and socio-cultural input that students receive derives from teachers' quality teaching rather from textbook quality (11.42 %) and from extra-curricular activities (14.28 %) such as using dictionaries, watching movies, and listening to songs. The external assistance of students' cognitive development appears, therefore, a necessity rather than luxury. To put it in other terms, students' Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) can only be effectively achieved through quality teachers. Tzuriel (2001: 13) quotes Vygostky :

An essential feature of learning is that it creates a zone of proximal development; that is learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalized, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement.

As we have already acknowledged that middle schools textbooks of English are student-proof and despite being motivated, students lack self-directed curiosity to learn, the only alternative left for students is to consider their teachers the only source of knowledge. Thus, it is fair to claim that teachers constitute the most important source of student active FL knowledge. As a concluding note, teachers’ attitudes toward quality teaching impact on students’ achievement proves to be positive.

29) Your teaching style is the result of your:

- a. Second/ foreign language learning and experience;
- b. Teaching experience;
- c. Pre-service and in-service training.



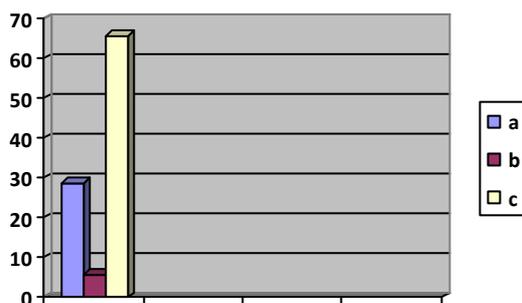
**Graph 29.** Teachers’ Attitudes Toward Teachers’ Style

A priori, teachers teach the way that they themselves have been educated, and as their seniority and experience grow over the years, they subsequently “review” their teaching styles (Feyten & Nutta, 1999 ; Smart, J. C., 2004, and Pollock, J. E. 2007). By definition, teaching styles refer to the teachers preferred ways of approaching lesson preparation, lesson delivery, and task administration. Lunenberg & Ornstein (2012: 448) quote Peterson who defines teaching styles as “how teachers utilize space in the classroom, their choices of instructional activities and materials, and their choice of student grouping”. All these in-service teachers’ instructional, interpersonal, and interactional skills are for better or worse a legacy of previous experience as students. 11.42 % of the surveyed middle school teachers claim that

their teaching style comes from their foreign/ second language learning experience. A higher percentage of the respondents (*viz.*, 34.28%) believe that pre-service and in-service training programs are the springboard for the development of their teaching styles. The findings of the current questionnaire unveil that 54.28% of the middle school respondents claim that their teaching style derives from their teaching experience. The latter appears counter-intuitive at the surface, and an in-depth investigation confirms that previous experiences as students largely affect how teachers behave in the classroom. Perhaps, much of teachers teaching styles are shaped and reshaped continuously hands-on and thanks to trial-and-error attempts.

30) Textbooks are deliberately used to increase the students' :

- a. Knowledge of the language ;
- b. Experience of the language ;
- c. Both.



**Graph 30.** Teachers' Attitudes Toward the Objectives of Textbooks

This question-item purports itself to measure the attitudes of the middle school teachers of English vis-à-vis the linguistic and socio-cultural content of the textbooks, and whether the kind of input included targets to activate ELL's performance in adequate sociocultural contexts or it only gives them information about the language being learned. It has been observed that a good number of teachers tend to teach the subject rather than teaching the students. A significant number of students feel alienated by their teachers' teaching styles; the results in standardized tests (BEM, in

our case) reveal that the achievement gap continues to widen despite the reforms being undertaken and resources injected. Textbooks are meant to offer a unique opportunity to students to know insights about the language and practice the language in different situations through real-life tasks. This assumption seems to be even more true when textbooks are designed according to CBA principles. CBA is criterion-referenced approach to teaching in that it lays emphasis on the individual students' mastery of (socio)linguistic input before moving to next. Our investigation, however, reveals that *projects* (proposed by textbooks authors) are not conducted by the targeted population but by external agents such as cybercafés operators. Students buy the ready-made project papers, and teachers score them on something they have not done.

The present questionnaire unveils that 28.57% of the surveyed middle school teachers of English believe that the textbooks of English are deliberately utilized by teachers to increase the students' knowledge about the language. Differently stated, teachers teach about the language: the grammatical metalanguage, positions of the parts of speech, insights about the British and American cultures. 5.71% of the respondents think that the middle school textbooks of English deliberately target to increase students' experience of the language, which means that students are provided with real-life tasks where they can use English. The majority of the surveyed teachers (*viz.*, 65.71%) suppose that the textbook package aims at increasing both the knowledge and experience of the language. Clearly, the attitude of the middle school teachers of English approaches the sociolinguistic content from an idealistic perspective; they expect that quality textbooks automatically need to combine both. The previous question-items have already proved that most input comes from teachers and not from the textbooks.

- 31) The primary function of middle school English textbooks is to :
- a. Provide practice activities ;
  - b. Provide a structured program for teachers to follow ;

c. Information about the language.



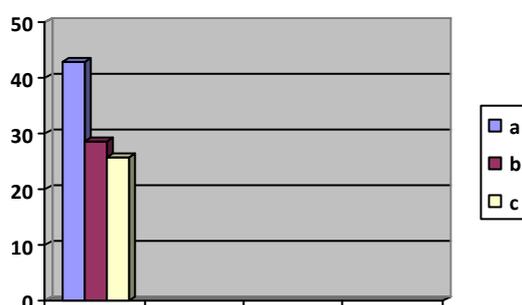
**Graph 31.** Teachers' Attitudes Toward the Functions of Textbooks

Similarly, this question-item, which is basically a follow-up to the previous, targets to identify the attitudes of the surveyed middle school teachers of English toward the primary function of middle school textbook package (*SOE* Books 1+2+3 and *OTM* Book 4). According to Robertson *et al.* (2005: 86) “The teacher’s main task is to transfer knowledge from textbooks to students through expert pedagogical skills. The teacher’s authority is established on his/ her profound knowledge of the subject matter and his/ her techniques in the delivery of it”. In other words, the source of knowledge (i.e., linguistic, sociocultural, and real-life tasks) is found in the textbook; teachers act as mediators, and students as knowledge consumers. Therefore, this view perceives that textbooks are more than practice providers, for they provide teachers with a systematic program and knowledge. It is customary in Algeria to propose self-contained textbooks: They are textbooks, workbooks, teacher’s guide, and the official syllabus. However, the results obtained thanks to this questionnaire appear to corroborate that the attitudes of the surveyed middle school teachers of English toward their textbooks is as follows : 60% of the respondents consider the primary function of the textbooks is to provide students with practice ; 20% of them think that the primary function of textbook is to provide teachers with a systematic program (i.e., curriculum and/ or syllabus), and yet another 20% of them believe that the primary function of textbooks ought to be the provision of information about the language currently being taught and learned. All in all, we can put claim that the reliance on textbooks as information providers goes unchallenged in countries where they are produced locally and need to undergo authorization by an official body such

as is the case of Algeria. Thus, teachers' roles as information providers are considerably reduced in favor of the textbooks.

32) The middle school instructional materials (i.e., English textbooks) make you feel :

- a. Trapped by the drudgery of the conception (i.e., design) ;
- b. Impassioned by the dynamics involved ;
- c. Inhibited by the insurmountable challenges.



**Graph 32.** Teachers' Attitudes Toward Teachers' Perception MS Textbooks

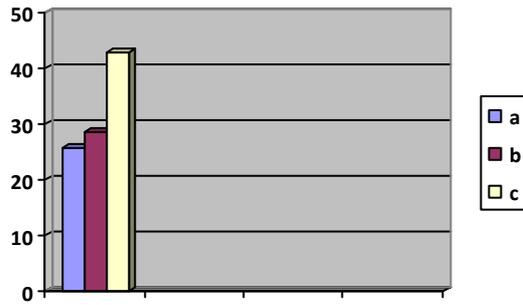
This question-item telescopes the attitudes of the surveyed middle school teachers of English toward the *SOE* series. It has already been reported in question-item 12 and question-item 6, where teachers (42.28 %) clearly think that their main source of input and 48.57 % believe that these textbooks do not really leave for them an elbow room for creativity and personal contribution. These figures sustain the assumption that middle school teachers of English harbor negative attitudes vis-à-vis the textbooks and the content thereof. With such unfavorable attitudes, teachers can only feel deskilled and tightly controlled by other forces than their own intellect, know-how, and expertise. The majority of the teachers in question (*viz.*, 42.85%) believe that the middle school instructional materials make them feel entrapped by the drudgery of the way these textbooks have been conceived and/ or designed. This figure comes to be coupled with another troublesome figure that amounts to 25.71% of the respondent who feel inhibited by the insurmountable challenges posed the

conception and/ or design the **SOE** package. Only one third of the surveyed population (28.57%) appears to be at the other end of the spectrum and thinks that the MNE-proposed textbooks make them feel impassioned by the dynamics involved in the conception and/ or design.

Obviously, the **SOE** series have been designed to drive the teaching-learning process despite the absence of other supplementary materials that would enable teachers from effective implementation of the curriculum. They have not also been designed so as to provide a “scaffold” for both teachers and students to construct well-graded knowledge of the language being taught and learned. These design and pedagogical defects appear to frustrate teachers from efficient interaction with the instructional materials. The corollary of these misgivings have been the appearance of undesired attitudes, which have proven to be so frustrating that teachers feel entrapped by the drudgery of the **SOE** series and the very many demands of their superiors (i.e., inspectors). The situation is made even worse with the absence of adequate teacher education and training. As a final analysis, the middle school teachers of English have developed unfavorable attitudes toward **SOE** (Books 1+2+3) and **OTM** (Book 4) because they have never been consulted as to their needs and expectations.

33) The middle school English instructional materials represent :

- a. The content of the course ;
- b. The balance of the skills taught ;
- c. The practice of language (by the students).



**Graph 33.** Teachers' Attitudes Toward the Essence of MS Textbooks

The present question-item aims to investigate the teachers' attitudes toward the nature of the MNE-proposed textbooks of English. We can confidently put claim that most Algerian textbooks encapsulate the whole curriculum: The instructional materials are represented by one textbook that contains both the syllabus to be taught and learned as well as the methodology to be followed. Middle school textbooks of English do not seem to be an exception as they introduce the foreign language, culture, and CBA teaching methodology at the same time. As for the skills that the students are supposed to master, they are introduced as follows: listening and speaking and later reading and writing. The surveyed teachers in their majority estimated at 45.71 % think that the middle school English instructional materials aim primarily to encourage the practice of the language as a considerable number of tasks is included. Some 28.57% of them believe that the instructional materials are balanced when it comes to the skills balanced. And only 25.71% of the respondents in question recognize that the middle school textbooks of English represent the whole course program of English. It seems that the middle school teachers of English have a major role of "coaching" students to speak the language. The attitudes of the respondents disclose that these view the textbooks as merely workbooks rather than instructional materials.

34) You occasionally feel inhibited by your teaching environment because of the :

- a. Long files and the limited time allowed ;

- b. Overcrowdedness ;
- c. Inspector's excessive demands.



**Graph 34.** Teachers' Attitudes Toward Teachers' Contextual Inhibition

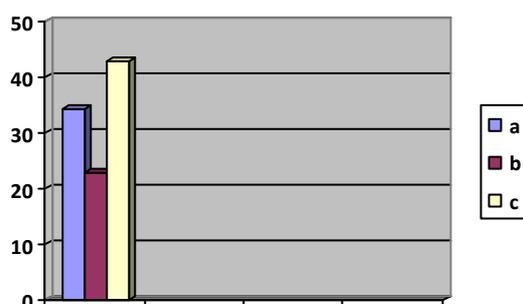
Teachers' concerns over some professional environment issues appear to be well-established. Teachers are clearly overloaded with many administrative and pedagogical duties and tasks to the extent that they become less committed to teaching and bridging the achievement gap. Ornstein *et al.* (2011: 320) note :

It is difficult for teachers to provide active, meaningful learning experiences when they must cope with the demands of large classes and class loads, a variety of duties and tasks outside their classrooms, pressures to cover a wide range of material and skills, and other such responsibilities.

The results of the present questionnaire sustain that professional environment constraints weigh significantly on teachers' efficiency and productivity. The majority of the surveyed middle school teachers of English (*viz.*, 65.71%) prioritize as their major concern the lengthy syllabuses and the relatively short time available to meet the deadline. Their second major concern is definitely large classes (i.e., overcrowdedness): 25.71% of the respondents rank large class size as a frustratingly painful worry. Intuitively, class size brings with it disruptive behavior and discipline-related challenges (tardiness- unexcused absences, not doing homework, unpreparedness for class, and noise, etc.). Only a minority calculated at 8.57% of the surveyed population believes that they occasionally feel inhibited by the excessive demands of their inspectors.

35) The work of being a teacher is :

- a. Less fulfilling due to deplorable professional circumstances ;
- b. Less fulfilling due to the lack of adequate training programs for teachers ;
- c. Less fulfilling due to the absence of incentives (money, prizes, commendations, and encouragements, etc.).



**Graph 35.** Teachers' Attitudes Toward Being a Teacher

The final question-item of the current questionnaire concerns itself with gauging teachers' attitudes vis-à-vis the profession of teaching. Teachers may enjoy relatively longer vacations, but they are plagued more than anybody else by stressful, daunting, and too demanding a job. Travers and Cooper (1996: 3) echo "Teachers are reported as being stressed by the overload, the behavior of the pupils, lack of promotion prospects, unsatisfactory work conditions, poor relationships with colleagues, pupils and administrators and a host of other problems". These professional, psychological, and social constraints may account for the teachers' lack of commitment, hopelessness, helplessness, and deskilling. The graphic representation of the results of the question-item prove that lack promotion prospects and pecuniary incentives as well as unsatisfactory work conditions are the *raison d'être* of teachers emotional and professional disengagement. The majority of the respondents (*viz.*, 42.85%) believe that the work of being a teacher is less fulfilling due to the absence of incentives such as pay raise, prizes, commendations, and encouragements, etc. The second largest proportion of the surveyed middle school teachers of English, which is estimated at 34.28%, thinks that the work of being a teacher is less fulfilling because

of the deplorable professional conditions. The smallest percentage of the respondents (22.85%) posits that the work of being a teacher is less fulfilling due to the lack of adequate training programs for teachers.

The aforementioned results decidedly demonstrate that the surveyed middle school teachers of English perceive their profession in unfavorable light : It is less fulfilling *tout court*. The claim may be rightfully laid that they nurture negative attitudes toward their profession all while as they see few promotion prospects, lack of incentives despite the recent pay raise and back pay, and finally the absence of training programs. No doubt that these frustrating circumstances have direct bearing on the teachers' negative perception of their work and workplace, which eventually leave very little elbow room for maneuver, creativity, leadership, and better self-esteem. It may be fair to acknowledge that more pressure is laid on teachers with the introduction of new school reforms, which only accentuates teachers' alienation and disengagement. According to Vandenberghe and Huberman (1999: 156) "If school reform to take hold, it must rely on the enduring commitment and determination of teachers". Paradoxically, Algerian middle school teachers have practically always been excluded from being an indelible part in the school reform, curriculum development, syllabus design, textbook writing, and program evaluation. Teachers in our country have been considered consumers rather than partners, which in the long run breed teachers' contempt and negative attitudes.

## Fieldwork Conclusion

The current research has developed from a powerful claim: namely, that is the teaching-learning process has a firm attitudinal base, which defines *significantly* teachers-students and teachers-EFL contextual environment effective interaction and task engagement. Teachers have long been ignored, and their attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and values usually taken for granted. This deliberate marginalization has engendered feelings of frustration and anger, which affected teachers' attitudes toward their contextual environment inasmuch as their commitment and devotion waned in accordance. The impact of teachers' negative attitudes on students' achievement gap constantly widens in accordance. Teachers' grievances, which have accumulated over the years and because of callous policies, have never been properly accommodated. Therefore, a fundamental assumption sums up the situation: Learning may not properly occur without addressing and redressing teachers' grievances. To perform at the peak of their potential, teachers' need to be aware of and attempt to control those negative attitudes. Besides, the other stakeholders (*viz.*, politicians, curriculum developers, textbook writers, headteachers, inspectors, and parents) ought to come to the assistance of an otherwise disenchanting teachers.

The answers and interpretations provided in this questionnaire sit well with the hypothetical framework which we proposed and formulated in the *General Introduction*. A priori, the Algerian middle school teachers of English face three major challenges: the contextual-related challenges, teaching profession-related challenges, and working relationships-related challenges. Contextual challenges such as old facilities, large classes, busy schedules, challenging textbooks, lack of audio-visuals, and so on have attested to be frustratingly troublesome for most teachers. Of all the challenges, however, overcrowded classrooms have sparked a record number of teacher flurry grievances; with such large numbers of poorly disciplined, rowdy students, teachers constantly strive to bring order as well as discipline to the class instead of and at the detriment of leading students to meaningful engagement. This present questionnaire furnishes highly suggestive,

although by no means conclusive answers to the issue of teachers' attitudes in the workplace. There are compelling reasons for taking up seriously teachers' attitudinal grievances, which are basically legitimate and with little good faith could be squarely accommodated. As things stand, these challenges ought to be addressed speedily and fairly in order to preserve teachers' commitment, meaningful engagement, and perseverance.

# **Pedagogical Implication for Teaching**

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## Chapter Six: Pedagogical Implications for the Teaching of English

### Introduction

Researching attitudes is worthwhile in its own right; researching teachers' attitudes is a gateway to understanding the psychological dynamics of the agents who influence more than anybody else the lives of future generations. This is because attitudes are the identities of individuals: They are what their attitudes are. Social psychologists cogently recognize that this theme is probably the most important in their area of research. Petty and Caccioppo (1996: 7) quote Allport who claims that "the most distinctive and indispensable concept in contemporary social psychology". The privileged position of attitudes lies in their omnipresence in people's lives, daily speech, and their impact on the way people act and behave. Oskamp and Schultz (2005: 4-6) outline the importance of attitudes:

1. an attitude can be considered the *cause* of a person's behavior toward another person or an object ;
2. the concept of attitude helps to explain the *consistency* of a person's behavior, for a single attitude may underlie many different actions ;
3. attitude is an *interdisciplinary* concept.

It is this triad nature of attitudes (causes- consistency- interdisciplinarity) that attributes to this concept its overriding importance in academic research. The coupling of attitudes with teachers adds to the importance of our topic in its endeavor to contribute to knowledge and better understanding of teachers' consistent decline in commitment to their profession.

According to Genck and Klingenberg (1991: vx) "... the success of the school board, superintendent, and management team depends upon their ability to make the work of the teacher in the classroom more effective". It is within the scope of this research to contribute in making teachers more effective in the classrooms by

investigating the causes of their attitudes, how they manifest themselves, how they affect the teaching behavior, and finally sensitize teachers and the other stakeholders to handle positively their emotions. The pedagogical implications of the present research and its findings can empower teachers in order to be more efficient and effective with the view of attaining emotional satisfaction. Accommodating teachers' attitudes and needs will be significantly beneficial for the Algerian education and the psychological well-being of both teachers and students. Thus, the achievement gap will be hopefully closed, and productive 21st century schools will be established.

## **6.1 Implications on the Teachers**

Research has attested that teachers represent the second most important factor in the lives of learners next to latter's biology. It should be acknowledge that this work would be of little relevance if it does not address the issue of the impact of the findings of the research that we conducted on the middle school teachers of English.

### **6.1.1 Teachers' Cognition- Intellect**

In broad terms, cognition is about the perception and processing of knowledge. Along those lines Reed (2007: 2) defines the concept in question as follows "Cognition is usually defined simply as the acquisition of knowledge". People arguably experience knowledge through a network of social contact, culture, formal institutions, and readings, etc. Professional knowledge appears to be acquired thanks to pre-and in-service training where it is constantly shaped and reshaped. According to our findings, the majority of the surveyed middle school teachers (50 %) tend to read fiction (novels and short stories) and only 32.35% declare to read EFL reference books. Besides these figures, unstructured interviews prove that teachers are generally apprehensive of the complex terminology and concepts employed in reference books. The abstract metalanguage seems daunting to the teachers whose in-service education and training are decidedly less effective as the emphasis has been on how to deliver a lesson rather than transform theoretical knowledge into practical knowledge and classroom practices into theory. This analysis is sustained by other findings which reveal that 52.28% of the teachers report that their teaching style comes from their in-

service hands-on experience, which means that their pre-service education and training was of little importance.

Teachers' education and training need to continue once they are employed and licensured. Theoretical knowledge is only meaningful when it materializes in the classrooms. Inversely, teachers need to be encouraged to codify their experience in the classrooms for further researching and deliberations in meetings, seminars, and refereed journals. It is worth of note that In Algeria, pre-tertiary teachers of English do not have a journal in which they can publish their thoughts, research, or exchange experience. At best, however, they subscribe to English Teaching Forum <sup>1</sup>(ETF), a magazine issued by the United State Information agency (USIA<sup>2</sup>). Although this magazine is highly acclaimed as one of the leading TEFL magazines, teachers need to read specialized books and attempt to transform theoretical knowledge into practical knowledge. This investigation urges stakeholders (inspectors mainly) to include specialized TEFL literature in their seminars to help teachers discuss innovative ideas and be acquainted with research and its findings. Teachers need be made aware that reading books may be challenging and even disheartening at first, but they are basically simple as they deal with what teachers experience daily in their classrooms. The only difference, authors use different metalanguage that may appear "outlandish". As a final comment, teachers need to fine tune their attitudes to accommodate different learning styles.

### **6.1.2 Teachers' Affect**

It has widely been accepted since the Greek period that learning has an emotional base. In all fairness, emotions actually mold the way in which people learn. And similarly, teaching has an intensely emotional base. Nonetheless, teachers' affect seems to receive little attention. Nias (1996, cited in Zembylas 2005: 6) notes:

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<sup>1</sup> ETF is a quarterly journal published by the U.S. Department of State for teachers of English as a foreign or second language

<sup>2</sup> USIA (1953-1999) was devoted to public diplomacy. It is supplemented by Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG)

Despite the passion with which teachers have always talked about their jobs, there is relatively little recent research into the part played by or the significance of affectivity in teachers' lives, careers, and classroom behavior. Since the 1960s teachers' feelings have received scant attention in professional writing. At present, they are seldom systematically considered in pre- and in-service education. By implication and omission of teachers' emotions are not deemed a topic of worthy of serious academic or professional consideration.

The neglect of teachers' emotions and their direct impact on students' achievement culminated into a sense of alienation and frustration that troubles teachers and chips away at their self-esteem and commitment.

A priori, teachers are emotionally eroded, and this is obviously mirrored in their unfavorable attitudes toward their profession. We have found in the course of this research that 42.85 % of the questionnaire respondents think that teaching is less fulfilling due to the lack of incentives. Furthermore, the findings of the current study disclose that –from pure surveyed teachers' perspectives- teaching does not really offer promotion prospects, unsatisfactory work conditions, poor professional relationships with colleagues, pupils and administrators, etc. Clearly, a claim can be put forward that teaching has turned out to be a lonely profession as most teachers carry out their duties in isolation from other teachers. What is commonly termed “coordination” seems to be occasionally undertaken all while as teachers practically have never been educated and trained to work in groups except during examination periods where they are required to submit a common examination paper. Yet another challenge that appears to largely affect teachers is the relationship with inspectors; the latter often harbor negative attitudes vis-à-vis teachers. In an unstructured interview with an inspector of English in the Region of Tolga confides that the majority of novice teachers, especially those who graduated from the university, lack the skill, know-how, conscientiousness, seriousness, and dexterity to assume fully their responsibilities.

We harbor a quiet hope that the findings of this investigation on teachers' attitudes to encourage all stakeholders to highly appreciate the fact that teachers' affect may be an asset that promotes the teaching-learning process. Teachers and students are both consumers and producers of knowledge, and, therefore, cannot be alienated and/ or underestimated. This research unveils that most of the teachers' disengagement stems from the attitudes of those in higher positions who patronize middle school teachers. Teachers' damaged affect accounts for the teachers' lack of commitment to their profession and their students. According to Arnold (1999: 2) "In the presence of overly negative emotions such as anxiety, fear, stress, anger or depression, our optimal learning potential may be compromised". Conversely, when teachers have overly unfavorable attitudes and emotions that teaching and thinking styles damaged beyond repair and their teaching potential may be compromised altogether. We recommend urgently that teachers' affect grievances be accommodated to help them be more efficient in whatever they do in the classrooms. As a final comment, teachers are clearly significantly sensitive to their duties and responsibilities provided that no deliberate sense of injustice is imposed on them.

### **6.1.3 Teachers' Motivation**

Simply put, motivation refers to what urges living organisms to act in order to accommodate a need of some sort. Pintrich and Schunk (2002, cited in Lins 2005:3) define motivation as "the process whereby goal-directed activity is instigated and sustained". The present work indicates that teachers come into the teaching profession: (1) to compensate their own need of not been adequately formally educated, (2) to emulate an excellent teacher and/ or share an enjoyable teaching methodology experience, (3) to contribute to making a difference in the lives of the students "on their watch", and finally (4), to obtain incentives such as a regular salary, promotions, pension, medical insurance, etc. A priori, teachers appear to be intrinsically and extrinsically motivated to undertake teaching as a career. Unfortunately, they end up demoralized as well as demotivated because of severe contrasts that they cannot tolerate. Despite the pay raise and the back pay, teachers still feel demotivated because in essence as the French put it *plus ça change, plus*

*c'est la même chose*<sup>3</sup>. Classrooms are still overcrowded, schedules even more busy, tasks all the more burdensome, and purchase power still low. Besides, the balance between what teachers represent (psychologically and socio-professionally), what they possess (instruction materials, teaching aids, teaching facilities such as language laboratories, etc.), and what is required of them of to do (closing the achievement gap) frequently tips.

This investigation points out that middle school teachers of English are demoralized and demotivated. Owing to their pivotal roles, teachers need a prompt intervention to save them from deskilling through providing with innovative materials and efficient training, from burnout thanks to supportive socio-psychological programs, from demotivation by meaningfully involving them in decision making, from demoralization through addressing their grievances, and from disengagement by persuading them that they are the linchpin of the teaching-learning process. Vibrant school climate and school culture that celebrate hard work, conscientiousness, cooperation, and discipline would certainly add to teachers' motivation to work efficiently even though they lack resources and incentives. Teachers' feelings that they are ancillary in comparison with students or higher officials need to be eradicated by integrating them in the governance of the school, development of curriculums, and sustaining discipline, and other such important issues. Teachers' motivation can be promoted by creating a healthy and positive relationship with the school administration and more particularly inspectors. Finally, students need to be made aware that discipline and deference vis-à-vis their teachers are not gratuitous favors; teachers are the key to the students' success and happiness.

#### **6.1.4 Teachers' Self-Esteem**

Self-esteem refers to the individual self-image and self-worth. It may seem paradoxical to acknowledge that teachers recognize that teaching may be a noble profession as it minimizes learners' bad habits and maximizes good habits in them,

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<sup>3</sup> The more things change, the more they remain the same (our own translation).

but at the same time teaching could be degrading in the long run. This attitude is sustained by 60% of the questionnaire respondents who believe that their profession is noble but eventually degrading. Besides, most teachers do not feel excited by the dynamics of their profession, instead the majority of the teachers who have responded to our questionnaire in (namely, 42.85%) believe that the middle school instructional materials make them feel entrapped by the drudgery of the way these textbooks have been conceived and/ or designed. Yet another concern that clearly troubles middle school teachers of English is the lengthy content and the limited time. The findings of our questionnaire disclose that the majority of the surveyed middle school teachers of English (estimated at 65.71%) report that their major concern is the lengthy syllabuses and the relatively short time available to meet the deadline (i.e., 28 week-school year). Large class size and lack of incentives as well as possibilities of promotion have all chipped away at the teachers' self-esteem.

The centrality of teachers in the prosperity of the nation is self-evident; teachers represent the second most influential factor after learners' biological make-up. It is unfortunate to know that since the 1990s, teachers and teachers' moral character have become the center of pathetic jokes. Teachers have been characterized as greedy for more money, lazy, poor and deserving alms, stingy, untidy, and weak. That clearly demonstrates how low the teachers' social standing has proved to be. Many teachers feel ashamed to identify themselves as such or associate with other teachers for fear of being ostracized. The stigma<sup>4</sup> attached to being a teacher has led a considerable number of teachers to change profession; some have tried oil companies (both national and foreign); some have been lured by emigration, and some others have taken up agriculture and cattle-related investments. This research is an outcry over the miserable situation wherein teachers seem to constantly endure. A teachers' social rehabilitation program need to be launched immediately to reach out for teachers and safeguard them from alienation. As a final analysis, 21st century societies and nations cannot afford the risks of losing competent teachers.

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<sup>4</sup> From a pure social perspectives teachers refer to miser, stingy, and all-time complaining individuals. This stigma is still popular in the collective mind.

### 6.1.5 Teachers' Attitudes

The present work has on various occasions unveiled that teachers, at least those who responded to the various questionnaires, harbor unfavorable attitudes vis-à-vis their socio-professional workplace and media used thereof. Teachers' negative attitudes whether consciously or unconsciously frustrate teachers' innovative approaches to teaching and to any other innovations for that matter. Thus, they create a problematic situation: They cannot lead their students to optimal learning because they themselves are unable to overcome their prejudices. Brookfield (2006: 15) observes "Sometimes it is not learning new content or skills students resist but the style in which these are taught". The findings of one of the questionnaires for teachers point out those teachers, regardless of gender, nurse negative attitudes toward male students. Both female and male teachers seem to nurse negative attitudes toward male students. 85.29% of the respondents believe that male students are noisy, rude, disruptive, careless, restless, untidy, rebellious, lazy, and selfish. 23.52% of the respondents think that male students are hardworking, intelligent, perseverant, energetic, cooperative, helpful, and caring. Whereas, only 11.76% of the surveyed teachers believe male students to be quiet, polite, obedient, thoughtful, calm, tidy, law-abiding, and kind.

Unlike male student population, female student population enjoys favorable attitudes according to the results of this study. In fact, 79.41% of the middle school teachers of English perceive that female students as quite, polite, obedient, thoughtful, calm, tidy, law-abiding, and kind. Yet another 11.77% consider female students to be hardworking, intelligent, perseverant, energetic, cooperative, helpful, and caring. Only 8.82% of the surveyed teacher nurse negative attitudes toward female students who are qualified as noisy, rude, disruptive, careless, restless, untidy, rebellious, lazy, and selfish. These figure are even more staggering if we bear in mind that all the Algerian middle school classes are overcrowded and made up of mixed-gender, mixed-ability, and even mixed-age (repetition of the year allowed for fear of drop-out) classes. This situation appears challenging for teachers as they appreciate half of the class (namely, female population) and despise the other half (*viz.*, male population). Yet another factor that causes frustration is that both teachers and

students interact in little space and time. Teacher-student rate of interaction is of the order of 1 minute 42 seconds in a space of 1.25 square meters. In such an environment, disruptive behavior reduces chances of optimal learning and the prevalence of negative attitudes.

This investigation reveals that the surveyed middle school teachers of English have developed unfavorable attitudes toward the instructional materials. Only one third of the surveyed population (estimated at 28.57%) appears to be at the other end of the spectrum and thinks that the MNE-proposed textbooks (i.e., *SOE* Books 1+2+3 and *OTM* Book 4) make them feel impassioned by the dynamics involved in the conception and/ or design. What is more, the overwhelming majority (estimated at 74.28 %) of the surveyed Algerian middle school teachers of English report that most of the FL linguistic and socio-cultural input that students receive derives from teachers' quality teaching rather from textbook quality (11.42 %) and from extra-curricular activities (14.28 %) such as using dictionaries, watching movies, and listening to songs. As it can be noted the teachers in question do not demonstrate enthusiasm and motivation to implement the MNE-proposed textbooks. Rather, they feel trapped by the drudgery and excessive pedagogical demands of the syllabus. A significant majority of the teachers (namely, 48.57 %) expresses their doubt as to whether they feel free to introduce innovation in their classrooms. If this figure is coupled with those 14.28 % of the respondents who feel that the middle school deprive them of being innovative, the result would lead us to claim that the predominant percentage of teachers feel "enslaved" by the textbooks.

Teacher-inspector relationship is frequently characterized by superior-subordinate attitudes. As a matter of fact, both stakeholders have high expectations that are rather not commensurate with the sheer reality. On the one hand, inspectors perceive teachers, especially those university-educated novice teachers, as lacking the expertise and skill to instruct middle school constituencies. According to our unstructured interviews of inspectors, teachers appear to be in disorderly, clumsy, and unable to comply with the standards of optimal teaching and learning. On the other hand, teachers do not seem to perceive their inspectors in favorable light: The latter are

overbearing, demanding, and lack empathy. The findings of our investigation disclose that 82.35% of the middle school teachers of English express the wish to deal with open-minded, compassionate, and understanding inspectors rather than to deal with overbearing and stick-to-the rule inspectors. Also, 73.52% of the teachers report to need to be advised by the inspectors instead of being criticized all the time. A slight figure, estimated at 58.82% of the surveyed teachers, discloses that they need to feel at ease with the inspectors' visit instead of the feeling of intimidation that seems to characterize the official visits of the inspectors. Amazingly, the unannounced inspectors' visit does not appear to affect teachers' attitudes as only 29.41% report that they need to know beforehand of the inspectors' visit. As a final note, as long as as inspectors inspire safety and aspire teachers to attain their full potential, unannounced visits are most welcome.

Official periodic inspectors-teachers meetings are usually referred to as *seminars* ‘‘ملتقيات’’, and represent a unique opportunities for both stakeholders to connect, share, and exchange ideas and experiences. Unfortunately, seminars are constantly held but with little benefits for most teachers, all while as virtually all the year seminars seem to calqued in pattern. Teacher-teacher interactions are limited; teacher-inspector interactions are controlled by face-saving attitudes; inspector-teachers interactions are domineering, and little innovation is introduced. Besides, the themes of the seminars are authoritatively selected and imposed by inspectors, which accommodate inspectors' needs after all. It seems that teachers are only occasionally consulted as to their needs, the way to manage seminars, and the recommendations that need be implemented as well as evaluated in the next seminars. It is noteworthy to acknowledge that seminars are discrete and linear in nature, and therefore, lack evaluation and future planning, which eventually denigrate the efficiency of the inspectors and compromises the utility of these official gatherings. The ultimate goal of the seminars ought to be to assist middle school teachers of English develop professionally, i.e., to become reflective, skillful, and expert teachers. Bensemmane (2001: 40): discusses in the following lines how Algerian teachers develop professionally:

How do teachers develop professionally in Algeria? It is usually through in-service training, which involves workshops, arranged fairly regularly, by higher institutions, (like the Ministry of Education), for experienced and less experienced teachers. In these meetings, there is traditionally an inspector (or occasionally a teacher-trainer), who hands over his experience (a new teaching or testing procedure, or presents a new course book) to teachers who are expected to implement them with their classes. But these workshops tend to put the teacher in a position of 'receiver' with little involvement on his part. Teachers have little opportunity to name the issues they wish to investigate, or to raise and reflect on problems, questions that they have themselves encountered. Could we say, then, that these meetings help teachers grow professionally?

We nurse a quiet hope that this thesis provides some recommendations that attempt to improve teachers' perceptions and optimize their attitudes. Teachers ought to be meaningfully engaged in the planning, preparation, and implementation of the *seminars*. What is more, they need to be empowered by enabling them to participate in decision-making and craft objectives of and recommendations for the upcoming seminars.

## **6.2 Implications on the Teaching Methodology**

A plethora of literature has accumulated over the last decade that corroborates the following assertion: Teachers mirror and replicate the way that they themselves have been taught in the different school phases. No wonder, thus, that these traditional and eroded teaching methodologies persisted in many classes, which compromise the success of school reform in the long run, and stubbornly consecrate boredom and inefficiency. Consequently, we have every reason to maximize the importance of rethinking teachers' approach to their own perceptions of their teaching methodology. This section seeks to come to the assistance of an otherwise confused community of the Algerian middle school teachers of English by providing incisive insights to improve their teaching styles and classroom practices.

### **6.2.1 Teachers' Training and Education Programs**

Ongoing teacher education and training should be an integral part of the seminars, in-service conferences, and formative training periods (i.e., *stages de formation* and *تربصات تكوينية*). This investigation reveals that teachers' teaching expertise originates from their own try-and-error, hands-on experience rather than from their former education and actual training. This assumption is sustained by 54.28% of the middle school respondents who openly claim that their teaching style derives from their teaching experience. The time allotted to formative pre-service education is yet another crucial factor, especially as the middle school teachers in their majority (estimated at 65.71%) seem to agree upon the (at least) four-year teacher training course program. The bias of the proposed course programs needs to be toward practice instead of theory, this is supported by 22.85 % of the respondents who seem to have ambivalent attitude as they report that the training need not really be biased to theory while 97.14% declare in favor of training programs that are biased to practice more than to theory. The ultimate goal of the pre-service course programs in question appears to be reflected in the attitude of the surveyed teachers in their majority (i.e., 91.42%) to make training qualified teacher the primary goal of any teacher training program.

### **6.2.2 Teacher Research**

Teachers are traditionally conceived as course implementers in that they are required to instruct students from proposed materials that are generally teacher-proof. Research has been left for academics who investigate different classroom facets and challenges. This separation engendered a serious pitfall: Outsiders are in charge of change in classroom practices. Recent tendencies view teachers as potential researchers who can bring about significant contribution to a better understanding of the classroom dynamics. Different terms are utilized interchangeably to designate this perspective: Teacher Research (TR), Action Research (AR), and Reflective Teaching (RT). Simply put, TR refers to teachers being active researchers of teaching-related issues. Lankshear and Knobel (2004: 4) echo "It is widely agreed that research involves teachers researching their own classrooms- with or without collaborative support of other teachers". In more concrete terms, Richards and Lockhart (1996: 12)

define TR as follows: “teacher-initiated classroom investigation which seeks to increase the teacher’s understanding of classroom teaching and learning and to bring about change in classroom practices”. Differently stated, TR differs from academic research in that it is initiated by individual teachers who aim to problem solve concrete classroom challenges.

It is widely accepted among scholars that TR may yield positive results because of the many advantages it advances. Partin (2009: 325) outlines the various credits of TR “Action Research can serve several purposes simultaneously: professional development, curriculum development, school improvement, and self-reflection. It can also give teachers confidence in the quality of their classroom decisions”. Despite these advantages of TR, a number of teachers may not be ready to seize the opportunity to solve their own classroom challenges, for they lack the expertise and prefer ready-made solutions. Burns (2010: 14) corroborates that “Action is a driving force in the classroom. Teachers are, on the whole, practical people and tend to focus on what needs to be done in the classroom to help their students learn”. Apparently, teachers prefer practical tips and games which help them motivate their students and quickly move from one teaching phase to another smoothly and with ease. According to Richards and Lockhart (*op.cit.*), TR comprises four cycles: planning, action, observation, and reflection. It is incumbent upon inspectors to introduce and encourage teachers to fulfill their new role as researchers in the periodic workshops (aka seminars). A priori, the majority of middle school teachers of English (77.14 %) report that they qualify their inspectors as highly qualified and motivated. Thus, inspectors need to live up to those expectations.

### **6.3 Implications on Textbook Use**

The findings of the current work affirm that the surveyed middle school teachers of English nurse negative attitudes toward the MNE-proposed materials. The data collected in the various questionnaire speak for themselves : 42.28 % of the respondents admit that **SOE** series and **OTM** are their primary source of input ; 28.57 % of the surveyed population believes that the instructional materials contain relevant

rubrics ; 37.14 % of the surveyed teachers recognize that they can engage and induce their students' interest using the proposed textbooks ; 31.42 % of the respondents believe that the selection of the linguistic and sociolinguistic syllabus is appropriate ; 31.42 % of the targeted population think that the linguistic syllabus is in fact graded ; 37.14 % of the surveyed middle school teachers of English think that the content is easy to implement ; 40 % state that *SOE* series and *OTM* do allow much room for creativity and innovation; 40 % of the teachers in question think that the objectives of CBLT and *SOE* series and *OTM* are compatible ; 31.42 % of the surveyed teachers agree with the view that *SOE* series and *OTM* are complimentary ; 40 % of the respondents believe that these textbooks are user-friendly; 17.14 % of them think that the textbooks are well laid-out, and 34.28 % of the interviewed teachers think that the textbooks currently in use in their classrooms are graphically attractive.

These dazzling low figures prove that the middle school teachers of English definitely perceive the instructional materials in unfavorable light. This negative attitude may be an outcome of the rush-to-print decision as well as the absence of a well-planned training that targets to explain how to use effectively the textbooks and make them teacher-friendly. Furthermore, the tenets of CBLT need be elicited and outlined to the already disenchanted teaching population even prior the official implementation. The components of the package need not only contain the textbooks but also the TG, workbook, testing guide, and the necessary audio-visuals. It was counter-intuitive to introduce the textbooks without TG; the latter would guide teachers smoothly the teaching-learning process and the intricacies of instruction. TG should not teacher-proof in that teachers find everything ready-made for them, and neither should TG be mere sketches of the files. Rather, TG authors should balance what teachers need to know and allow for elbow room for teachers' personal contribution. This investigation unveils that lengthy syllabuses represent a major concern for teachers, and therefore, we recommend a revision of the files. Longer files turn out to be too demanding and cause disinterest and boredom in the long run.

#### **6.4 Implications on In-Service Professionalism**

Teachers need not stop from ameliorating their teaching skills, practical knowledge, and updating their know-how. The frustrating socio-professional ought not to be a

safe haven for reluctant teachers to undertake a lifelong teacher education and training. Teacher need to be aware that the best teacher researcher is the classroom teacher himself/ herself. This section is written for that purpose: Encourage teachers to research and solve their own problems.

#### **6.4.1 Inter-Teachers Interactions**

It would appear of significant interest to note that both female and male teachers nurture positive attitudes toward one another. The present academic work discloses that 70.58% of female teachers report that male teachers are dedicated, helpful, caring, responsible, skillful, understanding, supportive, and fair against 29.42% who perceive male teachers as authoritarian, firm, selfish, reluctant to help, pompous, always behind schedule, and sexist. As for male teachers, 64.70% of them believe that female teachers are devoted to their job, helpful, caring, motivated, skillful, updated, resourceful, and tidy. This attitude is not shared only by 29.30 % who think that female teachers are lax, lazy, careless, uncooperative, selfish, always behind schedule, and demotivated. With such highly favorable attitudes, in-school cooperation between teachers of both sexes does not seem to pose any challenge. Administration and inspectors should urge teachers for *peer coaching* as an efficient strategy to share experience, minimize misunderstanding, and maximize collaboration. Peer coaching need not only concern one school, instead it needs to be extended across schools to level up experience. As a final comment, peer coaching should be carried out in a professional way in which reports and recommendations are addressed to all stakeholders (teachers, headteachers, inspectors, and board of education).

#### **Conclusion**

This section is prompted by an optimistic hope that the many years and readings undertaken to complete this thesis would benefit all stakeholders (i.e., curriculum developers, headteachers, inspectors, teachers, parents, and students). We have attempted to present teachers' attitudes and their impact on the teaching-learning process in a comprehensive framework so that the subtle factors would enable potential readers (researchers, students, and library users) perceive how the intricate

interplay of the factors in question would ultimately either enhance or frustrate English language teaching to beginners, where English is the second foreign language in the Algerian curriculum. The *normative analysis* (i.e., the analysis of teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and values) that we provide thanks to this study furnishes interesting, incisive insights on teachers' emotional aspects and how these have guided them (namely, teachers) in their daily classroom practices. This dissertation, therefore, develops from a powerful claim: namely that the attitudes of the teachers are omnipresent and exert an overriding influence on teachers' perceptions and decision-making. By understanding the dynamics of teachers' attitudes, much wisdom on empowering teachers would only culminate in closing students' achievement gap, which is dauntingly widening. And, it would help the latter cope with the incessant political, economic, social, and educational demands of the 21st c. For better or worse, teachers and their attitudes, beliefs and values were, are, and will be at the heart of any significant change, school reform, and prosperity.

## **Omnibus Recommendations**

## **OMNIBUS RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Effective education schools that provide effective teaching programs is a sure way to produce effective teachers in the workplace.
2. Effective education schools should be so designed to provide professional and pastoral support to well-selected student teachers.
3. Effective education schools should devote a fair amount of its time to make student teachers acquainted with both theoretical and practical aspects of teaching methodologies.
4. Effective education schools should keep student teachers, graduated teachers, and in-service teachers in contact through distance learning programs, regular seminars and workshops.
5. Effective teaching programs ought to promote student teachers' autonomy, background knowledge, self-esteem, creative talents, intellectual growth, emotional intelligence, decision making, risk-taking, and positive mindsets.
6. Effective teaching programs ought to assist student teachers to discover their potential, learning styles, brain dominance, teaching strategies, thinking styles, attitudes, beliefs, and values about themselves, their students, school contexts, and their profession.
7. Effective teaching programs ought to empower student teachers with the necessary teaching skills, effective use of school inputs/ resources.

8. Effective teaching programs ought to be flexible so as not to induce deskilling and/ or burnout in the workplace.
9. Effective teaching programs ought to assist teachers view their students as intelligent, thinking, thoughtful, caring, learning, and creative creatures.
10. Effective teaching programs ought not to idealize the teaching workplace and therefore ought to prepare student teachers to spot emotionally-troubled students and engage them purposefully in the teaching-learning process.
11. The teaching contexts decision-makers (schools and education directorates) need to prepare (novice or otherwise) teachers for an engaging, purposeful career.
12. The teaching contexts decision-makers need to reinforce teachers' job satisfaction, emotional understanding and labor, and commitment to their community as well as institution and their welfare.
13. The teaching contexts decision-makers need to relieve teachers of their occupational stress by providing professional and pastoral care all the more reducing conflicts over trivial matters.
14. The teaching contexts decision-makers need to create a positive atmosphere where all stakeholders (teachers, students, parents, principals, and others) interact for the betterment of the teaching-learning process.
15. The teaching contexts need decision-makers to address teachers' and students' disruptive behaviors in a manner that does not offend both parties' self-esteem and attitudes.

16. The teaching contexts need to encourage both teachers and students through packages of incentives (pecuniary and otherwise) to promote achievement.

## **General Conclusion**

## General Conclusion

Many pretend to come to defend teachers with a limitless number of “how-to-teach” theories, books, and handbooks. Many more keep blaming teachers’ inefficiency to bring about the desperately required change. Very few have attempted, however, to conduct serious research to discover what motivates and/ or hinders teachers’ soft and hard skills in their daily practices. For so long, a plethora of approaches, methods, and techniques were imposed on teachers, and ironically, called teacher-centered. Basically, teachers’ prerogatives were only central as far as these approaches and methods were concerned. Consequently, teachers’ roles and importance witnessed a dramatic setback because of the inherent deficiencies in the aforementioned approaches and methods. The more learners gained ground, the more teachers lost much of it, and the more they became ancillary. This deplorable situation caused an awkward feeling that palled teachers’ self-esteem, which eventually affected deeply their very existence and roles in their respective societies.

This work set a clear objective from the very onset: investigate the middle school English teachers’ attitude especially after the implementation of a new series of English textbooks. The latter were developed along new lines\_ Competency-Based Approach (CBA). The adoption of the new English teaching program came as result of a reshuffling and remodeling of the pre-tertiary school structure and course content. This change, either in structure or course program, usually comes to be referred to *school reform*. One common denominator in the Algerian school context is the brusque and often violent breach with previous practices. The breach is such as it often causes more perplexity than reassurance. The teaching community is frequently taken off-guard to such an extent that school reforms and/ or restructuring appears to be counter-productive. Neither teachers nor students seem a priori to absorb the essence of the change put forward so prematurely and awkwardly implemented that the sustainability of the programs is jeopardized in the long run.

The Middle school English teaching community's attitudes toward the proposed program is at the fulcrum of our present study. The success or failure of any course of study depends primarily on the positive attitudes, beliefs, dispositions, readiness and ability of the teachers to be an efficient part in the elaboration as well as implementation of such programs. The teachers' involvement needs to be complete and welcomed all along and at every stage. If at any stage, the teachers' involvement wanes, there grows a colony of parasites: mistrust, negative attitudes, and doubt in the viability of the course program, which will eventually lead teachers' cooperation to falter. For decades, a pathetic, obsessional interest in the learners' cognitive and emotional psyche came at the fore once the fixation with teaching approaches and methods came to a halt as they proved their fallibility, and all this at the detriment of the teachers' affective, cognitive, and behavioral aspects. The central line in our investigation has therefore been the emergence of the teachers' attitudinal stances as a result of the implementation of CBA-designed textbooks.

Throughout this study, we have attempted to verify the middle school English teachers' cautious reticence and inability to fully implement the series of textbooks. It may seem paradoxical and even ironical to mention that all that we know about our teachers is very little. Apart from certain factual socio-professional aspects (such as names, social status, graduation, payroll, and licensure, etc.), a great deal of their cognitive and emotional aspects is practically ignored. The middle school English textbooks (*Spotlight on English* 1, 2, 3 and *On the Move*) were a blessing in disguise: They demonstrated how the middle school English teachers desperately try to grab with an instructional material that surpasses their knowledge and practice. It is epiphanical for most surveyed teachers to come to realize how little they know about their own cognitive and emotional aspects, how little they know about their socio-professional context, and how little they know about their students. Most teachers' felt a fresh puff of air when they received the new album-like textbooks ; they reificated the contents, and rushed optimistically to implement an instruction to an adolescent population still struggling with literacy in their mother tongue let alone in a foreign language !

It should be acknowledged right from the onset that it is out of the scope of this study to manipulate variables to observe behavioral changes of the sample; instead it targets to disclose the nature of teachers' attitudes and the underlying reasons thereof, which appear to overlap at times and correlate at others. Hence, this study sits comfortably with the descriptive-interpretive methodology of research. At the descriptive level, it attempts to provide in a comprehensive description of the EFL contexts, profile of the MS teacher of English. Furthermore, it tries to elicit the nature of the middle school English textbooks (*SOE 1, 2, and 3* and *OTM Book 4*), the competency-based approach to foreign language teaching, as well as the challenges posed to the teachers in terms of objectives, methods, teacher guide, activities, content, projects, etc. The focus on these issues will surely pave the way to the second level of the study (namely, the interpretive level). This perspective aims at providing an *emic*<sup>1</sup> and *etic*<sup>2</sup> understanding of the middle school English teachers' attitudes vis-à-vis their teaching context and instructional materials (textbooks, workbooks, and realia, etc.). This aspect of inquiry is defined within the framework provided by educational research into the teachers' attitudes, beliefs, value systems and the fashion whereby these systems in question shape the teachers' instructional decisions and quality.

The present thesis outlines three hypotheses that touch upon three aspects that define the EFL teaching in Algerian middle schools. The first hypothesis assumes that teachers are more committed to their job once they are directly and deliberately involved in the management and decision making concerning the development of curriculums, textbook writing, production of audio-visuals, and planning of workshops that accommodate their expectations. The second hypothesis supposes that teachers' attitudes become more favorable according to the degree of the betterment of their socio-professional conditions: better salaries, less busy schedules, less crowded classes, and fairer scheduling of English sessions. The third hypothesis attempts to account for the ways to empower teachers and ameliorate their attitudes and perceptions. Being aware of the dynamics of their attitudes, teachers will have

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<sup>1</sup> Insider (teachers, inspectors, and headteachers, etc.)

<sup>2</sup> Outsider (researchers, specialists, and politicians, etc.)

the ability to suppress negative attitudes and capitalize on positive attitudes. Research tools such as questionnaires and unstructured interviews have been instrumental to the verification of the hypotheses.

The current research evolves from a powerful claim: namely, that is the teaching-learning process has a firm attitudinal basis, which defines significantly teachers-students and teachers-EFL contextual environment effective interaction and task engagement. Teachers have long been ignored, and their attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and values usually taken for granted. This deliberate marginalization has engendered feelings of frustration and anger, which affected teachers' attitudes toward their contextual environment inasmuch as their commitment and devotion waned in accordance. The imprint of teachers' negative attitudes on students' achievement gap constantly widens in accordance. Teachers' grievances, which have accumulated over the years and because of callous policies, have never been properly accommodated. Thus, a fundamental assumption sums up the situation: *Learning may not properly occur without addressing and redressing teachers' grievances.* To perform at the peak of their potential, teachers' need to be aware of and attempt to control those negative attitudes. Besides, the other stakeholders (*viz.*, politicians, curriculum developers, textbook writers, headteachers, inspectors, and parents) ought to come to the assistance of an otherwise disenchanting teachers.

The findings of the investigation unveil that the middle school teachers of English nurture negative attitudes toward four major challenges: management-related challenges, contextual-related challenges, teaching profession-related challenges, and working relationships-related challenges. Management-related challenges, which include teacher education and training programs, textbook design and writing, and organization of pedagogic activities, have affected teachers' unfavorable attitudes toward their very existence and roles in the teaching-learning process. Contextual challenges, such as old facilities, busy schedules, and especially class size, have sparked a record number of teachers' flurried grievances and negative attitudes. Teaching-related challenges (*viz.*, the teachability of the self-contained textbooks,) have proved to frustrate teachers' attempt to attain the set objectives. As for the working relationships-related challenges, teachers seem to have developed

unfavorable attitudes vis-à-vis the tense relations with other stakeholders (mainly inspectors and male students), limited prospects for promotion, and pecuniary incentives.

The textbooks appear esthetically more attractive especially as they have been printed on quality paper according to up-to-date technology. As for the linguistic and sociolinguistic content, it can be viewed as rich, varied and colorful though requiring, at all likelihood, great energy and longer school time to implement. The syllabus seems to be too condensed and pedagogically challenging for a program that requires at least some fifteen hundred hours instead of the current eighty-one hours a year. Besides, the textbook package contains no more than the textbooks themselves, which are supposedly taken to be self-contained curriculums. Neither audio-visual supports, nor the teacher's guide/manual, nor test construction guide have been made available for the teachers as yet. Last but not least, the teachers appear to be overloaded and overworked with new daunting pedagogical tasks such as projects and group-work.

At the fulcra of this uncomfortable situation is the teachers' aggravated sense of frustration helplessness, and hopelessness, which culminated into deep-rooted, tacit, and negative attitudes. These crippling attitudes have left the teachers with little elbow room to function properly in the workplace. A priori, the cumulative paucity of knowledge on the teachers' cognitive and emotional aspects may account for the teachers' sense of inefficiency and alienation. Comprehensive and sustainable teacher training and education programs, however, seem to be desperate remedies for desperate measures in a world which has proved itself market-driven, and in a society which constantly tends to be information focused. Therefore, teachers need to be equipped not only with the necessary hard skills (i.e., learned knowledge and expertise), but also with the 21 century survival (soft) skills: leadership, creativity, empathy, positive mind-sets, critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and adaptability.

These daunting results prove that the hypotheses, which were previously couched in the *General Introduction*, are true and valid. As far as teacher education and training programs are concerned, they are viewed by the solid majority of the surveyed teachers as a key to teachers' success in accommodating classroom challenges particularly when these programs are practice-oriented and practice-focused. The time allotted to the aforementioned programs needs to be sufficient to output efficient and knowledgeable teachers. Furthermore, top-down and bottom-up consultations prior to any school reforms or textbook innovation necessitate teachers' direct and meaningful contribution and involvement. Alienating teachers from the processes of school change (namely, innovation and/ or reform) appears to aggravate their sense of injustice and intimidation and eventually chips away at their *amour propre* (otherwise psychologically known as self-esteem). Last but not least, teaching profession needs to be officially rehabilitated: Teachers ought to feel that their profession is worthy; it provides them with promotion opportunities, and they should be convinced that it is financially rewarding.

Optimism to implement the content of the middle school English textbooks soon proved to be a frustrating experience. Long files (each file needs to be covered in eleven hours!<sup>3</sup>), rich and varied vocabulary, complex grammatical structures, phonological rules shown with arrows instead of native speakers' recorded tapes, inauthentic conversations, gender-biased situations, challenging topics not in the students' immediate context, out-of-context drawings, and worse still a great deal of printing and pedagogical flaws, which led to the emergence of what might be called *tacit negative attitudes*. The surveyed teachers' first impressions of the textbooks were almost always those of awe and acceptance if compared with previous textbooks. The more insights they received from an expert, the more they realized that at the back of their heads something wrong existed in the textbooks. The epiphanical moment manifests itself clearly in front of their eyes - their inefficiency to produce efficient FL communicators at a larger scale may be directly connected to those hidden factors (i.e., lack of professional training, absence of counseling, denigration

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<sup>3</sup> A simple calculation reveals that a file necessitates one month to be covered; it is an official requirement

of their cognitive and emotional dimensions, and their own pre-service as well as in-service attitudes, beliefs, and dispositions).

No serious research could possibly claim to be comprehensive and encompassing all the perspectives from which an academic “issue” is to be handled. Further research by other scholars is clearly an absolute necessity and never a luxury. We urge other willing researchers to undertake further investigation on teachers. We seize the opportunity to remind that teachers as an “issue” of investigation remains as yet significantly underexplored. The first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was primarily concerned with developing teaching methodologies, and for that particular reason it was termed the age of methodologies. The second half of the previous century witnessed an upsurge of interest in learners and their psychological and sociological aspects. Inversely, teachers appeared to receive little attention and interest despite the fact that they are the second most influential factor next to learners’ biological make-up. Issues such as teachers’ attitudes, beliefs, cognition, commitment, emotions, and values need be researched and codified in light of new the discoveries in other disciplines as varied as anthropology, cognitive sciences, neuroscience, pedagogy, psychology, social psychology, and sociology.

As a final comment, despite its status of positive bilingualism, English teaching in Algeria is still subjugated to an unaccounted-for *ethnocentrism*. Our middle school English textbooks have been printed in better quality paper, according to the latest technology, and included up-to-date content. Nonetheless, they still have not been supervised by expert native speakers, which might denigrate the value of our instruction. Our teachers should be our pride and joy, and therefore, they need to be better consulted, counseled, trained and educated. The real investment ought to be in qualified teachers whose absence as yet has caused a terrific gap in our literate versus illiterate population- many are functionally illiterate though they have received formal schooling. In a decade or two, official reports read that our oil reserves will hardly be able to pay for our welfare; the only one thing that guarantees our survival in the 21 century is *quality teaching* that we provide for our posterity. The kind of teaching that undertakes to promote our children’s character, integrity, and creativity. The world

has drastically changed in the Third Millenium, and so should we. Finally, we nurture a quiet wish that other willing researchers take up the issue of teachers' attitudes to expound it into new horizons.

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# Appendix

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## Questionnaire for The Teachers

*Dear Fellow Teachers,*

*I am currently enrolled in a PhD study that purports itself to lead ‘Investigating Teachers’ Attitudes Toward the Adequacy of Teacher Training Programs and CBA-Related Teaching Materials’. My fundamental line of argument is that teachers’ positive interaction with their socio-professional environment and their meaningful engagement in the teaching-learning process depend heavily upon the positive attitudes that they nurse vis-à-vis themselves and their roles as stakeholder educators. Therefore, I intend to address the pertinent issues (namely, professional, psychological, and social) which have cropped up from the implementation of the new school reforms as well as the introduction of middle school textbooks series (**Spotlight on English** 1,2,3 and **On the Move**) and their impact on the middle school EFL teachers’ attitudinal perspectives.*

*This questionnaire is constructed with the expectation that it may collect verifiable data so as to describe as accurately as possible the psychological bases of the teachers’ interaction with their socio-professional environment and the aforementioned instructional materials.*

*You are kindly requested to join in so as your contribution will lay bases for an in-depth understanding of the teachers’ cognitive, emotional, psychological, professional, and social aspects and how these affect classroom practices. It should be also noted that I have taken every precaution to design a questionnaire that honors confidentiality and anonymity of the participants.*

*I am genuinely appreciative.*

Fill out the form below with information about you.

1. **Gender** : Female Teacher : \_\_\_\_\_ Male Teacher : \_\_\_\_\_

2. **Pre-teaching study institute** :

ITE : \_\_\_\_\_

University : \_\_\_\_\_

3. **Pre-service training period** :

2 yy  3yy  4yy : \_\_\_\_\_

4. **Your mother tongue is** :

Arabic : \_\_\_\_\_

Berber : \_\_\_\_\_

Other (Specify) : \_\_\_\_\_

5. **The variety of English you use is :**

Received Pronounced/BBC English : \_\_\_\_ American English : \_\_\_\_ A Combination of both : \_\_\_\_

6. **The skill you like most to teach is :**

Listening : \_\_\_\_ Reading : \_\_\_\_ Speaking : \_\_\_\_ Writing : \_\_\_\_

7. **You like to read :**

EFL journals : \_\_ EFL Reference Books : \_\_ Online Articles : \_\_ Novels : \_\_

<b>Part One</b> : The Instructional Materials
-----------------------------------------------

**Division A** : The Textbook Series

1) Middle school English textbook series are esthetically appealing :

Yes                      No                      Not Really

2) Middle School English textbook series are well laid-out :

Yes                      No                      Not Really

3) Middle school English textbook series are easy to use :

Yes                      No                      Not Really

4) Middle school English textbook series are complimentary :

Yes                      No                      Not Really

5) Middle school English textbook series and CBA objectives are compatible :

Yes                      No                      Not Really

**Division B** : Teaching Methodology

6) Middle school English textbook series give you *elbow room* for innovation :

Yes                      No                      Not Really

7) Middle school English textbook series are easy to implement :

Yes                      No                      Not Really

8) Middle school English linguistic content (grammar, and lexis, etc.) is well graded :

Yes                      No                      Not Really

9) Middle school English linguistic content is appropriately selected :

Yes                      No                      Not Really

10) Middle school textbook series help you engage your students' interest :

Yes                      No                      Not Really

11) Middle school English textbook series make provisions for relevant rubrics :

Yes                      No                      Not Really

12) Middle school English textbook series are your primary source of input :

Yes                      No                      Not Really

<b>Part Two</b> Teachers' Attitudinal Aspects
-----------------------------------------------

**Division A** : English Language

13) English is included in the Algerian curriculum because UK is geographically close to our country :

Yes                      No                      Not Really

14) English is included in the Algerian curriculum because it is the language of technology and science :

Yes                      No                      Not Really

15) English is included in the Algerian curriculum because it is an international language used for global issues (global warming, H1N1, terrorism, and trade, etc.)



- 24) Teaching seems to be a:
- a. Lonely profession as teachers work alone ;
  - b. Group profession as teachers work together as a team ;
  - c. Both.
- 25) The primary purpose of teaching and the basis upon which teachers should be evaluated is :
- a. Good teachers make good students ;
  - b. Good students make good teachers ;
  - c. Good textbooks make good teachers and students.
- 26) The major agent in education is the :
- a. Teachers ;
  - b. Students ;
  - c. Textbooks.
- 27) The largest impact on students' achievement comes from :
- a. Small class size ;
  - b. Students' abilities ;
  - c. Teacher quality.
- 28) Much of the input that the students receive comes from :
- a. The textbooks quality;
  - b. The teachers quality;
  - c. Dictionaries, movies, and songs.
- 29) Your teaching style is the result of your :
- a. Second/ foreign language learning and experience ;

- b. Teaching experience ;
  - c. Pre-service and in-service training.
- 30) Textbooks are deliberately used to increase the students' :
- a. Knowledge of the language ;
  - b. Experience of the language ;
  - c. Both.
- 31) The primary function of middle school English textbooks is to :
- a. Provide practice activities ;
  - b. Provide a structured program for teachers to follow ;
  - c. Information about the language.
- 32) The middle school instructional materials (i.e., English textbooks) make you feel :
- a. Trapped by the drudgery of the conception (i.e., design) ;
  - b. Impassioned by the dynamics involved ;
  - c. Inhibited by the unsurmountable challenges.
- 33) The middle school English instructional materials represent :
- a. The content of the course ;
  - b. The balance of the skills taught ;
  - c. The practice of language (by the students).
- 34) You occasionally feel inhibited by your teaching environment because of the :
- a. Long files and the limited time allowed ;
  - b. Overcrowdedness ;



## Teachers ' Needs Questionnaire

Please do tick ( ) in the space provided any one of the following statements that you feel corresponds to your necessity.

1. I need to be involved in the syllabus design and textbook writing.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. I need to be consulted in the choice of the teaching methodology.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. I need to have a detailed teacher's guide.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. I need to be trained to cope with the new challenges of the classroom.  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. I need to deal with pertinent issues in periodic seminars.  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. I need more pre-service education and training.  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. I need to be advised by the inspector not criticized.  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. I need to feel more at ease with the inspector's visit.  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. I need to know beforehand of the inspector's visit  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. I need to deal with an open-minded, compassionate, and understanding  
inspector not an overbearing and stick -to -the- rule inspector  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. I need to be *empowered* ; I can alter, add or omit any part of the  
textbook if I feel it could frustrate classroom progress.  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. I need to have the freedom to start the files according to my  
classroom \_\_\_\_\_ needs.
13. I need to have a moderate number of students (say, 25/ group)  
\_\_\_\_\_
14. I need to have students classified by their abilities not their

alphabetical \_\_\_\_\_ order.

15. I need to have either all-male or all-female classes rather than  
co-education \_\_\_\_\_ (mixed-gender) \_\_\_\_\_ classes.

16. I need to teach a less busy- scheduled timetables (no more than 18  
hours/ \_\_\_\_\_ week).

17. I need to co-operate with other English teachers in the same school  
to \_\_\_\_\_ develop \_\_\_\_\_ professionally.

18. I need to work either with all-male or all-female colleagues.

19. I need a better insurance coverage.

20. I need to have the opportunity to spend my packed holidays organized  
by \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ Ministry.

21. I need to have a pay raise according to my efforts not according to  
my \_\_\_\_\_ seniority.

22. I need to be honored even if my students are under-achieving.

23. I need to feel able to sleep with clear conscience and not made to  
feel guilty of not doing my job well or not working hard enough with my  
students.

24. I need to be able to express my views freely on the teaching-learning  
process and find receptive ears. \_\_\_\_\_

25. I need to feel *the master* not *the obedient* servant in my teaching com-  
munity.

*Thank you*

## **Questionnaire for Teachers**

Circle (0) any one of the qualities set(s) that you feel correspond(s) to your attitude toward your students, colleagues and school context.

1. *As a general rule, male students are :*

- a. noisy, rude, disruptive, careless, restless, untidy, rebellious, lazy, and selfish
- b. quiet, polite, obedient, thoughtful, calm, tidy, law-abiding, and kind.
- c. hard working, intelligent, perseverant, energetic, cooperative, helpful and caring.

2. *As a general rule, female students are :*

- a. noisy, rude, disruptive, careless, restless, untidy, rebellious, lazy, and selfish.
- b. quiet, polite, obedient, thoughtful, calm, tidy, law-abiding and kind.
- c. hard working, intelligent, perseverant, energetic, cooperative, helpful, and caring.

3. *as a general rule, male colleagues (viz, English teachers) are :*

- a. authoritarian, firm, selfish, reluctant to help, pompous, always behind schedule, and sexist.
- b. dedicated, helpful, caring, responsible, skillful, understanding, supportive, and fair.

4. *As a general rule, female colleagues (viz, English teachers) are :*

- a. lax, lazy, careless, shy, uncooperative, selfish, always behind schedule, and demotivated.
- b. devoted to their job, helpful, caring, motivated, skillful, updated, resourceful, and tidy.

5. *As a general rule, my school context is :*

a. stressful, disheartening, hostile, biased, lax, demotivating, preferential (sexist), judgmental, threatening, undemocratic, and overbearing.

b. accepting, comfortable, inducing, involving, understanding, encouraging, supportive, caring, secure, trusting, warm, nonjudgmental , and nonthreatening.

<b>Important Note :</b>
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*You are supposed to report **the general mood** in your school context even though you enjoy a relatively comfortable position (e.g., you get along with your headmaster. Still, he's overbearing). The idea is to have a better insight into where teachers' attitudes are anchored. Thank you.*

<i>Middle School Textbooks</i>	<i>Head of the Project</i>	<i>Authors/Contributors</i>
Spotlight on English 1	Mrs. Lakria MERAZGA	Ouahiba Guerdjoudj Ouazna Mekaoui Khelifa Achour Hamid Ameziane Farouk Bouhadiba Bouteldja Riche Lounis Tamrabt
Spotlight on English 2	Mrs. Lakria MERAZGA	Dr. Farouk Bouhadiba Mrs Wahiba Guedoudj Mrs Zehour Torche
Spotlight on English 3	Dr. Si-Abderrahmane ARAB	Ameziane, H. Khouas, N. Louadj, K. Riche, B.
On the Move	Dr. Si-Abderrahmane ARAB  Dr. Bouthaldja RICHE	Dr. Si-Abderrahmane Arab  Dr. Bouthaldja Riche

<i>Middle School Textbooks</i>	<i>Size</i>	<i>Number of Pages</i>	<i>ISBN</i>	<i>Year of Publication</i>
Spotlight on English 1				2002-2003
Spotlight on English 2	27 cm × 19.5 cm	125	9947-20-289-5	2004-2005
Spotlight on English 3	22.5 cm × 18 cm	188	9947-20-420-0	2005-2006

On the Move	23.5 cm× 16.5cm	192	9947-20-469-3	2007-2008
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MS Textbooks	Files	Language Forms	Functions & Notions	pronunciation	Culture	Strategies
Spotlight on English 1	-					

<i>MS Textbook</i>	<i>Files</i>	<i>Functions &amp; Notions</i>	<i>Language Forms</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Culture</i>	<i>Strategies</i>
Spotlight on English 2	-A person's Profile - Language Games -Health -Cartoons -Theatre	- Describing a person (physical appearance) -Talking about so's life -Writing biographies -asking and answering about possessions -expressing possibility - Expressing capacity -expressing permission -Talking about	-the present simple tense (consolidation) -the adjectives -the past tense (consolidation) -ordinal and cardinal numbers (consolidation) -present simple continuous (consolidation) -past simple +ago -possessive ('s) - demonstratives : these/those -synonyms -antonyms -can (possibility) -could (polite)	-sound /s/ and /z/ -sounds /t/, /d/, and /id/ -stress : first, second and third syllable - sounds /th/ the and /th/ thin -stress : first, second and third syllable -sounds /sh/, /ch/ and /ch/ -sounds /i/, /ai/ and /i:/ -stress : first, second and third syllable -sounds /j/ and /g/ -souds /k/ and /s/ -stress : first,	-music around the world -time line on Games - Grandmother's remedies Colors and Health -C for cartoons/ Comic -Theatre genres Some Records	-Focus on listening - Identification of the task - Anticipation -Deducing - discriminating -Practice (role play) -Taking notes - Cooperating -Questioning -Using a dictionary -Using synonyms -Using antonyms

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>prices</li> <li>-Defining</li> <li>- Talking about health</li> <li>- Suggesting</li> <li>-Asking politely</li> <li>-locating</li> <li>- Describing a place</li> <li>- Describing illnesses</li> <li>-Enquiring about so's health</li> <li>- Suggesting</li> <li>- Expressing Permission</li> <li>Expressing prohibition</li> <li>-Enquiring about so's activities</li> <li>-Talking about so's regular activities</li> <li>-Talking about discoveries</li> <li>-Talking about remedies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>requests)</li> <li>-plurals (consolidation)</li> <li>-prepositions of location</li> <li>-possessive pronouns</li> <li>- the imperative (consolidation)</li> <li>-have got (consolidation)</li> <li>-must/mustn't</li> <li>-should</li> <li>-adverbs of manner</li> <li>-time adverbs</li> <li>-passive form</li> <li>-adverbs (consolidation)</li> <li>-time expressions (consolidation)</li> <li>-prepositions (consolidation)</li> <li>-would like</li> <li>- expressions :yes, I'd like to/I'd love to/I'd really..</li> <li>-time expressions (consolidation)</li> <li>-going to</li> <li>-which one(s)</li> <li>-numbers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>second and third syllable</li> <li>-sounds /ai/ and /ei/</li> <li>-sounds /ei/ and /oi/</li> <li>-stress : first, second and third syllable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Using substitutes</li> <li>-Guessing</li> <li>-Global understanding</li> <li>-Imagining</li> <li>-Ordering</li> <li>-Translating</li> <li>-Spotting the key words</li> <li>-Using punctuation</li> <li>-Checking spelling</li> <li>-Asking for help</li> <li>-self assessing</li> <li>-Decoding</li> <li>-Interpreting non-verbal messages</li> </ul>
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		<p>-Inviting</p> <p>-Enquiring about so's likes</p> <p>-</p> <p>Expressing intentions</p> <p>-Playing activities</p> <p>-Enquiring about so's future activities</p> <p>-Making choices</p> <p>-Enquiring about prices</p> <p>-Talking about distances</p> <p>-Talking about duration</p> <p>-Enquiring about so's career</p> <p>-</p> <p>Interviewing</p> <p>Talking about likes &amp; dislikes</p> <p>-Enquiring about so's preferences</p> <p>-Enquiring about so's past activities</p> <p>-Talking</p>	<p>(consolidation)</p> <p>-possessive pronouns</p> <p>-numbers (consolidation)</p> <p>-prepositions of location (cons)</p> <p>-adverbs of frequency</p> <p>-« wh » questions</p> <p>-« wh » questions (cons)</p> <p>-would you like (cons)</p> <p>-like+ing</p> <p>-past simple (consolidation)</p> <p>-present perfect</p>			
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		about past activities				
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Spotlight on English 3/Files	Functions	Notions	Language Forms	Pronunciation/ Intonation	Snapshots of Culture	Projects
- Communications -Travel -Work and Play -Around the World	F1 -greetings  -introducing people  -partings  -describing physical appearances  -identifying and using appropriate intonation in Yes/No and Wh-questions  -making and answering requests  -making apologies and giving explanations  -asking for clarification and expressing sympathy  -expressing likes and dislikes  -expressing preferences  -making/accepting and declining invitations	-questions and answers  -to have/ to be  -wh-questions how.. ?  -revision of family nouns  -relative pronoun « who » « which »  -contracted forms «of to be and have  -joining words  -modal can/could in polite requests  -numbers (phone)  -time and dates : in/on (revision  -verbal	F1  -Hello, Hi,..  -This is..  -How do you do ?  -Nice to meet you  -Goodbye ! Goodnight !  -See you later !  -And, but, because  -I'm sorry but..  -I'm afraid..  -I would like (to)  -Wait a moment please..  -Hold on please..  At two o'clock  -On Monday..  -In January  -Do you like/enjoy/love ..+Ving.. ?  -Are you fond of.. ?  -I really like..  -I don't like at all..	F1  - Rising/falling intonation  -vowel sounds /ae/ and / /  - intonation in Wh-qq  - intonation in statements  - Intonation in requests  - Intonation in Yes/No qq  - Intonation in short	- Nессиe  -Auld lang syne  - guards or bear killers  - schools in Britain  -love your neighbors language	Task 1  Introducing your favourite artist  Task2  Writing an email to introduce yourself to your favourite TV hero  Task3  Addressing a questionnaire to your favourite TV character(s)  Project round up  A wall sheet

		qq+verb(in g)	-« Would you come.. ?	answers		contrib ution
F2	-asking for permission	-short answers+v erb(ing)	-What would you like to have .. ?	-vowel sounds:/i/ and /i:/		Task 1
	-making requests	-polite requests	F2	-weak and strong forms		Welco me aboard
	- accepting/declinin g requests	F2	-May I borrow.. ?	F2		Task 2
	-making suggestions	-the modal may	-Would you mind.. ? Shall we.. ?			
	-offering help	-auxialiries do/will/wo uld	-What about+V(ing)	-Vowel sounds / /, / / and / /		
	-asking for and giving directions	-	-Let's+Verb..			
	-asking about distances and time	- vocabulary related to travel and airports	-Why don't we..	-Silent letters « r » and « b »		
	-locating amenities	-	-How far is it.. ?			
	-expanding notes	-can/could	-How lmong does it take.. ?	- Contrasti ve stress : stressted and unstresse d		
	-using the right intonation	-wh- word :how	-on the corner of../in/on/next to/past the..	prepositi ons : upon, by,on, in, from..		
	-planning a visit	Preposition s of place	-shall/will, going to+verb	- correctiv e stress		
	-making suggestions	The future tense	-I'm visiting..next week	-vowel sound / /		
	-expressing obligation/prohibiti on	-present continuous with future intent	-You can/can't	F3		
	-asking a favour	-	-You must/mustn't			
	-checking understanding/corr ecting misunderstanding	- modals :ca n/cannot (can't)	-You are not allowed to	-Stress in two-syllable words : Monday, Tuesday..		
F3	-describing regular activities	- must/must n't	-You must/mustn't+verb	Consolid ation of		
	-expressing feelings	- sequencers	-Can/could I ask you..			
	-describe actions that happened in	F3	-Can /could you.. ?			
			-First, next, then, after that,finally.			
			F3			
			-Subject+have+been..			
			-How long have you been..,			

<p>the past and affect the present</p> <p>-expressing consequences</p> <p>-talking about recent action with an effect on the present</p> <p>-expressing obligation with « have to »</p> <p>Asking for and giving advice</p> <p>-narrating events using : yet, just, ever, never</p> <p>-telling about continuous action interrupted by another</p> <p>-comforting someone</p> <p>-describing where, when and how something happened.</p> <p>F4.</p> <p>-locating countries on a map</p> <p>-talking about the four cardinal points.</p> <p>-comparing countries according to :</p> <p>- location/area/population/climate</p> <p>-locating towns within a country</p> <p>-describing towns</p>		<p>-So you have been..since/for..</p> <p>-subject+have (not)/has (not)+pp</p> <p>-must/ought to</p> <p>-has (never)been to..</p> <p>-before</p> <p>-I was thinking/wondering of+invitation (or suggestion)</p> <p>-What a pity/don't worry</p> <p>The plane was landing <i>when</i> we heard a deafening noise.</p> <p>F4</p> <p>-northern/southern,..</p> <p>-splendid/wonderful, delicious</p> <p>-(in) the north (of), (in) the south (of),</p> <p>-larger/smaller</p> <p>-the largest/the smallest/the biggest</p> <p>-north,south,east,west of..</p> <p>- above,below,in,on,be side,between,in upper,/in lower</p> <p>-long time ago, in 1797..</p> <p>-as comfortable as</p> <p>-more expensive than..</p>	<p>intonation in Wh-qq</p> <p>-stress in three syllable words</p> <p>-different pronunciation of « have » : strong and weak forms : /haev/, /hæv/and /av/</p> <p>-stress and intonation in sentences containing these forms</p> <p>- consonant clusters</p> <p>/gl/, /br/ and /sp/</p> <p>-strong and weak forms of was /w z/ and /waz/</p> <p>-strong and weak forms of were /wɑ:/ and /wə/</p> <p>-stress and intonation in</p>		
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	<p>(locating main avenues, streets, official buildings, amenities, places of interest)</p> <p>-imparting information</p> <p>-making adverts</p> <p>-writing memo</p> <p>-describing a monument (a shape, dimension)</p> <p>- agreeing/disagreeing.</p>		<p>-the most expensive..</p> <p>-the most../the least...</p> <p>-take a spoonful of..</p> <p>-in/at+place</p> <p>-in+year</p> <p>-metres high, it weighs, it is made of</p> <p>-it they, them, these, those ..</p> <p>-don't you think that.. ?</p> <p>-do you agree with/that.. ?</p> <p>-I don't agree at all/not really</p> <p>-how.. !what a.. !</p>	<p>sentences containing these forms.</p> <p>F4</p> <p>-stress in short comparatives (-er)</p> <p>-stress in short superlatives :the (-est)</p> <p>-stress and intonation in verbal qq and wh-qq with comparatives and superlatives</p> <p>- pronunciation of /m:/ and /m :r/ in sentences with comparatives</p> <p>- diphthongs :ph, gh, and th</p> <p>- intonation in exclamations.</p>		
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Note : On the Move (MS4) book map is devised more elaborately than the other three textbooks. In the following tables, we have attempted to illustrate the layout of the syllabus.

Années	Besoins	Stock	Production(*)
1990/91	30 687 000	10 664 000	20 023 000
1991/92	31 174 000	6 006 000	25 168 000
1992/93	30 993 000	8 573 000	22 240 000
1993/94	29 215 000	13 330 000	15 885 000
1994/95	27 489 000	13 000 000	14 489 000
1995/96	33 291 200	10 450 000	22 842 200
1996/97	22 644 000	15 450 000	7 170 000
1997/98	22 521 000	11 490 000	14 990 000
1998/99	27 143 000	6 378 600	20 764 400
1999/00	29 862 300	9 013 300	20 849 000
2000/01	32 264 000	6 859 000	25 405 000
2001/02	29 802 700	9 574 700	20 228 000
2002/03(**)	29 434 200	9 562 700	19 871 500

#### Evolution de la production(\*) des manuels scolaires

Années	Enseignement 1 <sup>er</sup> et 2 <sup>ème</sup> cycle	Enseignement 3 <sup>ème</sup> cycle	Enseignement secondaire	Total Général
1970/71	2.459.786	792.466	-	3.252.252
1979/80	7.301.425	2.986.553	1.085.107	11.373.085
1990/91	14.552.000	10.535.000	6.192.000	31.279.000
1991/92	12.277.310	8.776.190	4.114.500	25.168.000
1999/00	11.809.000	3.731.000	2.179.000	17.719.000
2001/02	11.922.770	3.594.380	2.104.850	17.628.000
2002/03(1)	13.691.000	3.233.500	438.500	17.363.000

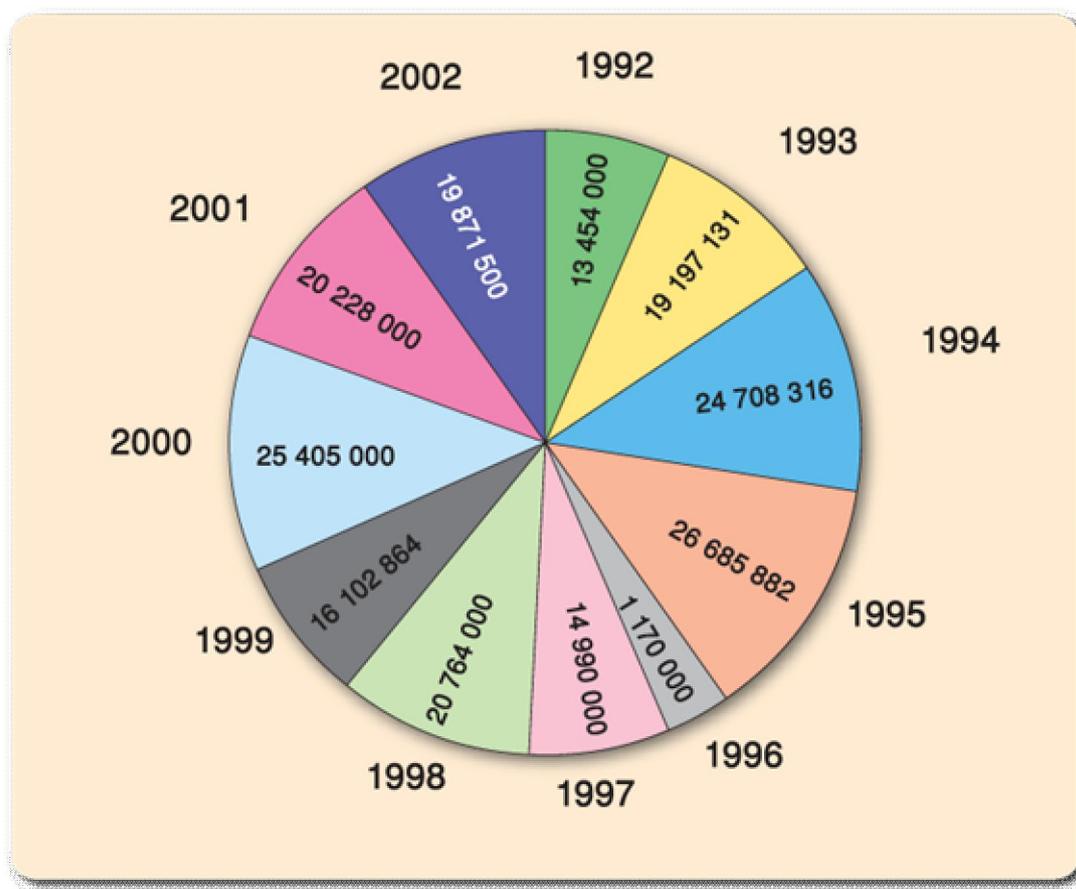
Année Scolaire 2010-2011

Besoins	55.025.687
Stocks 2009	19.565.248
Production 2010-2011	35.460.439
Production réelle	38.390.290

- Production cumulée pour la réforme du système éducatif de 2003/2004 à 2010/2011 (**291.264.383** livres).

## Situation de la production des manuels scolaires ( Ancien Programme )

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	
Total	13454000	19197131	24708316	26685882	7170000	
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
	14990000	20764000	16102862	25405000	20228000	19871500



## Situation de la production des manuels scolaires De la Reforme

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Total
30065805	43882034	23934125	35320992	44733433	43145905	61817323	282899617

## Birth Rate

Country	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<a href="#">Algeria</a>	23.14	22.76	22.34	21.94	17.76	17.13	17.14	17.11	17.03	16.9	16.71	16.69

## RÉSUMÉ

La présente étude, de nature descriptive ainsi qu'analytique, vise à rechercher les attitudes des enseignants du moyen à la suite de l'application des nouvelles réformes dont l'objet est d'introduire une nouvelle approche, interdisciplinaire, comme moyen d'instruction. Cette recherche s'est développée à partir et axée sur une affirmation: le processus d'enseignement-apprentissage a une base attitudinale ferme. Autrement dit, cette étude vise à explorer les attitudes des enseignants du moyen ainsi que le degré auquel ces attitudes pourraient influencer l'engagement des enseignants au processus d'enseignement-apprentissage. Aussi, il faut noter que les attitudes, croyances, cognition, émotion, et valeurs sont apparemment moins explorés à tel point que ces aspects psychologiques sont pris comme auxiliaires ou non-existants. Les questionnaires (trois en tout) et les interviews non-structurés ont été le pivot de la présente recherche, et les réponses collectées miroitent les hypothèses formulées. Lesquelles hypothèses pourraient être exprimées en ces termes-ci: si on repense l'éducation et la formation des enseignants, améliore les conditions socio-professionnelles des enseignants, et implique les enseignants dans la prise des décisions, on réduira significativement les attitudes négatives chez les enseignants. La population-cible de laquelle étude est la communauté des enseignants de l'anglais du moyen (n=70) sise à la Région de Biskra. Les enseignants en question ont répondu aux questionnaires et aux interviews non-structurés. Les résultats de la présente recherche révèlent que les enseignants du troisième palier (*voire* le moyen) ont développé quatre attitudes négatives envers quatre défis majeurs: (1) défi relié à l'administration, (2) défi reliés aux contextes (socio-professionnels), (3) défi relié à la profession d'enseigner, et (4) défi relié aux relations au travail. Le premier défi (incluant les programmes de formation et les manuels scolaires.. etc.) a engendré des attitudes défavorables envers l'existence et les rôles des enseignants dans le processus d'enseignement-apprentissage. Le deuxième défi (emploi du temps chargé et groupes pédagogiques bondés, .. etc.) a déclenché une rafale de doléances et d'attitudes négatives. Le troisième défi (accès didactique aux manuels scolaires) a frustré les enseignants d'atteindre les objectifs. Et finalement, le quatrième défi des enseignants est de surmonter les perspectives limitées de la profession d'enseigner, la rentabilité pécuniaire et la relation tendue avec les inspecteurs, directeurs et parents d'élèves.

## \*\*\* الملخص \*\*\*

إن هذه الدراسة ذات الطابع الوصفي التحليلي تهدف إلى البحث في مواقف الأساتذة عقب تطبيق الإصلاحات الجديدة ( التعليم على أساس الكفاءات). الغاية من تطبيق هذه الإصلاحات يو إرساء مقاربة بينية للمواد المقررة. تطور هذا العمل من و يدور حول إدعاء هو: إن المواقف و الإتجاهات هي ثلاثة الأثافي في العملية التدريسية التعليمية.بعبارة أخرى، تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى إستكشاف مواقف/ إتجاهات أساتذة مادة الأنجليزية في التعليم المتوسط و مدى التأثير على إلتزام الأساتذة في العملية التدريسية-التعليمية. هذا و تجدر الإشارة إلى أن مواقف و معتقد و إدراك و عواطف و قيم الأساتذة لطلما أتخذت على أنها ثانوية في أحسن الأحوال و غير موجودة في أسوأها. هذا، و تعتبر الإستبيانات (3 في عمومها) و كذا الإستجابات غير المهيكلة المحور الأساس لهذا البحث و إن أجوبتهما تعكسان الفرضيات المقترحة. يضم هذا البحث الذي بين أيدينا ثلاث فرضيات: إذا أعدنا التفكير في تعليم و تكوين الأساتذة، و حسنا الظروف الإجتماعية و المهنية للأساتذة، و إدمجنا الأساتذة في إتخاذ القرارات، فإننا نقلص مواقف و إتجاهات الأساتذة السلبية بشكل كبير. إن أساتذة الأنجليزية في الطور المتوسط في ولاية بسكرة هم موضوع البحث و تعدادهم ربي على ال (70). تكشف نتائج هذا البحث عن وجود مواقف و إتجاهات سلبية لدى الأساتذة. هذا، و ثمة أربع (04) تحديات كبرى تواجه أساتذة التعليم المتوسط و هي: (1) تحدي له علاقة بالتسير، (2) تحدي له علاقة بالظروف الإجتماعية و المهنية، (3) تحدي له علاقة بمهنة التدريس، و (4) تحدي له علاقة بالعلاقات البينية في العمل (أي الوسط المهني). فأما التحدي الأول و الذي يضم برامج تكوين الأساتذة و الكتب المدرسية ولد مواقف و إتجاهات سلبية تجاه كيان و أدوار الأساتذة في العملية التدريسية-التعليمية. أما التحدي الثاني و الذي يتطرق إلى التوقيت و الأفواج المكتظة فقد أدى إلى ظهور طوفان من التظلمات و كذا المواقف و الإتجاهات السلبية. و أما التحدي الثالث و الذي يخص إمكانية إستعمال و تطبيق محتوى الكتب المدرسية فقد أحبط بلوغ الأهداف المسطرة. و في الأخير فإن التحدي الرابع و الذي يخص الأفق المحدود للترقية و قلة الدخل المادي و العلاقات المتشعبة مع المديرين و المفتشين و أولياء التلاميذ فقد ولد مواقف و إتجاهات سلبية من المجال المهني.