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**Challenges of the Implementation of the Competency-based
Approach:
A Case Study of EFL Secondary School Teachers in Jijel,
Algeria**

**Thesis submitted to the Department of Letters and English in Candidacy for the degree
of Doctorat LMD in Teaching English as a Foreign Language**

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2022

Dedication

To my father and mother.

To my husband, Mohammed.

To my daughter, Ilaf.

To my sister, Souad.

To my brothers, Seyfeddine, Nouredine, Mohammed, Hassene and Slimane.

To my in-laws, family and friends.

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I also wish to address my sincere thanks to all the teachers and inspectors who took part in the study for their time and cooperation without which the accomplishment of this research work would not have been possible.

Abstract

This thesis investigates the main challenges that face Algerian secondary school teachers of English in the aftermath of the implementation of new school reforms that introduced a new interdisciplinary approach, *viz.*, the Competency-based Approach (CBA) as a medium of instruction. Differently stated, it tries to identify the difficulties that confront secondary school teachers while teaching English under CBA. This study attempts to address the most effective solutions that would make the CBA reform work most appropriately. When the CBA was adopted in teaching English as a foreign language, it was believed that this new approach would eradicate the problem of underachievement among Algerian pupils, but after more than a decade of its implementation, teachers' voices were already calling for help. Using a mixed research paradigm, this investigation was, first, carried out by the administration of a questionnaire to secondary school English teachers to have an account of the realities of CBA in English classes and gain more insights into the difficulties they face in teaching English. Second, data were gathered during an eight-week classroom observation with the purpose of defining the extent to which CBA suits the Algerian learners and the teaching context. Finally, a semi-structured interview was conducted with some general English secondary education inspectors. The results obtained revealed that the implementation of the CBA in teaching English in Algeria is inhibited by three major challenges: context-related challenges, teacher-related challenges, and learner-related challenges. Education systems are extremely complex and so are reforms. Recommendations and pedagogical implications were made by exploring the properties and peculiarities of the Algerian context, teacher, and learner.

List of Abbreviations

%:	Percentage
x :	Value
(x):	The mid-point
(f) :	Frequency
X:	Arithmetic mean
Σ:	Sum of values
Σ f:	Total of frequency
ADSL:	Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line
ALM:	Audio-lingual Method
ASTP:	The Army Specialized Training Programme
CBA:	Competency-based Approach
CBE:	Competency-based Education
CBET:	Competency-based Education and Training
CBI:	Content-based Instruction
CBLT:	Competency-Based Language Teaching
CLT:	Communicative Language Teaching
CNRE:	Commission Nationale de Réforme de L'Éducation (National Commission for Reform of the Educational System)
De Se Co:	Dictionary of Selected Competencies
DLP:	Digital Light Processing
EFL:	English as a Foreign Language
ELT:	English Language Teaching
ENS:	École Normale Supérieure
FLN:	Front de Libération Nationale

FNBE:	Finnish National Board of Education
GTM:	Grammar Translation Method
ICT:	Information and Communication Technology
LCD:	Liquid Crystal Display
L2:	Second Language
TBI:	Task-based Instruction
TEFL:	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TICE:	Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication pour l'Enseignement (ICTEs: Information and Communication Technologies for Education)
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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General Introduction

1. Statement of the Problem

2. Aims of the Study

3. Research Questions and Hypotheses

4. Methodology and Means of Research

5. Structure of the Thesis

General Introduction

1. Statement of the Problem

Educational reforms in Algeria are not new; it is the implementation of the CBA at all levels and in all subject matters that is new. The CBA is one of the modern communicative teaching methodologies that are characterized by the shift in focus from the teacher, who used to represent the fulcrum of education, to the learner who is now more involved in learning. The fact that the world is changing on a fast track means that implementing educational reforms is one of the tools for keeping up with such developments. In 2003, Algeria embarked with enthusiasm on a general reform implementing the CBA reshaping education in terms of how and what to teach. Built on the strongest and most solid language learning theories, the CBA implementation was believed to be the panacea for the problems of underachievement of Algerian learners in English. Though the Algerian educational authorities applauded the reform and provided all the necessary financial and human resources to ensure the success of this reform, views and reactions varied between proponents and opponents, but most importantly, what mattered most then, and even now, is the achievement of the Algerian learners in learning English as a foreign language.

On the one hand, the pessimistic views overtly state that the Algerian educational context is not appropriate to the CBA requirements and thus viewed the reform as change for the sake of change. They asserted that the challenges and shortcomings that are now facing the CBA are a proof that teaching English in Algeria is going from bad to worse. Other opponents went further by claiming that keeping the old method is better than engaging in a new one regardless of its strengths or noticeable results (Boukhentache, 2018).

On the other hand, the optimistic views assert that the CBA will certainly improve English learning and teaching in Algeria if the conditions under which it should be applied are available. They believe that the developments which are seen today in the field of teaching methodology of second languages prove that the shift towards teaching with competencies is vital. The optimistic views claim that the underachievement in learning English is due to the shortcomings that underlie the previous traditional approaches, such as the audio-lingual and communicative methods. They raise their hopes and go further in considering the CBA as the panacea to the failure of Algerian students in learning English.

The 2003 reform introducing the CBA as a teaching method at all levels and in all subject matters, including English, goes back to 1998 when a national committee was set for designing syllabi that would go hand in hand with the CBA. Being derived from strong, valid, and objective theories of learning and language teaching and having achieved noticeable results in some countries such as France and Belgium, this approach is not necessarily applicable in all educational contexts with the same results. Many factors need to be taken into consideration when embarking upon such a drastic reform. These include the educational environment, teacher training, syllabus design, learners and their autonomy, the availability of materials and media, and the like. These factors may become obstacles and challenge EFL teachers in their quest to help learners to achieve competency in English.

To put it in a nutshell, challenges and difficulties have always been part of any educational reform, but the situation becomes serious when the educational change fails to achieve its intended goal which is improving the performance of learners. Now the CBA has been part of ELT teaching practices for more than a decade, it is not time for making judgments or evaluations. It is high time an investigation was carried out to unveil the factors

and shortcomings that challenge the implementation of the CBA, and therefore contribute to addressing the most effective solutions to make this reform go in the most proper way.

2. Aims of the Study

Education represents the sensitive nerve for any nation as it defines the success or failure of any nation. Algeria has recognized the importance of this sector and started educational reforms just after its independence with the aim of uplifting the country in general and education in particular. At first, these reforms aimed at restoring the lost identity of Algerians; however, the major concern of the educational reforms nowadays is to produce a generation of competent and responsible citizens. Therefore, our country has a long history of reforms that goes back to the independence, and ultimately should have learned some lessons from the previous reform projects which had been poorly designed, badly implemented, or inappropriately evaluated- and sometimes all three.

This study aims to investigate the challenges that face EFL teachers at the level of secondary schools, in the region of Jijel. It is not meant to find out the weaknesses of the CBA as a teaching approach, but rather to provide insights into the obstacles that hinder the appropriate implementation of the CBA when it comes to teaching methodology, working conditions, the type of learners, and other factors. More importantly, this investigation is meant to contribute to the development of the learners' performance in English learning and teaching at the Algerian secondary school. The findings of this study will have significant pedagogical implications for EFL teachers at the level of secondary schools: they will show them how to face these challenges or at least diminish the effects of these obstacles on their students' performance in the language. The overall aim is translated into more specific objectives which are expressed in the form of research questions and hypotheses.

3. Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study is an attempt at answering a set of questions related to the challenges that face teachers working under the CBA. The objectives of the investigation are guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of the CBA?
2. Were EFL teachers ready to teach with competencies?
3. Were Algerian learners ready to learn with competencies?
4. What are the challenges that face secondary school teachers while teaching with the CBA?
5. Are the working conditions of EFL teachers compatible with the CBA principles?
6. What needs to be done to overcome the existing challenges in teaching and learning English with the CBA at Algerian secondary schools?

To answer these research questions, the following hypotheses were formulated:

Hypothesis 1: The quality of the teachers' training and the politicization of the educational system has inhibited implementing the CBA successfully.

Hypothesis 2: Teachers find working with the CBA difficult because learners have a weak background in the language and do not assume their roles in the learning process.

Hypothesis 3: The CBA reform would achieve its goals and improve the Algerian learners' performance when it takes into account the recommendations provided by educational experts.

4. Methodology and Means of Research

Methodology refers to the main approaches and paradigms that guide the manner in which the research is conducted while methods refer to specific research tools, instruments, or techniques that a researcher uses to collect data to answer research questions (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001). The decision to choose a particular research method is generally determined by its being fit for the purpose of the research problem, questions, objectives, and other practical considerations.

This research is based on methodological triangulation with data gathered from three means of research which serve all one aim which is identifying the challenges that face EFL teachers who are currently implementing the CBA as part of the last educational reforms and then suggesting the most pertinent solutions that would help meet these challenges. The choice of such a technique is prompted by allowing for cross-verification from two or more methods and capturing different dimensions of the present research problem.

First, a questionnaire was administered to EFL secondary school teachers in the region of Jijel. The target sample consists of seventy in-service EFL teachers who work in the different secondary schools of Jijel. These teachers were selected randomly so that the surveyed sample is composed of different educational backgrounds, ages, gender, and teaching experience. The questionnaire aims at investigating the challenges -mainly the practical ones- that teachers face while implementing the CBA in the classroom, their attitudes towards this approach as well as the evaluation of the learners' achievement in the language.

Second, classroom observation was conducted in two randomly selected classes of secondary schools of Jijel. Some of the major strengths of using classroom observation in this piece of research are to allow the researcher to do the following: permit to study the processes of education in a naturalistic setting, provide more detailed and precise evidence than other data sources, and stimulate change and verify that the change occurred (Waxman, 1995). This observation seeks to identify the challenges that are taking place in the classroom setting while learning under the CBA; thus, it will provide a critical view of these challenges in a realistic setting.

The third means of research is unstructured interviews. Interviews represent one of the most common formats of data collection in qualitative research. The qualitative interview is a type of framework in which the practices and standards are not only recorded but also achieved, challenged, and as well as reinforced (Oakley, 1998, p. 709). Four English inspectors were interviewed with the aim of providing more insights into what challenges teachers who are instructing their learners using CBA. More importantly, the findings of the unstructured interview would suggest what needs to be done to face those challenges. The contribution of English inspectors is that of genuine experts in the field: not only had they been EFL secondary teachers for decades, but also they are in charge of the pre-and in-service training for teachers and inspect them sometimes for the certificate of aptitude for secondary school teaching and other times as sudden visits.

5. Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is organized into seven chapters divided into two parts. The first part encompasses three chapters which provide the conceptual framework of the investigation and the relevant literature, while the second part is a fieldwork survey and discussion consisting of

four chapters, starting with the administration and discussion of the questionnaire, then classroom observation, and finally the analysis of the findings of the interviews. They provide both quantitative and qualitative evaluations of the results leading to pedagogical implications and suggestions.

In chapter one, the different teaching methods that have been adopted in the field of language teaching are briefly examined, with reference to their characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses. This chapter mainly explores the theoretical origins of Competency-based Education, clarifies the concepts of its key components, and states the educational implications that result from its application.

The second chapter, ELT Context in Algeria, is undertaken with the view of providing a thorough image of ELT with reference to the secondary school level and the different reforms that our country has gone through. It also deals in detail with the training and development programmes that have always been responsible for preparing EFL teachers.

The third chapter, Reform and its Implications for Teaching English, is concerned with the concept of change in education, its dimensions, objectives, phases, and the difficulties that impede successful reforms from taking place. CBA challenges that have already been generated by the literature are summarized within the scope of this chapter.

The fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters are the practical parts of this study. They respectively analyse the EFL secondary school teachers' questionnaire, give a detailed account of classroom observation, and finally, discuss the results of the inspectors' interview.

The three chapters are based on the analysis of the data and the obtained results serve to verify the research hypotheses.

Chapter Seven, Pedagogical Implications, provides teachers, foreign language learners, and even policymakers with some pedagogical implications which may contribute to facing the challenges that confront teachers for both the present and the future and thus improving secondary school learners' performance in the language.

Chapter One

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Chapter One

Teaching English as a Foreign Language under the Competency-based Approach

Introduction

Today, the world is changing on a fast track; this is due to the different developments which are seen in life spheres. These developments and changes such as globalization urge every country to move ahead and walk in parallel with the developed countries. Believing in the importance of education and its role in modeling future citizens, every country is trying to make sure it is following methodologies that prove to be fruitful. In the field of L2 learning, English is considered an international language not because of its large number of speakers but rather because of imposing itself as the language of science, research, international trade and global informational technology. This growing importance urges many countries to embark upon the newest teaching methodologies in teaching English as a foreign language. Shaped by the frequent changes, innovations, and development of language teaching ideologies, the concept of learner's competency and teaching by competencies is acquiring importance. Forming competent learners will lead to active and efficient citizens who will devote their competencies to the benefit of their country. The importance of learners' competency requires reviewing the literature on teaching approaches in general and the Competency-based Approach in particular to have a clear picture of it.

1.1. Overview of Major Language Teaching Methods and Approaches

The history of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) is linked to developments in many fields, especially with linguistics, applied linguistics, the psychology of learning and education and so is the quest for a teaching method that ensures the highest mastery of any foreign language. The new approaches are often built on the weaknesses of the

previous ones; accordingly, if any given approach proved to be ineffective, views and efforts would be focused on creating a new one that solves the shortcomings of the previous with the condition of drawing from the current learning theories at the same time. The following is a brief account of the most common teaching methods and approaches that L2 learning has witnessed nowadays.

1.1.1. The Grammar Translation Method

Old-fashioned Grammar, Translation Lessons, and Classical Method were the common descriptions used to refer to the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) before the twentieth century (Howatt and Smith, 2014). GTM began in Prussia at the end of the eighteenth century with the publication of the French coursebook and an English coursebook for secondary school pupils, authored by Meidinger in 1783 and Fick in 1793 respectively (Howatt and Widdowson, 2004). The GTM emphasizes the study of grammatical aspects of language and the use of translation as a means of ascertaining comprehension. Richards and Rodgers (2001) see grammar-translation as a way of studying a language through a detailed analysis of its grammar rules, followed by the application of this knowledge to the task of translating sentences into and out of the target language. Celce-Murcia (2001, p. 6) provided a synthesis of the key elements of the GTM.

- Instruction is given in the native language of the students.
- There is little use of the target language for communication.
- The focus is on grammatical parsing, i.e., the forms and inflections of words.
- There is an early reading of difficult texts.
- A typical exercise includes translating sentences from the target language into the mother tongue (or vice versa).

- The result of this approach is usually an inability on the part of the student to use the language for communication.
- The teacher does not have to be able to speak the target language fluently

Although this method was widely used in Europe, it was subjected to different criticisms because it eventually failed in producing learners who could use the foreign language they had been studying. Cook and Hall (2013) pointed out that within the ELT literature, GTM had been widely rejected in the late 19th century for focusing exclusively on accuracy and writing at the expense of fluency and speaking, and for being authoritarian and dull. Krashen (1987) added that it focuses on form rather than meaning. The GTM was based on the study of grammar lessons and translation which resulted in the learners' passivity as both the functional and social nature of the language is disregarded. Berlitz (1887 as cited in Howatt and Widdowson, 2004) asserted that relying on translation was strongly criticised as it wastes valuable language learning time which should be devoted entirely to the foreign language; this reliance encourages mother-tongue interference because all languages have their peculiarities that cannot be rendered by translation.

Today, though the GTM is not widely used in TEFL: some aspects of this method are still employed to teach modern languages in the United States, primarily at high school and university levels. Emphasis on reading and translating passages, conjugation of verbs, and explanation and memorisation of grammatical rules are still observed in foreign language classrooms today.

1.1.2. The Direct Method

The Direct Method, also referred to as the Natural Method, the Psychological Method, the Phonetic Method, or the Anti-grammatical Method, established in France and Germany around 1900 by Gouin and Berlitz, provides a clear contrast with the grammar-translation class (Rivers, 1981) as it operates on the idea that L2 learning has to be an imitation of first language learning since this is the natural way humans learn any language. The assumptions upon which this method was built were totally in opposition with GTM by the use of the target language as a means of both instruction and communication in the language classroom; the avoidance of the use of the first language (L1), and translation as a technique. This method can only be seen as a shift from literary language to the spoken everyday language as the object of early instruction (Liu and Shi, 2007). Thus, the Natural Method was seen as a reaction to the GTM.

Richards and Rodgers (1986, p.9) summarised the principles and procedures of the Direct Method as follows;

- Classroom instruction was conducted exclusively in the target language
- Only everyday vocabulary and sentences were taught
- Oral communication skills were built up in a carefully graded progression, organised around question-and-answer exchanges between teachers and students in small, intensive classes
- Grammar was taught inductively
- New teaching points were introduced orally
- Concrete vocabulary was taught through demonstration, objects, and pictures; abstract vocabulary was taught by association of ideas

- Both speech and listening comprehension were taught
- Correct pronunciation and grammar were taught.

Richards and Rodgers (1986) sustained that despite its success in private language schools, especially those of Maximilian Berlitz, the Direct Method had been subjected to a certain number of criticisms. It viewed learning languages as analogous to first language acquisition and required teachers to speak with native-like fluency. The implementation of this approach also required classes of small sizes. As the success of this method depended on the teachers' competence, students would not have a good opportunity to develop their language skills unless this native-like proficiency was obtained by the teachers. West (1930) criticised the direct methodologists for stressing the importance of speech without providing guidelines for selecting content. He pointed out that the primary thing in learning a language is the acquisition of vocabulary, and practice in using it.

The Direct Method faded in the early 1900s as it was not practical in classroom settings, and then saw a comeback under the name of the Audio-lingual Method after the Second World War.

1.1.3. The Audio-lingual Method

The terms "Audio-lingual" and "Audiolingualism" were first coined in 1964 by Brooks of Yale University to highlight the basic belief of structuralism that speech is primary. This method was also known as the 'Structural Approach' in Britain to stress the view that language is a set of structures, the Audio-lingual Method, or ALM for short. Richards and Rodgers (2001) pointed out that its origin can be traced back to the Army Specialized Training Programme (ASTP) announced in 1942, which was initially designed for students to

build their communicative competence. It is traced back to the Direct Method because of importing a certain number of teaching techniques (Appel and Dechert, 1991; Brown, 2000).

In terms of theoretical background, this method was one of the first to have its roots firmly grounded in linguistic and psychological theory; it combined the concept of teaching "linguistic patterns" with the behaviourist notion of "habit-formation" (Yule, 2010). Audio-lingualism is based on behaviorism, a theory that sees learners as passive receivers of information whose behaviour is shaped through positive or negative reinforcement. Liu and Shi (2007) sustained that audio-lingualism reflects the descriptive, structural, and contrastive linguistics of the fifties and sixties. Larsen-Freeman (2000) maintained that students will achieve communicative competence by forming new habits in the target language and overcoming the old habits of their native language.

Yule (2010) described this method as "incredibly boring". A criticism made to behaviorism came on the part of the linguist Chomsky (1957), who asked, "How can children make mistakes if they simply repeat what they hear?" In Chomsky's view, learners are credited with using their cognitive abilities in a creative way to work out a hypothesis about the structure of the L2 (Larsen-Freeman, 2000), later on, his ideas and theory gave rise to cognitivism.

1.1.4. The Situational Approach

The methodology that gave equal emphasis to the meaning and the form of the grammatical patterns of the English language was named the 'Situational Approach in Language Teaching' (Howatt and Widdowson, 2004). The learning theory that underlies the situational method represents a continuation of the ALM; it equals the language learning

process to the process of habit formation. The Situational Approach attempted to provide meaningful contexts for drill work in the form of pictures, dialogues, and other forms of 'situation' (Howatt and Smith, 2014). Richards (2006) argued that a typical lesson according to the situational approach requires employing a three-phase sequence, known as the P-P-P cycle: Presentation, Practice, and Product.

Howatt and Widdowson (2004, p. 299-300) asserted that the key principles that underlie the Situational Approach can be summarised as follows:

- All four language skills (listening; speaking; reading, and writing) should be taught, but the spoken skills should be given priority as reading and writing are based on items which have already been introduced and practiced orally
- Learning spoken language skills meant acquiring a set of appropriate speech habits
- Courses of instruction should be built around a graded syllabus of structural patterns to ensure systematic step-by-step progress
- Vocabulary items should be carefully selected and presented along with the grammatical patterns and presented orally before they are presented in the written form
- Grammar should be taught inductively
- Wherever possible, meaning should be taught through ostensive procedures and/ or cultural and linguistic context
- Errors should be avoided through adequate practice and rehearsal as they tend to form bad habits.

Some premises underlying this method have been criticised. These critics were similar to that of the audio-lingual method since both methods were built on the same theoretical foundations.

1.2. The Communicative Approach

The Communicative Approach to language teaching or CLT in short is seen as an outgrowth of the work of anthropological linguists such as Hymes, Firth, Halliday, and all of whom view language as a meaning-based system for communication. The communicative approach is rather broad-based and is most often defined as a list of general principles or features. Nunan (1991, p. 279) suggested that CLT includes five main features:

1. An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language
2. The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation
3. The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language but also on the learning process itself
4. An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning
5. An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activities outside the classroom.

It is clear that CLT is an “umbrella approach” with the objective of communicative competence and can be applied to a variety of more specific methods. The implementation of CLT has brought many advantages for TEFL. Unlike the ALM and the GTM, CLT emphasises task-oriented as well as student-centered language teaching practice and provides students with the comprehensive use of English. Richards (2006) believes that CLT focuses

on and aims at communicative competence, thus, enabling the learners to use the language in a communicative situation to satisfy their needs in real-life communication. Differently stated, it brings the real-life situation of native English into classroom activities such as role-play and simulation. Brown (2001) stressed that the major portion of the learning process is not upon the teacher: this illustrates that CLT classes have moved from teacher-centeredness to learner-centeredness. In other words, much more time issued by the learner that the role of the teacher is just to facilitate the learning process giving the learner opportunities to exercise and communicate enough in the CLT class to achieve communicative competence. Richards (2006) maintained that one of the major advantages of CLT is that a teacher can integrate all the four language skills into a curriculum and even in one lesson, rather than relying on activities designed to develop speaking proficiency. He may also choose to vary the type of activity from task-based, to content-based or process-based.

Although CLT gives priority to meanings and rules of use rather than grammar and rules of structure and focuses on fluency, but not accuracy in grammar and pronunciation, it is one of the latest humanistic approaches to teaching approaches which gives emphasis to language use and provides more opportunity to learners to practice the target language.

1.2.1. Process-based CLT Approaches

Content-based and task-based instruction, two current methodologies, described as an extension of CLT, are considered process-based in that they focus on creating classroom processes that promote language learning.

1.2.1.1. Content-based Instruction

Content-based instruction or CBI, in short, is a teaching method that emphasises learning about something rather than learning about language. However, beyond such simple statements as this, it is surprisingly difficult to find a clear definition of what content-based instruction is. Krahne (1987, p. 65) defined CBI as “the teaching of content or information in the language being learned with little or no direct or explicit effort to teaching the language itself separately from the content being taught”. Richards (2006) asserted that advocates of CBI believe that the best way to learn a second language in classroom contexts is by using content as the driving force of classroom activities and linking all the different dimensions of communicative competence, including grammatical competence, to content.

In CBI, communicative competence is acquired during the process of learning about specific topics such as business, social studies, history, and many other topics. Grabe and Stoller suggested seven strong rationales for content-based instruction (1997, p. 19-20):

1. In content-based classrooms, students are exposed to a considerable amount of language while learning content
2. CBI supports contextualised learning; students are taught the useful language that is embedded within relevant discourse contexts rather than as isolated language fragments
3. Students in CBI classes have increased opportunities to use the content knowledge and expertise that they bring to the class
4. CBI itself promises to generate increased motivation among students
5. CBI supports, in a natural way, such learning approaches as cooperative learning, apprenticeship learning, experiential learning,

and project-based learning. It also lends itself to strategy instruction and practice, as theme-units naturally require and recycle important strategies across varying contexts and learning tasks

6. CBI allows greater flexibility and adaptability to build into the curriculum and activity sequence

7. CBI lends itself to student-centered classroom activities; in content-based classrooms, students have opportunities to exercise choices and preferences in terms of specific content and learning activities.

Attention can be drawn to four noteworthy findings from research in educational and cognitive psychology that emphasises the benefits of CBI. First, thematically organised materials are easier to remember and learn and so is the presentation of coherent and meaningful information which leads to deeper processing and better learning. It also creates a relationship between student motivation and student interest, and students' ability to process challenging materials, recall information and elaborate. Finally, it contributes to developing expertise in a topic when learners reinvest their knowledge in a sequence of progressively more complex tasks (Stoller, 2002).

Like any teaching approach, the CBI has its demerits as some issues have been raised in implementing it. The one worth mentioning is whether the focus on content enables learners to develop language skills. Another key issue is concerned with assessment: the question raised is whether students should be assessed according to content, language use, or both. Designing authentic and interactive content-based assessments was needed because learners in CBI had to complete discourse tasks (Kasper, 2000). Crandall (1999) believes that it would be impossible for teachers to separate conceptual understanding from linguistic

proficiency. This means that both content and language should be assessed in CBI. Most importantly, the philosophy of CBI aims at empowering students to become independent learners and continue the learning process beyond the classroom.

1.2.1.2. Task-based Instruction

The way language and learning are viewed has a fingerprint in how second languages are taught. These views gave rise to task-based approaches; known as TBI in short (Ellis, 1994; Nunan, 1989; Prabhu, 1987; Skehan, 1998; Willis, 1996). TBI is based on the principle that a language can be learned by the balance of form and meaning. Richards (2006) argues that within TBI, the claim is that language learning will result from creating the right kinds of interactional processes in the classroom, and the best way to create these is to use specially designed instructional tasks. He added that TBI makes strong claims for the use of tasks and sees them as the primary unit to be used both in planning teaching and in classroom teaching. Nevertheless, what exactly is a task?

Attempts have been made to capture the key dimensions of tasks that are relevant to language teaching, such as the different involvement in tasks as well as the different degrees of focus on meaning. The definition of a task would include any activity used to promote language learning. A more useful and salient definition within the context of TBI is the more specific one provided by Skehan (1998, p. 95) who defined a task as “an activity in which: meaning is primary; there is some sort of relationship to the real world; task completion has some priority, and the assessment of task performance is in terms of task outcome”. According to Richards et al.(1985, p. 373), a task is defined as “...an activity which is designed to help achieve a particular learning goal such as using the telephone to obtain information, drawing maps based on oral instruction and other activities”. Littlewood (2004)

argued that definitions of a task range along a continuum to the extent to which they insist on communicative purpose as an essential criterion. Following the criterion of communicative purpose, Williams and Burden (1997, p. 168) defined a task as “any activity that learners engage in to further the process of learning a language”. Estaire and Zanon (1994, pp. 13-20) worked with this broad definition but distinguished two main categories of tasks: “communication tasks”, in which the learners’ attention is focused on meaning rather than form, and “enabling tasks”, in which the main focus is on linguistic aspects (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, functions, and discourse). Stern (1992, pp. 195-96) thinks of tasks as primarily involving communication. He associated tasks with “realistic language use” when he writes, “communicative exercises...provide opportunities for relatively realistic language use, focusing the learner’s attention on a task, problem, activity, or topic and not on a particular language point”.

For Ellis (2003, p. 16), “a task is a work plan that requires learners to process language pragmatically in order to achieve an outcome that can be evaluated in terms of whether the correct or propositional content has been conveyed”. Willis (1996, p. 23) pointed out “tasks are always activities where the target language is used by the learner for a communication purpose to achieve an outcome”. Ellis strongly agrees with Willis’s definition and goes further to consider it as presenting “a broad consensus among researchers and educators” (2000, p. 195). He adopted the term “exercise” for any activity not comprising a communicative purpose; therefore, Littlewood (2004) sees that Ellis’s exercise (in contrast to tasks) would correspond to Estaire and Zanon’s (1994) enabling tasks (in contrast to communication tasks). All the above definitions stress the importance of meaning in the process of accomplishing a task.

As there are strong and weak forms of CLT, Nunan (2004) drew a basic distinction between “real-world or target tasks” and “pedagogical tasks” in considering target tasks as uses of language in the world beyond the classroom while pedagogical tasks are those that occur in the classroom. Willis (1996, p. 53) proposed six types of tasks as the basis for TBI. These are listing tasks, sorting and ordering, comparing, problem-solving, sharing personal experience, and creative tasks. Richards (2001) suggested the following typology of pedagogical tasks: jigsaw tasks, information-gap tasks, problem-solving tasks, decision-making tasks, and opinion-exchange tasks.

TBI received both support and criticism; however, few would question the pedagogical value of employing tasks as a vehicle for promoting communication and authentic language use in L2 classrooms. This approach, however, has its drawbacks. Among them, are the cognitive difficulty of the task, the degree of contextual support, the amount of assistance provided to the learner, and the complexity of the language which the learner is required to process and produce (Nunan, 1989). Despite all of these criticisms, TBI still stands as one of the recent approaches applied in EFL.

1.2.2. Product-based CLT Approaches

Recent teaching approaches have focused on what learners do with extended stretches of language in authentic contexts of use. Both the text-based instruction and the competency-based approach focus more on the outcomes or products of learning as the starting point in course design than on classroom processes (Richards, 2006).

1.2.2.1. Text-based Approach

Text-based Instruction, also known as a Genre-based Approach is mainly concerned with what learners do with whole texts in context: it is concerned with units of discourse called texts. To state it differently, it sees communicative competence as involving the mastery of different types of texts. This approach implies that learning targets words through reading texts, such as acquiring words' meaning and their typical language environment from texts. Thornbury (2005, p. 8) claimed, "Language always happens as text and not as isolated words and sentences". Texts include rich word information such as word family, word meaning, lexical chains, and word association. Johns and Davies (1983) asserted that when using texts in learning and teaching vocabulary, a text could be described as a linguistic object, a vehicle for information, and a stimulus for production. They added that texts as linguistic objects are used for language work, specifically grammar or vocabulary.

Richards (2006) argues that text-based teaching focuses primarily on the products of learning rather than the processes involved. It has been pointed out that an emphasis on individual creativity and personal expression is missing from TBI, which is heavily wedded to a methodology based on the study of model texts and the creation of texts based on models. Critics added another demerit of this approach which is concentrating on specific skills instead of focusing on more general language proficiency and it is probably impractical in many situations. Likewise, Richards (n.d.) pointed out that there is a danger that the approach becomes boring over time.

1.2.2.2. Competency-based Instruction

Competency-based Instruction is considered another product-based approach that is designed not around the notion of knowledge, but around the notion of competency. The

focus on competencies or learning outcomes underpins the curriculum framework and syllabus specification, teaching strategies, and assessment (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Competency-based Language Teaching or CBLT for short is based on a functional perspective on language teaching and its framework is often tailored to meet learners' needs and the language skills they need can be accurately predicted or determined.

Representing the core of this approach, the CBA is going to be deeply examined in the coming sections of the present chapter.

1.3. The Competency-based Approach

Curriculum development focuses on various learning aspects. Some focus on skills and personal development while others focus more on knowledge transmission and assessment of that knowledge. The application of the learner-oriented approach to language teaching is called Competency-based Language Teaching. The CBA came as an attempt to bridge the gap between what the students learned at school and real-life tasks i.e. between school life and real life.

The CBA is a teaching approach that focuses on the outcomes of language learning and CBLT represents the application of competency-based education principles to language teaching. CBLT emphasises what learners are expected to achieve with the target language. In other words, the approach sees outputs as very important rather than the learning process. This means, starting with a clear picture of what is important for students to be able to do, then organising curriculum, instruction, and assessment to make sure this learning ultimately happens. CBLT demands that language is connected to a social context rather than being taught in isolation. It requires learners to demonstrate that they can use the language to

communicate effectively (Paul, 2008; Richards and Rodgers, 2001; Wong, 2008). According to Docking (1994, p. 16), CBLT:

...is designed not around the notion of subject knowledge but around the notion of competency. The focus moves from what students know about language to what they can do with it. The focus on competencies or learning outcomes underpins the curriculum framework and syllabus specification, teaching strategies, assessment and reporting

According to Auerbach (1986, as cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p.146), there are eight key features that are essential for CBLT:

1. A focus on successful functioning in society which means that language is taught in order to prepare the students for the different demands of the world
2. A focus on life skills to determine that language is always taught as a medium of communication in concrete tasks in which specific language forms/skills are required
3. Task- or performance-centered orientation.
4. Modularized instruction emphasises that the competencies which are taught have to be systematically separated into manageable parts so that both the teacher and students can handle the content and realise their progress
5. Outcomes that are made explicit a priori.

6. Continuous and ongoing assessment to determine which skills they lack and after they have had instructions in that skill they are tested again to ascertain whether they have achieved the necessary skills or not
7. Demonstrated mastery of performance objectives.
8. Individualised, student-centered instruction.

Competency-based instruction (CBI) refers to an approach to teaching which focuses on teaching the skills and behaviours needed to perform competencies. Competency-based Education (CBE) is based on a set of outcomes that are derived from an analysis of tasks learners are typically required to perform in real-life situations. CBE is believed to improve the quality of teaching and learning because of its focus on learning outcomes (Richards and Schmidt, 2002). Schneck (1978) defined CBA as outcome-based instruction that is adaptive to the needs of students, teachers, and the community. Therefore, it is based on a set of outcomes that are derived from an analysis of tasks typically required of students in life-role situations. In this context, Slavin (1998) asserted that students must receive specific instruction on how to use their skills and information to solve problems and encounter a variety of problem-solving experiences if they are to be able to apply much of what they learned in school.

According to Savage (1993), the competency-based model was defined by the U.S. Office of Education as a performance-based process leading to demonstrated mastery of basic and life skills necessary for the individual to function proficiently in society. It is, therefore, a functional approach to education that emphasises life skills and evaluates mastery of those skills according to actual learner performance. To put it in a nutshell, CBA aims at making learners able to transfer and use their acquired knowledge in their everyday situations. Learners will thus see learning as being worthwhile and having relevance for both their studies and

learning. Docking (1994) pointed out that teaching with competencies serves as an agent of change because it improves teaching and learning as well. When teaching, it offers teachers an opportunity to revitalise their education and training programmes and the quality of both assessment and teaching will thus improve; when learning, students' learning will be enhanced by the clear and precise description and specification of outcomes and the continuous feedback the assessment of competencies may offer.

As earlier stated, this approach entails the use in combination of all the knowledge, know-how, and attitudes required for the solutions of real-life problems from which learning by competencies departs. In other words, learners will use their knowledge in grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, pronunciation, and other language sub-matters to communicate effectively in real-time listening, speaking, reading, and writing situations that they might encounter outside the confines of the classroom. Furthermore, competency-based language learning consists of knowing what to do, where, when, and with whom; or, being linguistically, communicatively, and socio-linguistically competent in the learned language (Nkwetisama, 2012).

1.3.1. Historical Foundations of the CBA

In the last two decades, CBE was formed as an educational trend in different places all over the world. A certain number of developed countries such as Great Britain, Germany, Canada, and New Zealand and even developing countries all over the world including Algeria and Jordan welcomed the CBA into their educational system in an attempt of updating their educational systems. These systems put their trust in this approach because it is based on solid principles that would lead to the success of education in particular and the success and prosperity of the country in general. However, the origin of CBA is still a controversial issue.

Because of the existing similarities of teaching with competencies and the Taylorist scientific management theories, some theorists believe that the origin of this approach is indebted to Taylor, one of the founders of industrial psychology at the beginning of the twentieth century and the first person to have elevated job analysis to a science.

In addition to the existing similarities between the Taylorist approaches and the CBA, the latter is most directly originated from the behavioural objectives movement of the 1950s in the United States. The behaviourist model of human psychology or the movement of behavioural objectives of the 1950s in the US is based on the view that CBA is mainly concerned with making inferences about competency based on performance and asserting that teachers are encouraged to express their instructional objectives as changes in students' observable behaviour. Bloom (1971) believes that promoters of this movement advocated the specification of the objectives as directly observable behaviours which can be consistently recorded as either present or absent. Burke (1989) pointed out that the origins of CBA can be traced back to the 1920s, exactly to ideas of educational reform linked to industrial/business models centered on the specification of outcomes in behavioural objectives form. Later development extended its applications to elementary schools and to minimum competency standards for high school graduation and vocational education.

The introduction of CBE was both evolutionary and revolutionary. Brown (1994) asked the question of where did the CBE come from and answered this question by dividing the evolution of this trend in teaching into five sequential generations. Brown's historical account traced the first generation of CBE to the application of scientific management to work roles and the second generation to the development of mastery learning models in the U.S. during the 1920s and 1930s. He suggested that the third generation of competency-based approaches was

primarily concerned with formative vocational education and training, and reflected instructional design informed by psychology: namely, the work of Skinner; therefore, this stage provided CBE with its connection to behaviourism. The fourth generation, in which the term “competency” first appeared, witnessed the development of behavioural objectives which were written in a very specific form. Brown also pegged the introduction of systematic instructional design and curriculum development in this era. Underlying the transition from one generation of competency-based approaches to the next is the increased focus on outcomes, versus process (Brown, 1994).

Butova (2015) had a different point of view from that of Brown. He pointed out that the development of the CBE can be divided into three distinct consequent stages; the first stage dated from the mid-1960s and early 1970s; the second one between the mid-1970s to the early 1990s, and the third one from 1990 onward. It was within the second stage of the development that the psychological aspect dominated the CBA, and some educational aspects were established in general in the field of foreign language learning at the same stage due to the linguistic origin of the competency theory (Burns and Klingstedt, 1973). In 1990, the Council of Europe separated strategic, social, sociolinguistic, linguistic, and educational competency to become the first legal confirmation of the notions of the CBE. Finally, the third stage of development of the CBE was characterised by global development and active implementation of conclusions made at the previous stages (Zimnyaya, 2004).

In reaction to concerns that students were not taught the skills they used in real life after school, it is asserted that the CBA was first adopted by the American educational system because of the problems that faced their educational system during the 1960s. Tuxworth cited that “the 60s were tumultuous times in education in the USA: demands for curriculum reform

dissatisfaction with teacher training were features of the climate when emerged the CBET” (1994, p. 110). It then evolved through applications to other professional education programmes in the USA in the 1970s, vocational training programmes in the UK, Germany, and many others in the 1980s, and vocational professional skills recognition in Australia in the 1990s.

Some commentators have argued that the CBA developed in ways that were influenced by more than one narrow approach to learning. For instance, Harris et.al (1995, p. 38) pointed out that five learning approaches were related to the design of the CBA in the 1970s. These were: Mastery Learning (Bloom, 1974), Criterion-referenced Testing (Propham, 1978), Minimum-competency Testing (Jaegan, 1980), Competence in Education (Burke et al., 1975), and Programmed Learning (Skinner, 1952). They added that these five movements shared three features: module design, assessment around a list of observable behaviours, and the concept of mastery (Harris et.al, 1995, p. 38).

1.3.2. Definition of Competence, Competency and Communicative Competence

Before implementing competency-based objectives, a particular procedure should be followed. First, the terms competence, competency, and communicative competence should be clearly defined according to the related literature (Nunan 1990; Richards 2001).

1.3.2.1. The Notion of Competency and its Numerous Interpretations

The words “competence” and “competency” are often used interchangeably: in dictionaries, the two words mean the same thing. Both the concepts of competence and competency are nouns that refer to the quality of being competent; adequacy; possession of required skill, knowledge, qualification, or capacity (American Heritage Dictionary, 2017).

Norris (1991) believes that despite its practicality and apparent simplicity, the term competence has had a troubled history. The meaning of competency had been the subject of much debate, and the following examples of views regarding the meaning of the term ‘competency’ indicate the difficulty of obtaining a precise and universally acceptable definition. The lack of a clear definition of the term competency was recognised by Hoffmann (1999, p. 275) who stated:

The term competency is multi-faceted. Some have defined the term narrowly by using a single element of human performance. Others have allowed their definition to overlap several of the elements of human performance. The shifting definition has brought with it a degree of confusion over the nature of the concept and its application.

The concept of competence had been used in other domains than education; more importantly, it dated back to even ancient civilisations. It can be dated back to Persian (in the code of Hammurabi), Greek (in Lydia of Plato), and Roman times (in general language). It was used in Europe from the sixteenth century and entered professional literature in law (competence of courts and witnesses), public administration (competence of institutions), organisational structure (competence of departments or functions), management (core competence, competence management), and education and training (competence-based education) from the seventies of the last century (Mulder, 2007). The list below (Mulder et al, 2009, p. 756) shows the milestones in the use of the concept of competence and indicates that the debate over the concept of competence is not new:

- Use in daily speech in the Persian, Greek and Roman eras.
- Used in Western languages in the sixteenth century.
- Used in behavioural sciences in the 1950s by White in 1959.

- Used in systems science in the 1970s by Gilbert in 1978.
- Used in management sciences: 1980s by Boyatzis in 1982.
- Used in corporate strategy in the 1990s by Prahalad and Hamel, in 1990.
- Institutionalised in education in the 2000s by the European Commission in 2005-2006.

Although it has been in use for decades, the term competence has enjoyed increasing currency in educational research, psychology, and neighboring disciplines in the last few years (Csapó, 2004; Rychen and Salganik, 2003).

Brown (1994) maintained that the specific use of the term 'competencies' first appeared in the early 1960s and was associated with a report in the USA on the effectiveness of teacher performance. In teaching contexts, the term competence focuses attention on learning outcomes: it is what people can do, involving both the ability to perform in a given context and the capacity to transfer knowledge (Harris et.al, 1995, p. 16). Ameziane (2005, p. 12) defined competency as a “know-how to act” process which integrates and mobilises a set of capacities, skills, and an amount of knowledge that the learner is going to use effectively in various problem-solving situations and circumstances that have never occurred before.

The definition of the term competency is multifaceted as schools of thought provide different definitions. Behaviourists conceive competence in terms of the discrete and observable behaviours associated with the completion of specific tasks. Evidence of the possession of the competency is based on direct observation of performance. One advantage of conceptualising competencies in behavioural terms is that it is helpful in course design,

especially when the emphasis is on practical tasks (Gonczi, 1997). While the behaviourist school of thought focuses on observable and measurable behaviours that result from going through certain training, the constructivist school uses the term competency to illustrate the construction of capacities that are acquired from social interaction between members of a group of individuals who are sharing a particular situation. If the above definition is considered, it is concluded that this term is defined from a constructivist point of view because it divides knowledge into conceptual and procedural, and then organises it into schemas that help identify a problem task and its solution through an efficient action within a set of situations (Stoof, et.al, 2002).

Though the term competence is a ‘useful term, bridging the gap between education and job requirements’ (Van Der Klink and Boon, 2002, p. 6), it is rather a fuzzy concept (Delamare and Le Deist, 2005). Competency in the USA was referred to as the ‘behavioural approach’ and defined as individual attributes that are related to effective performance. Whereas, in the UK the term ‘competence’ is more common that reflects the achievement of occupational standards. Competency was also referred to as an independent variable whilst competence was a dependent variable (Grzeda, 2005). The USA’s approach was called ‘the input approach’ in comparison to the UK’s ‘the output approach’ (Hoffmann, 1999).

According to Sckneckenberg and Wildt (2006), competency refers to superior performance. It is a skill or characteristic which enables a person to carry out specific or superior actions at a superior level of performance. To put it simply, competence is one of the steps to be gone through before achieving competency which is the ultimate and most superior goal or level. Therefore, the meaning of the term competency becomes clearer than before and confirms the definition relating it to superior performance or ability relating to excellence in a specific activity model of defining the term competency. The learner has to go through an

ascending process in which he first goes through '*competence*' to reach '*competency*' which is placed at the top of the ladder (Sckneckenberg and Wildt, 2006).

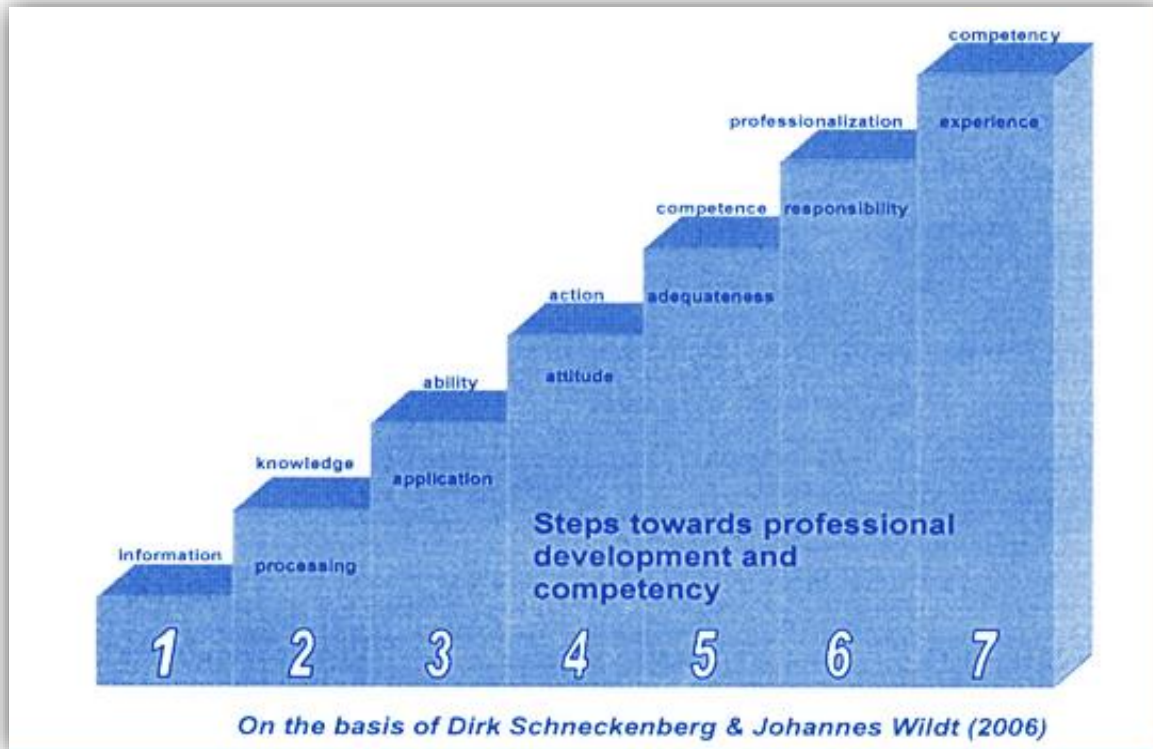


Figure 1.1. Competency Development Model (Scheneckenberg and Wildt, 2006)

The model of Schneckenberg and Wildt presents achieving competency as a seven-step ascending ladder that starts with the step of perceiving information utilising semantic assimilates which are to be accommodated and adapted in mental structures and leads to the second step which is knowledge. Then, if this knowledge is applied in the appropriate context, it will lead to the next step which is ability. The latter is going to be combined with an attitude and motivational orientation and is afterward realised in the activity performance. Reaching the next step of professionalisation is followed by achieving the desired competency-the most superior performance and the last step in the ladder (Sckneckenberg and Wildt, 2006).

The confusion and debate concerning the concept of competence and competency make it impossible to impute a coherent theory or at least to arrive at a definition capable of accommodating and reconciling all the different ways that the term is used.

1.3.2.2. Definition of Communicative Language Competence

If language learners were asked what they think the goal of a language course is, they would probably answer that it is to teach the grammar and vocabulary of that language. However, if they are asked what their goal is as language learners, they would most probably answer that it is to be able “to communicate” in that language. Language is a social phenomenon that is used as a means of communication and interaction between members of a community. The goal, then, of L2 teaching is to develop students' communicative competence (Hymes, 1972), a term coined in opposition to the Chomskian concept of competence that refers to the abstract grammatical knowledge speakers have for producing correct sentences in a language. By ‘competence’ Chomsky (1965, p. 4) referred to “the unconscious knowledge of the ideal speaker-listener set in a completely homogeneous speech community”. Such underlying knowledge enables the user of language to produce and understand an infinite set of sentences out of a finite set of rules. ‘Performance’, on the other hand, is concerned with the process of applying the underlying knowledge to the actual language use. However, ‘performance’ cannot reflect competence except under ideal circumstances because it can be affected by such variables as memory limitations, distractions, the shift of attention and interest, errors, and some other variables (Chomsky, 1965).

Chomsky’s distinction of competence and performance came under fire by Hymes (1972) who drew attention to the ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogeneous speech community adopted by Chomsky and qualified it as “unreal and misleading” as his theory

does not account for socio-cultural factors. Hymes maintained that his theory of communicative competence was a definition of what a speaker needs to know to be communicatively competent in a speech community. He defined communicative competence not only as an inherent grammatical competence but also as the ability to use grammatical competence in a variety of communicative situations, thus bringing the sociolinguistic perspective into Chomsky's linguistic view of competence. In Hymes's view, a person who acquires communicative competence acquires both the knowledge and the ability for language use (Hymes, 1972).

In an attempt to clarify the concept of communicative competence, Widdowson (1983) made a distinction between competence and capacity. He defined communicative competence in terms of the knowledge of linguistic and sociolinguistic conventions and referred to capacity as procedural or communicative capacity. He understood the ability to use knowledge as a means of creating meaning in a language. According to him, ability is neither a component of competence nor does it turn into competence, but remains "an active force for continuing creativity", i.e., a force for the realisation of what Halliday called the "meaning potential" (1978, p.27). Having defined communicative competence in this way, he gave more attention to performance or real language use in his reflecting on the relationship between competence and performance (Bagarić and Djigunović, 2007).

The concept of communicative competence was then further developed in the early 1980s by Canale and Swain who defined communicative competence in terms of four components:

- **Grammatical competence:** the grammatical, lexical, semantic, and phonological competence

- **Sociolinguistic competence:** the understanding of the functional aspects of communication (including role relationships, personal factors, social and cultural context...)
 - **Discourse competence:** the linguistic and meaning relationships within the discourse (cohesion, coherence, gesture...)
 - **Strategic competence:** referred to the coping strategies developed to solve the learning problems and to be autonomous.
- (1980, p. 4)

Unlike Hymes, Canale, Swain and Widdowson, Savignon (1983) put much greater emphasis on the aspect of ability in her concept of communicative competence. She defined communicative competence as “the ability to function in a truly communicative setting-that is, in a dynamic exchange in which linguistic competence must adapt itself to the total informational input, both linguistic and paralinguistic, of one or more interlocutors” (1972, p. 8). According to her, the followings are some of the characters of communicative competence:

- Communicative competence is a dynamic rather than a static concept. It depends on the negotiation of meaning between two or more people who share to some degree the same symbolic system
- Communicative competence is applied to both written and spoken language, as well as to many other symbolic systems
- Communicative competence is context-specific. Communication takes place in an infinite diversity of circumstances, and success in a particular role depends on one’s understanding of the context and on prior experience of a similar kind (1997, p. 272)

Later on, Savignon (1983) adapted the inverted pyramid to show the hypothetical integration of four components of the communicative competence that learners gradually expand. Communicative competence as shown in the figure below comprises four sub-interrelated competencies: grammatical competence, discourse competence, socio-cultural competence, and strategic competence.

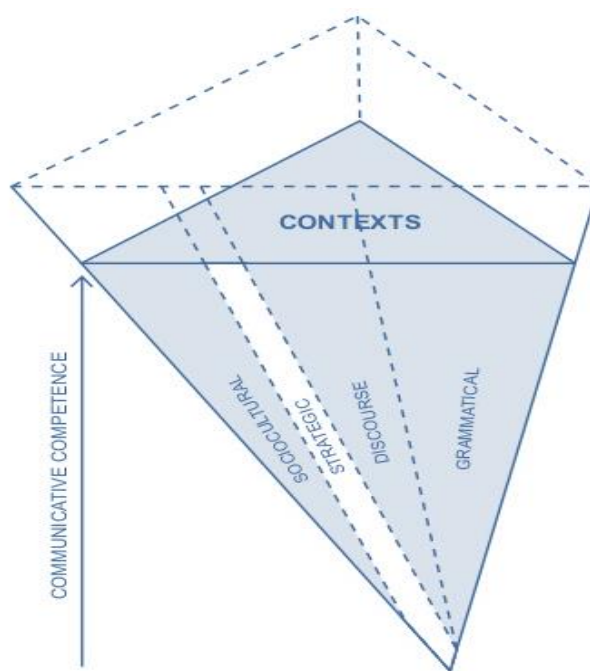


Figure 1.2. Communicative Competence Components of Savignon (1983, p. 8)

According to Richards (2006, p. 3), communicative competence, includes the following aspects of language knowledge:

- Knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions
- Knowing how to vary our use of language according to the setting and the participants (e.g., knowing when to use formal and informal speech or when to use language appropriately for written as opposed to spoken communication)

- Knowing how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g., narratives, reports, interviews, conversations)
- Knowing how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one's language knowledge (e.g., through using different kinds of communication strategies).

The development of the concept of communicative competence reveals that from the moment of its introduction into the linguistic discourse, the latter has been constantly changed and adapted to the context of its use (Bagarić and Djigunović, 2007).

1.3.3. Theoretical Foundations of the CBA

New theories namely Behaviourism, Cognitivism, and Constructivism have gained ground and have been the main paradigms that have marked the world of education (Brown and Zhou, 2015). CBA is a reaction to the traditional teaching approach which teaches lessons without definite real-world applications. It is, in fact, an eclectic method adopting concepts from several modern learning theories.

Harris et al. (1995) believe that CBE had been influenced by three major schools of educational philosophies: the behaviourist, the cognitive, and the humanist. Skinner (1953) is seen as the major proponent of the behaviourist school which appears to be highly supportive of task-oriented approaches such as CBE/T. He suggested that there can only be speculation as to what occurs during the learning process, and therefore the only way to assess this process is to evaluate a person's behaviour or performance as he learns. Behaviourists promote the theory that the acquisition of knowledge is aided by rewarding a correct response, namely positive reinforcement, rather than punishing an incorrect response, which is known

as negative reinforcement. In CBA, this can often be accomplished with immediate feedback on the completion of criteria-based tasks. Secondly, the cognitive school of thought, which is built on the theory that knowledge, is acquired by the continuous refinement of schemata in which the understanding formed by experiences and new experiences is evaluated. Thirdly, the humanist school of thought- whose principal proponents Harris et.al (1995), Maslow (1970), and Rogers (1983)- believes that a person should be regarded as a holistic being, and individual differences in learning processes have to be emphasised and taken into consideration. This theory tends to be at odds with the predetermined and prescriptive nature of CBA.

Norris (1991, p.332) presented an overview that demonstrated the variety of philosophical foundations of the competency model. He provided three different theories or constructs of competence:

- **A behaviourist construct:** Competence is treated as something a person is or should be able to do. It is a description of action, behaviour or outcome capable of demonstration and assessment.
- **A cognitive construct:** Competence as what a person knows and can do under ideal circumstances.
- **A generic construct:** The generic competence approach favours the elicitation, through behavioral event or critical incident interviewing, of those general abilities associated with expert performers.

Gonczi (1997) presented another exploration of the philosophical foundation of CBA believing that the concept of competency goes beyond the traditional conceptualisations which concentrate only on the tasks that need to be performed or on the generic attributes or

capacities that underpin competency. He distinguished between three basic conceptions of the nature of competency: the behaviourist, the generic, and the holistic. In the behaviourist view, competence is conceived in terms of the discrete and observable behaviours associated with the completion of specific tasks. The generic conception includes underlying attributes such as knowledge or critical thinking capability and provides the basis for transferable or more specific attributes. He argued that these generic competencies are somewhat disconnected from future professional performance and thus are not task-specific. The combination of the two approaches creates a more holistic, integrated, and relational approach (Gonczi, 1997).

Understanding these trends among learning theories and their limitations is fundamental to having a thorough idea about the origins and development of CBE (Harris et.al, 1995).

1.3.3.1. The Behaviourist Theory in Education

Behaviourism is linked with empiricism, which stresses scientific information and observation, rather than subjective or metaphysical realities. According to this theory, learning is defined as the enduring modification of behaviour- being the set of objectively observable reactions of a body that reacts to a stimulus (Pavlov: 1849-1936, Thorndike: 1874-1949, and Skinner: 1904-1990). Other influential behaviorists include B.F. Skinner (1904-1990) and James B. Watson (1878-1958).

The processes that occur between stimulus and response can neither be observed nor measured; therefore, learning can be observed in stimulus and response (Tomic, 1993). In other words, behaviourism is a learning theory that focuses only on objectively observable behaviours and discounts any independent activity of the mind. Behaviour theorists define

learning as nothing more than the acquisition of new behaviour based on environmental conditions. When applying the tenets of behaviourism to education, teaching is defined as the arrangement of contingencies of reinforcement under which students learn. Of course, students learn without being taught in their natural environments, but when teachers arrange special contingencies, this accelerates learning. That is these contingencies will speed up the emergence of behaviour which would otherwise be acquired slowly or make sure the desired behaviour would appear (Skinner, 1968). The teacher's role is, then, to help students learn by conditioning them through identifying the desired behaviours in measurable, observable terms, recording these behaviours and their frequencies, identifying appropriate reinforcers of the desired behaviour, and then providing the reinforcer as soon as the student displays the behaviour.

Though Behaviourist theorists attempted to explain learning with one single set of conditioning principles, no theory may be a complete model for the investigation of learning in general and language learning in particular. In this respect, Demirezen (1988, p. 139) presented seven counterarguments to Behaviourist theory of language learning.

1. Basic strategies of language learning within the scope of Behaviourist theory are imitation, reinforcement and rewarding.
2. The learning process in the Behaviourist theory supports the development of analogical learning in children which in turn obstructs the instinctive production of language.
3. Obstructions made on instinctively-based learning will harm the creative way of learning; the intrinsic learning will be delayed because of previously settled rules and drills.

4. The rate of social influence within Behaviourism is not satisfactorily explained.
5. It is highly unlikely for learning to be the same for each individual.
6. This theory is more fruitful on animals and can only be true in the early stages of learning when learners are infants.
7. Many of the learning processes are too complex, and for this reason, there are intervening variables, which cannot be observed between stimulus and response.

1.3.3.2. The Cognitive Theory in Education

Cognitivism is a learning theory that focuses on the processes involved in learning rather than on the observed behaviour. In the late 1950s, learning theory began to shift away from the Behaviourists as psychologists began to de-emphasise the focus on the overt and observable behaviour and stress instead the focus on more complex cognitive processes such as thinking, problem-solving, language, concept-formation, and information processing (Snelbecker, 1983).

The cognitivist revolution replaced behaviourism in the 1960s as the dominant paradigm. This paradigm combined new theories in psychology and linguistics with new technologies and new sciences such as computing and neuroscience. Cognitive education is composed of a set of instructional methods that assist students in learning how to recall or reorganise knowledge, as well as developing students' understanding and intellectual abilities and skills (Reigeluth, 1999). Tenants of the cognitivist theory seek to highlight the internal processes of learning. Ausubel (1963) and Gagné (1965) were among the most influential authors who developed this theory. According to them, the learner is an active system of

information treatment, similar to a computer. They first looked into the physical components of human memory and into the way information is stored, represented, and illustrated by the human brain. They concluded that the human brain stores information in memory, treats it, and solves problems. This process of data treatment was schematised in 1976 by Gagné who explained how the information (stimulus) that comes from the environment in different forms (visual, auditory, olfactory and tactile) was treated and interpreted. The information is captured by the senses to be transmitted to the sensorial memory where it is decoded. Memory is given a prominent role in the learning process since learning results when information is stored in memory in an organised and meaningful manner (Ertmer and Newby, 1993).

Rejecting the pure stimulus-response approach of the behaviourists, cognitive psychology draws much from the Gestaltists who focus upon insight and define it as "the sudden perception of relationships among elements of a problem situation" (Lefrancois, 1972, p. 189). Cognitive theories view learning as a process of recognition by which the learner perceives new relationships among the parts of problems. In defining how learning occurs, cognitive theories stress the acquisition of knowledge and internal mental structures: they focus on the conceptualisation of students' learning processes and address the issues of how information is received, organised, stored, and retrieved by the mind (Ertmer and Newby, 1993). Stated differently, as opposed to Behaviourists, Cognitivists do not require an outward exhibition of learning but focus more on the internal processes and connections that take place during learning. Cognitivism contends that "the black box" of the mind should be opened and understood. Fontana (1981) believes that the cognitive theory views the learner as an information processor, knowledge as a schema or symbolic mental constructions, and learning as a change in a learner's schemata. Some important classroom principles from cognitive psychology include meaningful learning, organisation, and elaboration.

Cognitivism, like, behaviourism, emphasises the role that environmental conditions play in facilitating learning. However, the active nature of the learner is perceived quite differently (Ertmer and Newby, 1993).

1.3.3.3. The Constructivist Theory in Education

The 1980s and 1990s witnessed the emergence of constructivism as a leading metaphor for human learning. This newborn in the field of educational psychology was a direct outcome as interest was slowly directed away from behaviourism and information processing theories (Mayer, 1992). Though constructivism is considered a branch of cognitivism as they both conceive learning as a mental activity (Ertmer and Newby, 1993), Jordan et al. (2008, p. 55) pointed out that constructivism differs from cognitivism as follows:

...whereas cognitivism focuses on how information is processed, constructivism focuses on what people do with information to develop knowledge. In particular, constructivism holds that people actively build knowledge and understanding by synthesising the knowledge they already possess with new information

As one moves along the behaviourist-cognitivist-constructivist continuum, the focus of instruction shifts from teaching to learning, from the passive transfer of facts and routines to the active application of ideas to problems (Ertmer and Newby, 1993). Constructivism in this sense is more concerned with what people do with information than how they store it or retrieve it for use: it is about knowledge construction, not information processing. Constructivists define learning as an active process of knowledge construction rather than a process of knowledge accumulation and acquisition. Learners are proactive beings who construct their own knowledge and interact with their environment. They construct their

knowledge through their own experiences. By reflecting on our experiences, we construct our own understanding of the world we live in; knowledge is seen as the result of the activities of active beings (Thanasoulas, 2000).

Piaget (1896-1980) and Vygotsky (1896-934) are recognised as the main pioneers of constructivism and social constructivism. Both are critics of behaviourism and the reductionist approach that have significantly influenced the field of education and pedagogical research through their diverse research works. Constructivism has its roots in the cognitive theories of Piaget and Vygotsky and embraces several aspects of both of those theories. The psychologist Piaget's child development work gave birth to the constructivist movement in education. The central idea of his view of learning is that learners construct knowledge through their various interactions with their environment (Marlowe and Page, 2005). This suggests that knowledge is not innate or transmitted by the environment. Knowledge results from learners' continuous adaptation to the reality to be learned. According to Piaget (1968), intellectual adaptation is a state of equilibrium between assimilation and accommodation. When faced with new problems, learners will try to solve them using the intellectual tools they possess-this is assimilation. If unable to solve them using this strategy, they modify their intellectual activity-this is accommodation. In short, this means that when a problem creates an imbalance, learners try to reduce this imbalance. By constructing more suitable structures and creating the conditions for their own cognitive progress. According to Piaget, learning is therefore the result of a dynamic process in which learners seek a balance between themselves and their environment.

Vygotsky's work led him to consider another element that would prove essential to his thesis: the historical and cultural context and the role of social mediation in learning-called

social constructivism. According to him, consciousness and thought are not strictly internal characteristics since they develop from external activities performed in a specific social environment (Brown, 2000). He emphasised the importance of interacting with others to become aware of one's own actions and thought processes, as well as the essential role of culture in thought formation. According to Legendre (2005), it is precisely this awareness that determines how we act, i.e. our ability to take initiative and successfully perform certain activities. He stated that mediation's role in learning is based on the principle of the zone of proximal development, which he defined as the difference between what learners can do independently or with others' help. According to Vygotsky, interventions have to target this development zone to bring learners to the upper limit of the zone. He proposed mediation or support to bridge this gap (Brown, 2000).

Both Piaget and Vygotsky are regarded as constructivists, still, key ideas of their theories differ. Piaget found that children act independently on the physical world to discover what it has to offer while Vygotsky thought that human mental activity is the result of social learning. Finally, there is no interest in arguing the virtues of one man's ideas over the other, however, both include the notion of learner autonomy in somehow different ways in their theories.

Motschnig-Pitrik and Holzinger concluded that the main goal of constructivism is competence, not knowledge as in cognitivism, or achievement as in behaviourism (2002). Consequently, the constructivist learning view and the concept of competence together are stressed as the mainstay of CBE.

1.4. Teachers' Roles in the CBA

The CBA exercised a series of radical changes on how and what to teach: both the teachers and learners' roles were at the core of this change. Within the previous approaches, the teacher was the expert, authority, and knowledge dispenser who strictly followed a given curriculum imposed by higher governmental authorities; however, the introduction of CBA assigned a new role for teachers. Instead of being a fountain of knowledge or sage on the stage, the teacher is now just a guide on the side allowing the learner to be at the heart of the learning process. Teachers' roles change, as they are not presenters of language elements as lesson planners; autonomy shifts the teacher more into the role of counselors (Johnson et al., 1998).

Within CBE, the concept of the constructivist teacher is gaining much attention as that of the constructivist learner. The constructivist teacher models constructivist approaches that engage students in interdisciplinary exploration, collaborative activity, and field-based opportunities for experiential learning, reflection, and self-examination (Casas, 2006). It is strongly believed that if teachers are to be able to employ these strategies in school, students will be able to transfer the competencies they learned at school to real-life situations. Brooks and Brooks enumerate twelve characteristics of a constructivist teacher which apply to all subjects, but only the following descriptors apply to the ELT;

1. Constructivist teachers encourage and accept students' autonomy and initiative
2. Constructivist teachers use raw data and primary sources, along with manipulative, interactive and physical materials
3. When framing tasks, constructivist teachers use cognitive terminology such as "classify", "analyse", "predict" and "create"

4. Constructivist teachers allow the students' response to drive lessons, shift instructional strategies and alter content
 5. Constructivist teachers inquire about students' understanding of concepts before sharing their own understanding of these concepts
 6. Constructivist teachers encourage students to engage in dialogues, both with the teacher and with one another
 7. Constructivist teachers encourage students' inquiry by asking thoughtful, open-ended questions and encouraging students to ask questions of each other
 8. Constructivist teachers seek elaboration of students' initial responses
 9. Constructivist teachers allow waiting time after posing questions
- (1999, p. 103-114)

The shift in roles implies a change in the teacher's attitude toward knowledge and teaching; however, does the shift in roles from traditional to modern approaches mean that teachers are neglected or de-emphasised? This change in the role does not mean that teachers no longer give information; they rather give different types of information in different ways. Teachers explore the world of knowledge along with their learners, motivate and inspire them as well; they also facilitate the process of learning, and above all act as mentors or supportive and understanding coaches. The teachers' role is that of a facilitator because they provide appropriate frameworks and activities for learners to complete and organise pair and group work to foster cooperation, participation, competition, and interaction between them. According to Kompf (1996, p. 173), "constructivist teachers allow student responses to drive

lessons, shift instructional strategies, and alter content”. The idea of the limited role of the teacher is that this encourages students to engage in collaborative learning.

Because working with projects is one of the most distinctive features of the CBA, the teacher, for example, may give his students projects that contain writing papers, essays, reports, publishing web pages, conducting research, answering open-ended questions, creating artwork, organising events and other frameworks that require active engagement and collaboration from the students. In addition to this, the teacher must opt for the most appropriate tasks following the needs of the classroom, i.e. whether the emphasis should be more on vocabulary building and grammatical structures, or reading and writing skills.

The table below shows the shift in teachers’ roles as well as learners’ roles from traditional approaches to the CBA.

Teacher-centered	Learner-centered
Knowledge is transmitted from teacher to students	Learners construct knowledge through gathering, synthesising information problem solving and so on
Learners passively receive information	learners are actively involved
Emphasis on acquisition of knowledge outside the context in which it will be used	Emphasis is on using and communicating knowledge effectively to address emerging issues and problems in real life contexts
The teacher’s role is to be primary information giver and primary evaluator	The teacher’s role is to coach and facilitate. Teachers and learners evaluate learning together.
Teaching and assessing are separated	Teaching and assessing are intertwined
Emphasis is on right answers	Emphasis is on generating better questions and learning from errors.
Desired learning is assessed through the use of objectively scored tests.	Desired learning is assessed through papers, projects, performances, portfolios and the like.

Culture is competitive and individualistic	Culture is cooperative, collaborative and supportive.
Only students are viewed as learners	Teachers and learners learn together.

Table 1.1. Comparison of Teacher-Centered and Learner-Centered Paradigms. (Adapted from Huba and Freed, 2000)

In short, the teacher needs to help learners feel responsible for their learning. If the aforementioned duties and responsibilities are attributed to teachers under the CBA, what roles are assigned to learners?

1.5. Learners' Roles in the CBA

Before dealing with the learners' role in teaching with competencies, a recent distinction between the terms student-centered and learner-centered has been established by language researchers and the two terms should not be used interchangeably. According to Weimer (2002), teaching as student-centered implies a focus on students' needs and thus makes the whole process of teaching seek only products. The student is then identified as a customer and the teacher is serving and satisfying this customer. More importantly, this metaphor gives rise to the idea of education as nothing more than a product; however, being learner-centered focuses attention squarely on learning, how and what the student is learning as well as whether he grasps and applies this learning and above all how will this learning affect him in the future (Weimer, 2002).

As opposed to the traditional approaches in which students acted as passive recipients of knowledge, teaching with CBA asserts that when the learner makes his own path and constructs his own learning, he will certainly be able of using this acquired knowledge in real-life situations. This applies to the famous saying of the American astronomer Carl Sagan in which

he put the constructivist theory in very simple words and asserted, “When you make the finding yourself -even if you are the last person on Earth to see the light- you will never forget it”. When it is said that CBA is learner-centered, it is indicated that the spotlight has moved from the teacher to the student; therefore, instruction focuses mainly on what the student is doing.

Nunan (1995) compared teacher and learner-centeredness and found that the key difference is that, in a learner-centered curriculum key decisions about what will be taught, how it will be taught, when it will be taught, and how it will be assessed will all be made regarding the learner. The belief of the constructivist theory which echoes that effective learning happens when students take stock of what they already know and move beyond it lies heavily on the notion of autonomy: the latter brings along new roles of the teacher as well as a change in the teacher’s attitude towards knowledge and teaching. When students are compelled to assume greater responsibility for directing their learning, they will gradually learn to see themselves as the controllers of their own learning. Learning is then seen as self-initiated and not other-initiated (Johnson et al., 1998).

This shift in roles in CBA is based on the constructivist model in which learners construct rather than receive or assimilate knowledge. Their role will be to integrate, produce, and extend knowledge (Jones et al., 1994). This constructivist model of learning requires active input and engagement from the learners’ side and requires intellectual effort and aids retention. They learn to think critically and to adapt and transfer knowledge across a variety of settings. Because expectations and standards are clear and precise, learners have to be committed to continuing to work on each competency, mastering it, and then progressing to another (Richards and Rogers, 2001). The learner’s role moves from assimilating knowledge by listening, watching, reading, and studying to a process of personal appropriation, questioning

his own convictions which all lead the learner to revise his prior knowledge and its scope. He also compares his own representations with those of his classmates, searches for information and then validates it through consulting various sources of cognitive, affective and motivational strategies in order to set a balance between previous knowledge and his newly acquired knowledge. Learner's autonomy means that he is going to operate his own learning processes and assure the quality of his acquisition which will facilitate his retention. Negotiation, exchange of ideas, and interaction are the most used strategies by learners while learning under the CBA. The Algerian National Ministry of Education summarises the learners' roles within the CBA as follows:

- To know what to learn
- Act upon what he learns
- Build strategies
- Solve problems
- Learn to cooperate and collaborate
- Work autonomously and puts into question his learning process
- Assess one's self (Middle School English Syllabus, 2006, p. 79)

In brief, learners who construct their own way in knowledge today are tomorrow's individuals, capable of demonstrating independence in thought and action, thinking rationally, and are capable of critical participation in the societies they live in.

1.6. Planning Lessons under the CBA

Planning is a central part of the teaching process. In CBLT, each competency must be identified and subdivided into the relevant skills. Modules must then be developed to give students the opportunity to learn and practice those skills. Teachers must determine exactly what and how well students must perform to master the competency.

According to Nkwetisama (2012), a CBA lesson plan often calls for four steps. The first step is referred to as the “presentation of the problem-solving situation” in which the teacher’s task is presenting and giving instructions to learners. This step is based on the theory that learning is most effective when it involves problem-solving situations. It involves new notions to be discovered by learners; therefore, this step can be also regarded as a discovery phase. The need to solve problems in a real-life situation arises during this phase. The second phase is “systematization” in which teachers help and guide learners to examine and bring out relationships between previously learned elements and the elements found in the new problem-solving situation in which they find themselves. This phase is highly learner-centered as the teacher has to move from the traditional role of delivering knowledge to the role of helping learners to construct their knowledge. In a grammar lesson, for instance, the learners’ task is to deduce the rule. Though the learner at this phase is responsible for his learning, the teacher’s intervention is of crucial importance for the learning to take place appropriately. Following the systematization phase is “the application phase” in which the teacher provides his learners with the most appropriate tasks where learners apply the new knowledge. The fourth and final step of planning a lesson is “the partial integration activities”. As its name suggests, this phase is about practicing a series of activities. The teacher presents a new but rather a more complex situation that will necessitate the exercise of the skill to solve a problem which is similar to the competence or skill that learners have learned at the very beginning of the lesson, i.e. during the presentation of the problem-solving situation. The activities provided in this phase must be concrete life situations (Nkwetisama, 2012).

Teaching with competencies does not specify certain procedural sequences or strategies in performing classes. It merely depends on the need for the targeted competency

attainment. The point is to teach life skills by using a language other than language materials (content). Laird (1985) pointed out that the difference between traditional and CBA instruction is summarised in three periods of instruction: pre-instructional period, instructional period, and post-instructional period. In the pre-instructional period, the material of any given traditional approach consists of external experience and knowledge selected and arranged in such a way as to be taken to the classes. CBA takes materials that are related to students' knowledge and experience in the real world and provides activities for carrying out the experience and knowledge in the context of their use to be performed in the classroom. Then, during the instructional period, a teacher adopting a traditional approach presents the material to the class to be memorised and comprehended, while the one adopting CBA makes use of the knowledge and experience in the classroom conducted by the learners in a simulated and real-world environment (Laird, 1985) (see Appendix A for the difference of instructional process between CBA and traditional content-based teaching). The post-instructional period is manifested in traditional approaches with learners trying new behaviour in the real-world after instruction while in CBA, the behaviour is just the follow-up of their previous experience and performance carried out in the classroom (Rambe, 2013).

1.7. Competency-based Assessment

Today, we see increasing demand from educators as well as policymakers to prepare citizens for 21st-century skills and to measure achievement of, or performance on them. In language teaching in general and in CBA in particular, these skills include critical thinking, analytic reasoning, problem-solving, and communicating; therefore, evaluating the learners' gained competency is a key element in CBA as the demand goes beyond simply knowing and includes applying knowledge to everyday problems and tasks. That is, the demand is for both

knowing and being able to use that knowledge in everyday activities and decisions (Shavelson, 2010).

Assessment can be referred to as the gathering of information about an individual's ability to perform specific tasks. Competency-based assessment is at the heart of CBA teaching. Jessup (1991) suggested that not only does a competency-based to education require new forms of assessment, but also assessment takes a more significant role, becoming an integral part of the learning process as well as a means of evaluating it.

Wolf (2001) pointed out that assessing competence should be importantly characterised by an emphasis on clear and transparent outcomes. However, the emphasis on outcomes and "transparency" is not peculiar to the competence-based context. It is also a defining characteristic of a rather broader theory of measurement, that of criterion-referencing. In CBLT programmes, assessment is criterion-referenced rather than norm-referenced. In a criterion-referenced assessment, scores are interpreted with respect to a specific level or domain of ability, while in a norm-referenced assessment; scores are interpreted with relation to the performance of a particular group of individuals (Bachman, 1990). Nunan (2007) asserted that learners are able to obtain useful diagnostic feedback on their progress and achievement since explicit criteria are provided against which they can compare their performances. All the major features of competency-based assessment as currently advocated are summarised in the quote below.

Competence-based assessment is a form of assessment that is derived from a specification of a set of outcomes; that so clearly states both the outcomes-general and specific-that assessors, students and interested third parties can all make reasonably objective judgments

with respect to student achievement or non-achievement of these outcomes; and that certifies student progress on the basis of demonstrated achievement of these outcomes. Assessments are not tied to time served in formal educational settings (Grant et al., 1979, p. 5)

In traditional environments, the purpose of assessment is to identify whether or not, and to what extent learners are able to retrieve previously memorised information. CBA puts high emphasis on assessment methods and strategies which are described as formative not summative. The table below, based on the work of O'Connor (2002), summarises the differences between assessments and grades in traditional classes and those in competency-based classes.

Traditional Classrooms	Competency-based classrooms
One grade is given per assignment. An assignment may be a quiz, a test, homework, project, or anything the student must complete.	One grade is given for each specific competency. Students may be assessed throughout the process but these formative assessments will not typically be considered in the final evaluation.
Assessments are based on a percentage system.	Standards are criterion or proficiency-based. Specific criteria and standards are made available to students ahead of time.
Traditional grades may rely on a mix of assessment, achievement, effort, and behavior to determine the final grade and may include late penalties or extra credit.	Grades measure only achievements. Information about effort and behavior may be reported but it is not part of the competency assessment. There are no penalties or extra credit.
Everything goes in the grade book regardless of the purpose. Every assessment score is included in determining the final grade no	Students advance only in terms of the competency.

matter when it was collected during the module. The final grade determines whether the student advances to the next level.	
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Table 1.2. Traditional Versus Competency-based Grading Style (O'Connor, 2002)

The process of assessment covers activities of grading, examining, and certifying. Not only the students' competencies assessed but also their attitudes and performance. Chen (2003, p. 22) stated, "Constructivist assessment honours learners' attempts for building knowledge and understanding, not its reproduction". Thus, learners' demonstration of knowledge construction, acquisition, and their products should be noted as only part of the evaluation; the process should also be evaluated. In addition to written exams and formal tests, assessment in constructivist environments may take several forms such as assessing learners' portfolios, research reports, project works, essays, and term papers. It may include the evaluation of performance in group or class discussions, debates, or plays. A teacher may also evaluate his learners' participation, and rely on peer evaluation, self-evaluation, and group evaluation (Wilson, 1996).

1.7.1. The Project

Project work may be defined as a learner-oriented activity that can be carried out individually, in pairs, or in groups. For Haines, "project work is not a replacement for other teaching methods but rather an approach to learning which complements mainstream methods and which can be used with almost all levels, ages and abilities of students" (1989, p. 1). It can be conducted intensively over a short period or extended over weeks or a semester (Stoller, 2002).

For syllabus designers, the project work represents the visible and assessable manifestation of the learners' competencies as it reflects their command of language and of the skills and strategies they have acquired throughout the unit (Teacher's book of the 3rd year, 2011). Moreover, the project boosts the learners' sense of achievement resulting in an increasing sense of achievement, responsibility, self-esteem, self-confidence, and autonomy in learning (Teacher's book of the 1st year, 2005, p. 21). Hedge defined the project as follows

An extended task which usually integrates language skills work through a number of activities. These activities combine in working towards an agreed goal and may include planning, the gathering of information through reading, listening, interviewing, etc., discussion of the information, problem-solving, and oral or written reporting, and display (1993, p. 276)

Before being presented to the class or handed to the teacher, any given project has to go through some worthwhile steps. These include planning; gathering information; assigning roles to members of the project; solving problems and others. This will allow enough room for learners to exercise and develop their cognitive skills both inside and outside the confines of the classroom and results in increasing their sense of responsibility and autonomy in learning. Therefore, the value of the project does not only lie in the final outcome but in the process toward the endpoint.

Sheppard and Stoller (1995) proposed an eight-step sequence of activities for orchestrating project work in an ESP classroom. Their model has been fine-tuned and tested as well to generate a revised model that gives an easy-to-manage structure to project work and

guides teachers and learners in developing meaningful projects. Stoller (2002, p 112) maintained that in the aim of moving from the initial conception of the project to the actual debate, the instructor and his learners go through the following ten steps:

1. Agree on a theme for the project
2. Determine the final outcome
3. Structure the project
4. Instructor prepares students for the language demands of information gathering
5. Gather information
6. Instructor prepares students for the language demands
7. Compile and analyse information
8. Instructor prepares students for the language demands of the culminating activity
9. Present the final product
10. Evaluate the project.

Many benefits of incorporating project work in second and foreign language settings have been suggested. First, the process leading to the end product of project work provides opportunities for learners to develop their confidence and independence (Fried-Booth, 2002). Learners also demonstrate increased self-esteem, and positive attitudes toward learning (Stoller, 2006). In this regard, Shekan (1998) pointed out that project work enables the gradual development of autonomy with progressively greater responsibility being taken by the learner. Stoller added that project-based learning provides opportunities for “the natural integration of language skills” (2006, p. 33). From a motivational perspective, projects being authentic tasks, are more meaningful to students, increase interest, motivation to participate,

and can promote learning enjoyment, and motivation also stem from the fact that classroom language is not predetermined, but depends on the nature of the project (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). According to Allen (2004), another set of reported benefits of project work pertains to the development of problem-solving and higher-order critical thinking skills. These skills are very important since they are life-long and transferable to settings outside the classroom. Dörnyei (2001) suggested that among other potential benefits of project work: encouraging motivation; fostering group cohesiveness; increasing expectancy of success in the target language; achieving a synthesis of academic and social goals; reducing anxiety; increasing the significance of effort relative to ability, and promoting effort-based attributions.

1.7.2. The Portfolio

In education, a portfolio is defined as a purposeful collection of work that provides information about one's efforts, progress, or achievement in a given area. Weigle (2002, p. 199) defined the portfolio as “a reflection of the learning situation since it describes what the student has done in the class”.

Language portfolios are made up of three parts: the passport, the language biography, and the dossier. The passport contains factual information about the language learner. It gives a history of the learners' language learning experiences which in L2 settings refers to learning English. It may also contain any certificates or qualifications which show the learners' level in an internationally transparent manner. The second part is the language biography which refers to a personal history of the learners' language learning experience, and self-assessment materials. The third item that constitutes a good portfolio is the dossier which is a collection of course works showing learners' level of English. It may include corrected class or homework, tests, exams, voice or video recordings, or any other part of the project of work.

Richards and Schmidt (2002) pointed out that the portfolio is both a learning and assessment tool. It serves as a tool of learning as it gives students a sense of commitment, ownership, pride, and achievement that leads them to take more responsibility for their own progress. Furthermore, the portfolio helps them develop a reflective approach to language learning and to develop language-learning strategies which help them to learn independently. Guided by their teachers, learners record their progress repeatedly over time and assess their own progress in the foreign language.

Portfolios used well in classrooms have several advantages. They help in documenting and evaluating learners' achievements in a much more nuanced way than selected-response tests can (Bowles, 2021). In addition, portfolios can be integrated easily into instruction, i.e. used for assessment for learning. Portfolios also encourage learners' self-evaluation and reflection, as well as ownership of learning (Seifert and Sutton, 2011).

However, there are some major disadvantages of portfolio use. First, a good portfolio assessment takes an enormous amount of teacher time and organisation: the time is needed to help students understand the purpose and structure of the portfolio, decide which work samples to collect, and finally review and evaluate the portfolios out of class time is also enormously time-consuming. Teachers have to weigh if the time spent is worth the benefits of the portfolio use.

Conclusion

Over the last decades, the requirements placed upon education systems have been influenced by rapid progression in life spheres. Being the spinal cord of any nation, education has to go hand in hand with this progression. In TEFL, the teaching methods and approaches

discussed in the foregoing chapter show how the newest developments in learning theories shaped each approach. This can be likened to a life cycle when a new approach appeared, evolved, reached its climax to receiving applause and a large number of proponents, and then starting soon to fade either because of its noticeable shortcomings or because of the appearance of a newer learning theory.

To produce the most competent and skillful citizens, Algeria adopted the CBA which seeks at mobilising learners' values, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours in a personal way to address the challenges faced in real-life settings. Therefore, all hope is placed upon this approach; however, like any teaching approach, the CBA has its own demerits. The main demerit of the CBA is that it works well in some learning environments and less well in others. Therefore, the main question to ask is Does it work in the Algerian educational environment? And if yes, how well does it work? The forthcoming chapter will go deeply into the Algerian EFL context to answer these questions.

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Chapter Two

English Language Teaching in the Algerian Context

Introduction

It is within the scope of the current chapter that we attempt to provide an overview of the English teaching and learning context in Algeria. Identifying the various variables that constitute the Algerian school context in general and the teaching of EFL, in particular, will serve the purpose of the present piece of research which aims at identifying the impediments that inhibit the proper implementation of CBA. Hence, it is of crucial importance for the success of this study to collect the most possibly verifiable and reliable data on the ELT context in Algeria so that the challenges compromising the excellent implementation of novel approaches and materials are reduced while favourable, positive atmospheres are recreated, encouraged and ultimately sustained. Language planning in Algeria, an overview of ELT and reforms in the Algerian educational system, ELT secondary school textbooks as well as teachers' education and training are going to be explored. Throughout this chapter, these complex and frequently delicate interweaving variables that control the teaching and learning context of EFL from different and multifarious facets shall be tracked down.

2.1. Language Planning in Algeria

The present Algerian rich and complex linguistic profile resulted from its rich and complex historical, political and socio-cultural backgrounds. From independence until today, Algerians have developed a very intricate linguistic situation because they do not rely extensively on only one language in their everyday life communication (Bebrabah, 2014). Tabory (1987) argues that the Algerian linguistic situation is a complex one as it is at a crossroad of tensions between French, the colonial language, and Arabic, the new national language; Classical Arabic versus colloquial Algerian Arabic; and the various Berber dialects

versus Arabic. These languages have acquired different statuses which are of paramount importance at socio-linguistic and political levels (Mostari, 2005). The Chinese language is also introduced as the newest language of commerce that has recently entered into rivalry with the other languages (Bebrabah, 2014).

The most widely used language is Arabic in its two forms; classical Arabic, and dialectal Arabic, French, Berber, and English as a foreign language. Hence, the Algerian linguistic landscape involves four languages.

2.1.1. Arabic

Arabic was introduced to North Africa with the Arab conquest and then gained a large number of speakers, including Berbers, therefore, the respect they owed to Arabic was primarily associated with the respect they had towards the religion of Islam. When French colonials came to Algeria they strongly believed in the superiority of their language and thus tried to replace Arabic and Berber with French. One of their behaviours is the racist description of Arabic and Berber languages at that time by the French geographer Reclus when he said that speakers of Arabic and Berber are sharing “a passion for terrible guttural sounds which resemble vomiting” (1886, p. 680).

Because of more than a century of colonialism and the attempt of erasing everything that related to the Algerian identity, French dominated at the expense of Arabic and Berber in the Algerians’ daily life; therefore, during the colonial era, it stood as the official language of the country (Sharkey, 2014). As the use of French started to dominate, the use of Arabic was broadly restricted with the ongoing colonial attempts of breaking up the Algerian identity and thus its unity.

After gaining independence, much had to be done especially in restoring the Algerian identity threatened by the French attempts of eradicating the Algerian identity. The first step in reconstructing Algeria at that time could not be done without restoring the bedrock of its identity which is the Arabic language. With this aim, the policy of “*Arabization*” was launched by the free Algerian authorities with the hopes of regaining the value of Arabic and thus preserving the Muslim-Arabic identity and restoring the Arabic language as well (Mostari, 2003). In the Tripoli Programme of June 1962, the FLN-The Revolutionaries - restated that the role of the revolution was to restore Arabic, the very expression of the cultural values of the country, its dignity, and sufficiency as the language of civilisation (Gordon, 1978).

Despite the great campaigns of Arabization launched throughout the country, French remained the dominant language at that time in government, education and the mass media. On the one hand, voices that believed in the superiority of French had been calling for using and speaking French as a sign of modernisation and openness. On the other hand, opposite voices were stressing preserving the mother tongue of their ancestors and the vivid symbol of their Muslim-Arabic identity since French to them was considered a sign of colonialism and dependence. These conflicts soon became related to politics and ideological beliefs and played a major role in deciding the educational and linguistic issues in the country for many years.

The present Algerian landscape includes Algerian Arabic, known also as the colloquial Arabic or dialectal Arabic, which is the spoken variety used spontaneously by Algerians in their everyday communication. Algerian Arabic appears in different dialects that vary from one place to another even in the same region. Though Algerian Arabic remains without a

proper writing system, it represents a mixture of classical Arabic, Berber, and even French. Standard Arabic, a simpler and more practical form of classical Arabic, is being used by Algerians in various life domains such as education, politics, media, press, administrative institutions, finance, army, and industry as well. Al Ani (1971, p. 18) defined standard Arabic as “a modernised version of Classical Arabic”. It is also the national and official language in Algeria, as stated in the Algerian constitution of 1996, chapter 1 / Article 3 “L’Arabe est la langue nationale et officielle” (“Arabic is the official and national language”). This practical and simplified form of classical Arabic is known as the language of the holy Koran, also referred to as the “Holy Language of God”. Despite being a simplified modernised form of classical Arabic and more appropriate for educational purposes and the developments that the modern world is witnessing in various domains of human civilisation, it is not used for everyday communication by Algerians.

2.1.2. Berber

When the Greeks came to North Africa they called people who live in this region Berbers, but this word was in fact offensive because it was used to refer to people from North Africa or Sahara whom they could not understand their language. The word Barbarian was first used by Romans to describe people who lived in North Africa but the Kabyles who represent nowadays a large active community of Algerian Berbers prefer to be called Imazighen, which means free or noblemen. Berber or Tamazight is a variety that has been preserved until today despite the widespread Arabization wave that accompanied the Muslim migration.

Several attempts were made to promote the status of Berbers or Tamazight. These attempts have reached success in February 2018 when the Algerian government

constitutionally stated that Tamazight is an official and a national language. An important step forward to a legal basis that allows for the possibility of developing this language as it is going to be taught in schools. However, although Tamazight has become a national and official language, one has to bear in mind that the Algerian linguistic landscape is enriched by the co-existence of French, Arabic, not to mention English as the language of technological development and globalisation.

2.1.3. French

French colonialism might have had the greatest influence in molding the present linguistic profile of Algeria. Algerians underwent a difficult period of colonialism characterised by the French underestimation of Algerian culture and language as well. In other words, Algerians had been struggling for more than a century with colonialism that was determined on erasing Algerians' identity and creating the society the French had dreamed of when they first set their feet in Algeria in 1830. Benrabah referred to the methodical policies implemented by the French that targeted the Algerian language and culture between 1830 and 1962 as “deracination” and “deculturization” (2014). During the colonial and post-independence periods, the overwhelming majority of Algerians without mentioning their educational and cultural background were bilinguals; however, this bilingualism soon started to become subtractive and Arabic was replacing French in many domains, particularly in education under the influence of the educational system of Arabization. Despite having gained independence some fifty years ago and the pursued policies of Arabization, French continues to be an important language in many areas of life (Aitsiselmi and Marley, 2008).

2.1.4. English

“Any literate, educated person on the face of the globe is deprived if he does not know English” (Bruchfield, 1998, p. 14). These words echo the importance of English as the world’s language, not because it is the most widely spoken as a native language, but because English is widely spoken outside its native countries either as a second language or as a foreign language. In Algerian educational contexts, the rapid growth of English as a global language urged Algeria to replace French with English in 1996 (Crystal, 2003). Nowadays, it is considered the second foreign language, and it is taught from the first year of middle school until the third year of secondary school. Moreover, English departments are included in almost every Algerian university.

In real-life communication, English is considered a foreign language because it has no function in terms of society: its use is not manifested in daily communication in the Algerian speech community. Only a tiny number of Algerians speak English; most of them are either young people or internet users.

2.1.5. Competition between French and English

Although the present Algerian linguistic profile is composed of four languages, French is still considered the major player in the Algerian linguistic scene of second languages. By the end of the 1990s, Algeria was classified as the second-largest speaking community in the world after France. In 2014, Algeria has been classified by a recent report issued by the International Organisation of La Francophonie (IOF) in the tenth spot worldwide in terms of the use of French by its citizens (Rekab, 2014).

At the historical and political levels, French is still well-preserved as the language of the coloniser in the Algerian administration as well as the media, even during the hard periods that Algeria had to undergo namely the ideological struggle of the seventies and even during the dark decade of terrorism. Despite the so-called Arabization policy, French has found all the support it needed to sustain its presence in Algeria. French has been strengthened not only historically but also politically when the educational reformers of 2003 affirmed in the final report delivered to the highest authorities in the country that this language should be studied from the second year of primary school rather than the fourth year. On the 15th of June 2000, Algerian President Bouteflika intervened in front of the National Assembly in Paris and said a few words that echoed much about French and its status within Algeria. He stated:

French and the high culture it conveys remain, for Algeria, important and valuable gains that the rehabilitation of Arabic, our national language, cannot strike ostracism. This is a richness that can fertilize our own culture and that is why French, like other modern languages, and even more because of its intrinsic virtues and its seniority in our country, will keep the place where no complex, resentment, or even conjuncture can dispute (Le Monde, June 17, 2000, p 18).

Some voices were in strong opposition to the preserved status of French; thus they reject not only the use of French in different life spheres but also the continuous sustainment that the Algerian authorities are continuously providing to the language of the coloniser. They believe that the omnipresence of French in Algeria symbols cultural colonialism and represents a direct threat to the Muslim Arabic identity. Even though French is considered as the first-second language and English as the second foreign language, these two languages have entered into rivalry to gain a monopoly on the Algerian linguistic landscape. French or

what Kateb Yassin (1929-1989) considered once as war booty is nowadays struggling to preserve its present status. This struggle can be explained by the opening up on other foreign languages in general and English in particular. This opening up includes both Chinese and Turkish languages that might overthrow the existing foreign languages and would be part of the Algerian linguistic profile one day. In 1963, the sociologist Gordon foresaw the future of French in Algeria and thus set the tone for future linguistic developments as follows:

In ten to fifteen years, Arabic will have replaced French completely and English will be on its way to replacing French as a second language. French is a clear and beautiful language... but it holds too many bitter memories for us (1966, p. 113).

English is introduced to Algerian students in the phase of Middle school exactly in their first year of middle school as the second foreign language. Because it is the language of technology and development, Algerians -particularly the youth- are becoming more interested in learning English. A campaign had been launched via the internet and social networks asking the Algerian National Ministry of Education to replace French with English and upgrade this latter as the first-second language in Algeria. Although the campaign ended in favour of English with the overwhelming majority, it received no attention or comment from the Algerian educational authorities. Pro-francophone and opposite voices justify their position from the campaign by referring back to September 1993 when the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education decided to introduce English as a competitor to French. Pupils had to choose either French or English as their first mandatory L2. Parents rather than pupils then made the choice and the competition ended in favour of French. Statistically speaking, between the years of 1993 and 1997, out of two million school-children in the

fourth year of primary school, the total number of those who chose English was between 0.33% and 1.28% and thus considered highly insignificant (Miliani, 2000).

Because the present study deals with teaching English under CBA, the EFL teaching context will be explored within the forthcoming sections of this chapter.

2.2. An Overview of ELT and Reforms in the Algerian Educational System

The situation of foreign language teaching in Algeria is related to past socio-political and historical events; therefore, the teaching of English in Algeria cannot be taken out of its historical context. The present educational system is the result of the continuing interaction of several factors. Starting with the French colonisation that had exercised its deepest impact on the Algerian educational system, to the Arabization policy that aimed at restoring the Algerian lost identity to the present day where the system is undergoing several improvements aiming at bettering the level of the Algerian learner.

2.2.1. Pre-colonialism Era

Algeria was not an ignorant nation but rather a nation well-known for its large number of historians and scientists whose books and scripts were later on burned and destroyed by the French. Before the French conquest, there were no administrative authorities or ministries that organise education and decide what and how to teach; thus, methods of learning were mainly based on memorisation (Ladjal and Bensaid, 2014). Education in Algeria before France's invasion had consisted of instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic with children learning basic Muslim law in secondary school from the age of fifteen onwards. For students that could continue their studies, madrasas, or small universities existed in urban areas. In fact, the

educational system during that era was built on endowments given by people to build quranic schools, and teachers were respected and highly paid during that era.

2.2.2. Colonialism Era

French colonialism was quite aware of the importance of learning within any nation; therefore, it confiscated all the endowments properties to deprive Algerians of all learning opportunities. This act was considered as cutting the arteries of Algerian cultural life. On the 7th of July 1833, a report delivered by an exploratory committee delivered to the king of France stated the following;

In addition to state properties, we confiscated all the real estate that belong to the endowments...we also seized peoples' properties after promising them to preserve and protect those properties. We profaned the sanctities of religious institutions... (Ouchan, 2014)

The French campaign, which targeted schools and mosques, resulted in depriving Algerians of learning opportunities and resulted in a tremendous decrease in the number of literate people which was estimated to be only 3.8 % in 1901. The decrease in the number of literate people in Algeria almost sent it to the dark ages because it increased ignorance, spread heresies and doctrines, and almost led to the loss of the Algerians' identity. The French colonial education relying on French exclusively as the language of instruction was designed only for the colonists' population and a very specific number of Algerians. In this respect, Nelson (1979, p. 117) stated:" French colonial education was designed to meet the needs of the European population and to perpetuate the European cultural pattern". To make things worse, colonial curricula taught Arabic, the sacred language of the Quran, during this era as a foreign language (Naylor, 2000).

2.2.3. Post-colonialism Era

After 1962, the illiteracy rate was estimated to be more than 85% in the recently independent Algeria. Besides, Algeria inherited a French colonial education system that was based on European content and conducted only in French and by foreign teachers; therefore, regaining the value of Arabic culture and Muslim identity was the primordial priority to be taken by the newly independent Algeria. Thus, on the eve of independence, Algeria set out to design an effective language policy that would honour and restore the Algerian Arabic Muslim identity (Mostari, 2003).

The presence of the Algerian linguistic variety created a language crisis, either political or educational: such an intricate linguistic situation means that everyone claims a monopoly on the language issue: Arabization, French-Arabic bilingualism, the English language status, never reaching consensus (Miliiani, 2003). The long occupation had a deep impact on Algerians in general and on their education and culture in particular. After the independence, the Algerian government had to work hard in order to eradicate the ignorance and all the traces of French culture, especially that of language. Despite the tremendous efforts made by the Algerian revolution and even by some Algerian intellectuals to preserve the language of the Holy Quran, the overwhelming majority of Algerians used French. Algeria had, then, a long way to reforms and projects so that the status of Arabic within the Algerian speech community is restored. The very first step was the creation of the National Ministry of Education in 1963 which took on its shoulders the mission of building an inclusive open national system that would represent the Algerian Muslim Arabic free citizen. Increasing literacy, providing free education, making primary school enrollment compulsory, removing foreign teachers and curricula, and replacing French with Arabic as the medium of instruction were the primary goals Algeria had to achieve (Chapan, 1994).

From the eve of independence until today, the reforms that the Algerian educational system had gone through can be summarised in three major steps:

2.2.3.1. The First Reform: from 1962 to 1975

After setting the National Ministry of Education in 1963, the focus was directed to the Arabization project that started primarily with using Arabic as the language of instruction instead of French at the primary school. The Arabization campaigns were launched in various public domains notably administration, environment, and education (Mostari, 2003).

The Arabization reform was a double-aimed project. The first aim was vital and sacred; it was embedded in the religion and identity of the Algerian citizen. In the Tripoli Programme of June 1962, the FLN restated that the role of the revolution was to restore Arabic, the very expression of the cultural values of the country, its dignity, and its sufficiency as the language of civilisation (Gordon, 1978). The second aim was that of coping with the changes and developments that were happening all over the world since the rate of literate people after independence was estimated to represent a tenth of the Algerian population. Hence, the newly independent Algeria believed that it could not develop and construct itself without restoring Arabic-the bedrock of the Algerian identity-. the Algerian President Boumediène emphasised this in 1968 when he stated: “Without recovering that essential and important element which is the national language, our efforts would be vain, our personality incomplete, and our entity a body without a soul” (Mostari, 2003, p. 26)

Within the same context of quickening the Arabization process, the latter had been recommended in all life spheres in the First National Conference on Arabization held from May 14th to 17th, 1975. The conference determined a three-term progressive Arabization:

- A short-term from 1976 to 1978 during which the rate of Arabized classes in primary and secondary levels would increase from one-third to half.
- A mid-term from 1976 to 1980 was concerned with a partial Arabization in some scientific and technical fields in universities.
- A long-term period from 1976 to 1982 at the end of which Arabization should be brought to a successful conclusion from the primary to the secondary levels (Mostari, 2003, p. 30)

Though a moratorium had been called upon Arabization, great hopes were placed upon this project by Algerian authorities at that time. It was believed that the Arabization project should take into consideration the rivalry with French and thus proceed with the process gradually, “archaism” must not be allowed to favour regressive traditional (....) Algerianisation is not Arabization (Grandguillaume, 2004, p. 158).

The Arabization project faced three main problems: hasty enforcement, lack of qualified teachers, and teaching methods (Lakehal-Ayat-Benmati, 2008). Arabization policy had been widely criticised for ignoring the population’s linguistic diversity and the lack of teaching personnel which obliged the government in 1964 to recruit 1000 Egyptian as Arabic language instructors (Benrabah, 2004). In the same context, Mostari (2003) believes that Arabization faced a certain number of criticisms. The first criticism laid in the inability of Classical Arabic to cope with technology and modernity. She added that Arabization had been perceived politically rather than socio-linguistically: it was seen as a hasty political decision that did not take into account any socio-cultural considerations of the newly free independent Algeria. Despite the great aims and hopes placed upon the Arabization project, great failures

and conflicts arose from its unwise implementation. This is what happens when educational decisions become deeply embedded in politics.

For English, Bellalem (2008) stated that English teaching was marked by two main events: the first in 1969, when a General Inspectorate of English was established in 1972, and the second when the government decided to “Algerianise” (Mize, 1978) the English teaching textbooks and methods (Hayane, 1989).

2.2.3.2. The Second Reform: from 1975 to 2002

Although Algeria was still making its very first steps in the field of education, the period of the seventies was characterised by different reorientations and new legislations. In 1975, indicators of the Arabization’s failure led to concerns about standards. One year later, the Algerian President Boumediène called a moratorium on Arabization, but this was interrupted two years later by his sudden death. Within the same year, a new schooling system called the fundamental school was applied. The fundamental schooling system was simply a fusion of the primary and middle schools with all the subjects taught in Arabic except for the foreign languages. Further modifications were introduced in 1976 extending the period of compulsory education from six years to ten years and guaranteeing that education would be free for all at every level. In addition to guaranteeing tuition-free instruction, the reforms of 1976 mandated that education had to be the exclusive domain of the state, and private education was abolished.

Algeria had become aware of the growing importance and the place English as a foreign language was taking all over the world. In September 1993, the Ministry of Education published a decree that gave pupils' parents the right to choose the first foreign language their children would learn. The advocates of Arabization preferred replacing English with French

as a foreign language for the fourth grade just to oppose the French domination on the Algerian scene of foreign languages. However, only (0.33) of parents chose English and this amendment was later withdrawn (Miliani, 2003).

By 2002, there had been a total Arabization of the school system; all subjects were taught in Arabic, and French was introduced in the third grade of primary school. Within this era, English was gaining more and more interest, thus time allocated to English sessions increased.

2.2.3.3. The Third Reform: from 2002 Onwards

The incapability of forming competent learners capable of transferring to real-life situations what they had been inculcated in school urged Algeria to reconsider its educational systems and thus planned for a new educational reform. In this respect, the continual reliance on traditional educational procedures was seen as an impediment to the nation's social and economic development (Kaewdang, 2001; Wasi, 1998). If a student can fill in blanks on a language arts test but cannot write a clear letter to a friend or a prospective employer, or can multiply with decimals and percents on a math test but cannot figure sales tax, then that student's education has been sadly misdirected (Slavin, 1998). In order to relate school acquisitions to varied contexts of use inside as well outside school, Algeria opted in 2002 for the CBA reform to bridge the gap between school life and real life.

The impetus for the 2003 reform started with a series of meetings between Algerian and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO for short, officials. These meetings led to a contract signed on October 2nd, 2003, in which UNESCO accepted to fund Algerian educational reform. The project, called Programme of Support for

the Reform of the Algerian Educational System (Programme d'Appui de l'UNESCO à la Réforme du Système Educatif (PARE). Since the official launch of the PARE, the Algerian education reform efforts were sustained by other agencies such as the French Agency of Development (Agence Française de Development (AFD), the European Union, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (Tawil, 2006).

The CNRSE (Commission Nationale de Réforme du Système Educatif, known by its French initials as the CNRSE), was set by president Bouteflika and headed by Hadj Salah from May 13th, 2000, to September 30th, 2000, then by Benzaghoul starting from October 1st, 2000, consisted of 170 members. It was their responsibility to evaluate educational system and submit proposals to the minister on teaching ideas, targets, curricula and how they may be shaped to match the country's new philosophy of democracy, reconciliation, and economic development. The CNRSE report criticised the structure and content of national education, the teachers' qualifications as well as teaching resources (Tawil, 2006) and thus confirmed the need for reform to meet the 21st-century challenges (CNRSE, 2000).

Conclusions drawn out by the CNRSE revealed a deterioration of the educational system. The following were the reflections made about secondary education.

- A decline in the total number of learners who succeed in their BEF exam
- An increase in the number of learners who re-take their levels
- A considerable proportion of learners who drop out of school
- A remarkable disequilibrium between the huge number of learners hosted by general secondary schools and the minority of learners who opt for technical secondary schools, and finally

- A low percentage of learners who pass their BAC exam (Tawil, 2006).

Following the recommendations set by the CNRSE, the Algerian educational system implemented CBA at all levels of the Algerian educational system, starting with primary until secondary school. New curricula and new textbooks were introduced then. The main aim of this reform was to make the students able of integrating and mobilising a set of capacities, skills, and an account of knowledge that will be used effectively in problem-solving situations that will occur outside the confines of the classroom.

Roegiers (2011) pointed out that the 2003 Algerian education reform was conditioned by internal and external challenges. On the one hand, internal challenges targeted amelioration and adaptation of education to the society's needs of today; and the promotion of citizenship, democracy, tolerance, and dialogue in Algerian schools. Internal factors also stressed a progressive restoration of the job market. On the other hand, external challenges targeted modernisation of the economy; development of scientific and technological knowledge as well as recourse to the new ICT, and learning to use them in different sectors of life.

The major and broadest aim of applying the CBA in Algerian schools is to improve the system by integrating the newest and modern technological instruments of media and communication. The CBA, according to the Algerian Ministry of Education, aims at establishing three competencies in learners:

1. To interact orally in English: the learner should produce oral messages by using appropriate intonation, pronunciation, structure,

and vocabulary related to a specific communicative situation. This competency will enable the learner to interact, negotiate, persuade, and give opinions through collective brainstorming of negotiations and problem-solving situations.

2. To interpret authentic, oral, or written documents: the learner should treat and interpret oral or written messages in order to get information, answer questions, and justify answers in a given communicative situation.

3. To produce simple, oral, or written messages: the learner should be able to produce a written message in order to inform, describe, relate, and prescribe by using the different types of discourse and the already acquired knowledge in a given communicative situation (Ameziane et al., 2006, p. 4)

In addition to the three targeted competencies, the CBA seeks to help learners to act as effective users of language in real-world contexts, through the establishment of a know-how-to-do, and a know-how-to-be in learners. The table below summarises the aims of the competency-based reforms of Algerian schools:

The first aim: <i>Enhancing the quality of compulsory education</i>	
1	Enhancing the plan of the continuous teachers' training
2	Developing the syllabi and improving the educational tools.
The second aim: <i>The reconstruction of the compulsory education</i>	
3	The reconstruction of compulsory education streams
4	Enhancing the competencies and abilities of pedagogical and administrative management
The third aim: <i>Enhancing the system of orientation</i>	
The fourth aim: <i>Implementing the new technologies</i>	
6	Transferring the (TICE) experience to the field of education in Algeria

Table 2.1. Aims and Goals of 2002 Reforms (Adapted from MEN-2005-p 236).

According to Bellalem (2014, p.103), the proposed curriculum reforms centered around three platforms:

- Platform 1: Reforming the school structure which involved:
 - a) Introducing a preschool level for 5-year-old pupils,
 - b) Restructuring the duration of primary school from 6 to 5 years, and middle school from 3 to 4 years, and
 - c) Restructuring post-compulsory education in secondary school into three streams: general, technical, and vocational.
- Platform 2: Reforming teacher training which involved:
 - a) Improving the knowledge and skills of teachers and inspectors, and
 - b) Coordinating and evaluating teacher training and development.

- Platform 3: Reforming teaching syllabuses and textbooks which involved
 - a) Elaborating and introducing new teaching programmes for all school levels,
 - b) Providing and evaluating new teaching resources and materials,
 - c) Introducing new teaching methodologies to meet the programmes' objectives, and
 - d) Setting up systems for information and communication technology in schools.

Private education had been refreshed by the reforms as an executive decree was passed in 2004 amending the 1976 reforms and allowing for the establishment of private institutions of education under strict and well-defined regulations (Clark, 2006).

Secondary education lasts three years and is non-compulsory. It has four types of objectives: general objectives, such as the development of the student's ability for curiosity, critical thinking, creativity, autonomy, socialisation, and general studies. Methodology objectives include study skills, know-how, and scientific thinking. As to mastery of languages, this includes mastery of the mother tongue language, plus two other foreign languages at least. As with the status of foreign languages within CBA reform, French was reintroduced into the second grade of primary school. English, also, was taught in the first year of intermediate school, two grades earlier than before. It is taught in Algerian middle, secondary schools, and most Algerian universities. The secondary schooling system lasts three years and allows third-year students to sit for the Baccalaureate which is the national exam that gives access to university. Therefore, by the end of the secondary level, students

would have studied English for seven years: four years in Middle school and three years in secondary school. Finally, scientific and technology objectives encompass the development of the student's ability for inquiry and rational judgment (National Ministry of Education, 2005).

Grade	Stream	Time Allotted per Week	Coefficient
First Year	Literary Stream	4	3
	Science and Technology	3	2
Second Year	Experimental Sciences	3	2
	Economy and Management		
	Technique and Maths		
	Literary and Philosophy	4	3
	Foreign Languages	4	4
Third Year	Experimental Sciences	3	2
	Economy and Management		
	Technique and Maths		
	Literary and Philosophy	4	3
	Foreign Languages	4	5

Table 2.2. Time Allotted and Coefficient of English in Secondary Education

2.3. Objectives of ELT in the Algerian Secondary School

The objectives of teaching and learning English in secondary schools rest upon the general objectives of the reform of the Algerian educational system introduced in 2003. Teaching English as a second foreign language aims to provide the learner with a world vision to share knowledge, science, and technologies, and to become tomorrow's citizen who is linguistically and communicatively competent and able to integrate harmoniously and efficaciously in the process of globalisation. The National Ministry of Education (2005, p. 4) stated that:

Teaching English in Algeria aims at setting up and developing communicative, linguistic, cultural, and methodological competencies that would permit the learner to face situations of oral or written communication that have to take into consideration his or her future needs and those of the society in which he or she evolves

These objectives can be divided into four interrelated categories: linguistic, methodological, cultural, and socio-professional (Arab et.al, 2006).

2.3.1. Linguistic Objectives

- Provide the learner with a solid linguistic basis of grammar, vocabulary, syntax, and pronunciation
- Allow the learner to understand and communicate easily in the target language
- Allow the learner to pursue successfully studies at the university or in a professional milieu.

2.3.2. Methodological Objectives

- Promote the learner's strategies of autonomous learning to allow him to deepen and expand his knowledge
- Develop the learner's mental and intellectual abilities of analysing, synthesising, and evaluating through several pertinent activities
- Prepare the learner for professional life by learning the rational use of English texts
- Enable the learner to use ICTs due to their importance in the learning process.

2.3.3. Cultural Objectives

- Raise the learner's intercultural awareness by exposing him to diverse civilisations and cultures
- Stimulate the learner's curiosity and open-mindedness
- Encourage interdisciplinary learning by bringing themes studied in other subject matters to integrate all the acquisitions.

2.3.4. Socio-professional Objectives

- Allow the learner to be an active participant in life after finishing his studies.

These were, in brief, some of the major objectives of English language teaching in the Algerian secondary school for which a new teaching approach was implemented in Algerian secondary schools, namely the CBA.

2.4. ELT Secondary School Textbooks

Textbooks play a significant role in EFL teaching and learning by providing useful ready-made material to both teachers and learners: they are the main teaching and learning aid (Matthews, 1985). The textbooks illustrating the CBA in Algerian secondary schools are as follows: *At the Crossroad*, first-year textbook; *Getting Through*, second-year textbook, and *New Prospects*, third-year textbook.

2.4.1. First Year Textbook

"*At the Crossroads*" is the English textbook, designed for first-year learners in both literary and scientific streams. The name *At the Crossroads* was used to serve two purposes. First, students who ended their Middle school successfully, i.e., with a Brevet degree will

come to a crossroads by the end of their first year when they would have to choose to specialise in different streams. Second, the course places learners at a crossroads of disciplines and cultures in that it seeks to establish cross-curricular and cross-cultural linkages (Teacher's Guide, 2003). At the Crossroads was designed to comply with the guiding principles which frame the curriculum laid by the Ministry of National Education as laid down in January 2005, namely the CBA, which is both learner-centered and project-oriented.

The overall aim of At the Crossroads is to consolidate and extend the competencies required at the Middle school level. These broad competencies are worded in the syllabus as follows:

- Interacting orally in English
- Interpreting oral and written texts
- Producing oral and written texts

The book is organised into six didactics units, turning around a specific topic suggested by syllabus designers. The units are as follows "Getting Through", "Our Findings Show", "Back to Nature", "Eureka!", and "Once Upon a Time". Each unit starts with an introductory section that presents the project of the unit; Think it Over which ignites the students' interest in the theme of the unit and; Words to Say which aims at familiarising the students with the pronunciation of words to be dealt with throughout the unit. The introductory section of the unit is then followed by four sequences which are entitled, classified into, and described as follows:

Sequence One: Listening and Speaking

It comprises a varied set of activities that aim to get learners to develop their listening and speaking skills. It is made up of the following four rubrics.

- **Anticipate:** this rubric encompasses tasks inviting the learners to interpret pictures and make predictions before listening and answering questions related to the general topic of the unit.
- **Listen and Check:** learners listen to their teachers reading the listening script and then check their answers. This rubric aims at improving their listening comprehension and their ability to recognise English language sounds.
- **Say it Clear:** this rubric focuses on intonation, stress patterns, and spelling by exposing learners to different types of activities.
- **Your Turn:** it comprises tasks offering the practice that learners do individually, in pairs, or in groups. This rubric represents the culminating point in the building of speaking skills.

Sequence Two: Reading and Writing

It comprises a varied set of activities that aim to get learners to develop their reading and writing skills. It is made up of the following four rubrics.

- **Anticipate:** at this stage, learners are encouraged to make predictions.
- **Read and Check:** this rubric provides learners with the opportunity to test their hypotheses through reading comprehension tasks.
- **Discover the Language:** it consists of activities in which the learners practice the language structure they have come in across the text.

- **Write it Right:** composed mainly of writing tasks. This rubric aims at getting learners to develop their writing skills by producing a meaningful piece of writing by drawing upon what they have discovered about the functioning of written language in the sequence.

Sequence Three: Developing Skills

At The Crossroads follows the principles of a multi-skills syllabus and therefore attempts to cover both productive (speaking and writing) and receptive skills (listening and reading). The third sequence aims at encouraging learners to apply the four primary skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing together with the functions and language forms they have learned in the previous sequences with a variety of activities and situations of problem-solving, like telephoning, writing a letter of application or conducting a meeting. It is composed of Stop and Consider: a language reference section made up of forms of grammar review based on the exercises to implement the grammar rules of the unit.

Sequence Four: Extension and Consolidation

This sequence combines knowledge and know-how to obtain objectives conducive to competency (Riche and Arab, 2005). It aims to elaborate on language and social skills acquired earlier to flesh out writing their communicative abilities. Sequence four is divided into two rubrics which are “write it out”, and “work it out”.

- **Write it out:** it is made up of different activities that aim to consolidate the four primary skills, particularly writing.
- **Work it out:** activities in this rubric place learners in problem-solving situations related to English learning (e.g. pronunciation) and everyday life (e.g. telephoning problems). This rubric expands on social skills and makes learners aware of problem areas in stress and pronunciation.

- **Check your Progress:** this is a self-evaluation section that allows learners to evaluate their attainments.
- **Project Workshop:** the learners are assigned projects to carry out and are asked to follow a checklist of instructions for their realisation. The aim of this rubric is to re-invest the functions and skills acquired through the unit. Different projects throughout the textbook are as follows: making a job application booklet; writing a book review; conducting a survey; making an invention profile and; making a consumer guide (Teacher's Guide, 2003).

2.4.2. Second Year Textbook

“Getting Through” is the students' textbook in their second year of secondary education; it is the basis of the course in the classroom. In their introduction to the book, Riche and Arab (2006, p. 6) pointed out that *Getting Through* complies with the National Curriculum for English issued by the Ministry of Education in December (2005). It follows the guiding principles which frame the CBA curriculum, which is both learner-centered and project-oriented. They added that the textbooks attempt to make students consolidate their knowledge of functional English, in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Teachers are required to keep a portfolio of all tasks and exercises students do in class.

As for the content of the book, it is organised into eight didactics units, turning around a specific topic suggested by syllabus designers. The units are as follows “Signs of the Time”, “Make Peace”, “Waste not, Want not”, “Budding Scientist”, “News and Tales”, “No Man is an Island”, “Science or Fiction”, and “Business is Business”. Each unit starts with an introductory section that presents the project of the unit; *Think it Over* which ignites the students' interest in the theme of the unit and; *Words to Say* which aims at familiarising the

students with the pronunciation of words to be dealt with throughout the unit. The introductory section of the unit is then followed by five main parts. These parts are entitled and described as follows:

1. **Discovering Language:** within this rubric, learners will discover the vocabulary, spelling pronunciation, and grammar as constituents of the language to be dealt with in each unit.
2. **Developing Skills:** the students will build basic language skills as well as intellectual skills (thinking, guessing, anticipating, making, analysing, synthesising, planning, and the like). These skills are required for initiating work on projects and class presentations based on these projects. This enterprise naturally integrates the three competencies described in the syllabus, i.e., interacting orally, interpreting messages, and producing messages.
3. **Putting Things Together:** the students come to the project which represents the outcome of the constituents of language and the skills acquired throughout the unit. The students are provided with guidance on how to get the project materialised at the end of each unit in the textbook. They will have the opportunity to combine primary and social skills and thus display their achievements.
4. **Where do we go from here:** this is devoted to the student's self-assessment. They will have the opportunity to check their own progress through various means, including filling grids and keeping portfolios.
5. **Exploring Matters further:** this part of the unit contains three to five authentic texts that relate to the theme of the unit. These texts are taken from a wide range of different sources, such as newspapers, interviews, and magazine articles but many have been adapted in order to suit the level of the learners. The purpose of this rubric is to enable students to learn more about the topic dealt with and acquire more vocabulary and improve their knowledge of grammar.

The textbook has been designed to represent a valuable and flexible resource for teachers. They can pick up or leave aside activities depending on their teaching schemes and their students' capabilities.

2.4.3. Third Year Textbook

Designed to develop the Algerian learner's competencies in English, *New Prospects* is the third volume of a three-course book package intended for all third-year students attending classes in all streams of secondary education. The overall approach of New Prospects remains basically based on a competency-based, learner-centered, and project-gear methodology (Arab et.al, 2006).

New Prospects is organised into six didactics units, turning around a specific topic suggested by syllabus designers. The units are as follows "Exploring the Past", "Ill-Gotten Gains Never Prosper", "Schools: Different and Alike", "Safety First", "It's a Giant Leap for Mankind" and "We Are a Family". The textbook has a cyclical design with recurrent language functions, grammatical structures, and language components as well as skills, and strategies. Each of the six units is structured in the same way and comprises two main parts with two sequences each.

Part One: Language Outcomes

This part is divided into Listen and Consider and Read and Consider. The focus of these two sequences is to work on the language dimensions of the texts by the study of grammatical structures, vocabulary, pronunciation, and sound systems through the rubric of Around the Text. Both Listen and Consider and Read and Consider end with Think, Pair, Share which aims at getting students to re-invest in speaking or writing the thematic and

linguistic elements learned throughout the two sequences by foregrounding a particular function, such as advising, comparing, and informing.

Part Two: Skills and Strategies Outcomes

The second part of the units is essentially concerned with the structural and discursive aspects of the texts. This part comprises two sequences, namely Listening and Speaking and Reading and Writing. They target practicing the four primary skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), and social skills (collaborative skills, peer assessment, and responding to problem-solving situations) inside or outside the classroom. Listening and Speaking is divided into the following four rubrics:

1. Before Listening: it consists of pre-listening activities which ask learners to predict content through a set of questions.
2. As You Listen: it contains activities that demand learners to listen to their teacher reading a lecture to check their predictions.
3. After Listening: it comprises a set of activities permitting the learners to practice the other language skills (reading, speaking, and writing).
4. Saying it in Writing: this rubric prepares learners for the fourth sequence as it asks them to produce a piece of writing related to the listening content.

Reading and Writing is also divided into four rubrics. They are as follows:

1. Before Reading: this rubric contains questions which ask learners to make predictions about the topic.
2. As You Read: here, learners are invited to opt for their skimming and scanning skills.
3. After Reading: it mostly requires learners to identify the structure of the text in question and includes writing activities which prepare them for the next rubric.

4. **Writing Development:** the aim of this rubric is to get learners to eventually concretise through writing what is termed in the official syllabus as the terminal objective of integration.

Riche and Arab (2006) pointed out that the learners' outcomes and the intercultural outcomes for their part are in-built, i.e. made to be part and parcel of the process of teaching/learning at all times. The technological skills are intended also to be less obtrusive in the Research and Report and Project Outcomes assignments since learners will resort to the internet search either on their own or following the webliography which is given to them as an aid.

Assessment: it is of two kinds: self-assessment and objective assessment. While self-assessment bears on the functions and language components, objective assessment bears on the skills and strategies.

Time for...: before moving to the next unit, learners are invited to relax with a song or a poem in this rubric.

2.5. Teachers' Training and Professional Development

Today, the challenges of the 21st century, such as globalisation, competitiveness, communication, and information technologies, among others, require a student population with higher proficiency in English to have access to better opportunities in the future. Therefore, teachers, in turn, are expected not only to be competent but also to be professional in their related fields and subject matters. Teachers have to possess a great deal of knowledge and skills with regard to both teaching and assessment practices in order to meet the high demands and standards of quality education. It should be noted also that the success of any approach depends so much on understanding its major components by its practitioners who

are supposed to be the EFL teachers in this case. In defining training, Richards and Farrell (2005) emphasised the significance of ongoing teacher development for in-service practitioners to become acquainted with the most recent resources and methodologies. They define training as follows:

...it is seen as preparation for instruction into a first teaching position or as preparation to take on a new teaching assignment or responsibility. Training involves understanding basic concepts and principles as prerequisite for applying them to teaching and the ability to demonstrate principles and practices in the classroom. Teacher training also involves trying out new strategies in the classroom, usually with supervision, and monitoring and getting feedback from others on one's practice. The content of the training is usually determined by experts and is often available in standard training formats or through prescriptions in methodology books (2005, p. 3)

The term professional development is usually used to refer to any activity or process intended to change any combination of the following: teachers' beliefs and attitudes, teachers' knowledge, and teachers' classroom practice (Clark, 1990). It is also perceived as the different types of learning undertaken by teachers beyond the point of their initial training (Craft, 2000). Richards and Farrell (2005) view teachers' professional development as a general growth not focused on a specific job, but serves a long-term goal and seeks to facilitate the growth of teachers' understanding of teaching and themselves as teachers.

Fullan (1993, p. 122) pointed out that reform in teacher education must focus on developing and bringing together two broad themes:

1. It must re-establish the moral purpose of teaching (defined as making a difference in the lives of more and more individual students).
2. It must establish and continue to develop the knowledge and skill-base required to accomplish, including knowledge and skills required to change organisations and to contend with the forces of change in complex environments.

To be effective, teachers need a combination of both effective training and professional development programmes that foster their knowledge, skills, experiences, and even personal qualities in order to be effective teachers. In this quest, the Algerian Ministry of National Education stressed on several occasions that preparing teachers for the teaching profession is conceived as one of its major concerns (Benbouzid, 2009). Teachers' training and development in Algeria take three forms: the old training system, the new training system, and the in-service training.

2.5.1. The Old Teacher Training System

On the eve of independence, the newly independent Algeria was floundering in all life spheres. Algeria inherited a foreign -in the full sense of the word- an educational system that was far from Algerians in terms of goals, objectives, and content. There was an urgent need to start the construction of the country; however, education in Algeria had been faced with a terrible shortage of teachers at that time. Algeria had to resort to training institutions that were at the beginning an exceptional solution to remedy the situation; however, these were operational until a new training system was opted for later on. Teachers could be trained following two training courses supervised by two different bodies: the Ministry of Higher

Education and Research, at the university, for secondary school teachers; and the Ministry of National Education, at the Institutes of Education, for middle and primary school teachers.

On the one hand, students holding a Baccalaureate Certificate had the right to become foreign language teachers after satisfying the requirements of a License degree course. By the end of the course, student-teachers were expected to have acquired content knowledge about the English language and its culture, and some pedagogical knowledge. The training of the Ministry of Higher Education lasted three years but was then extended to last four years in 1988. On the other hand, Training at the Institutes of Education was different from the License course in terms of duration, form, and purpose. First, the training used to last one year, then it was extended to two years, and after that to three years; before the Training at the Institutes of Education were finally closed down in 1999. Second, the courses at the ITE were a combination of theory and practice where student-teachers were required to attend practical teaching sessions, whereas the License courses were mostly theoretical. Third, the courses were for the training of primary and middle school teachers (Ministry of Education, 1992), and so entrance to the course did not necessarily require having a Baccalaureate certificate, provided that candidates passed an entrance examination (Bellalem, 2008).

2.5.2. The New Training System

Algeria relied on a specialised group of curriculum developers, subject specialists, and textbook evaluators trained in competency-based approaches to curriculum development and made tremendous efforts in training teachers in teaching with competencies. Now, the Algerian Ministry of Education is directing its efforts into training teachers according to the principles underlying the CBA reform and meeting the demands and challenges of the new curriculum.

After succeeding in the teachers' competition organised by the National Ministry of Education, teachers must attend preparatory training that aims at forming competent and skillful teachers. The preparatory training as described by a novice teacher included 400 hours of which 250 hours were devoted to theoretical training and the rest of 150 hours were invested in practical training. The theoretical training involves seminars, lectures, and teachers' discussions and exchange of ideas. It included modules on didactics, educational psychology, school legislation, and ICT. The content of the theoretical current training system is summarised in the table below:

Module	Content
1.Didactics	Basic concepts of EFL teaching methodology. This includes curriculum, syllabus, lessons plan, evaluation, and other aspects.
2. Educational Psychology	The application of the principles and concepts of psychology in the different issues of education such as the development of teaching, learning, motivation, instruction, assessment, and other topics that are concerned with the teaching and learning process.
3. School Legislation	The different types of laws for workers in the education sector and the public sector in general.
4.ICT	The mastery of the different technological tools that are used to communicate and manage information.

Table 2.3. Modules of the Theoretical Training of the National Ministry of Education

The practical training was undertaken under the supervision of an experienced teacher appointed by the educational local authorities. The trainee would first attend some sessions in order to grasp the general outline of how to teach. Later on, the supervising teacher would ask him to plan and then present some lessons in front of the students. After the lesson presentation, the supervising teacher would discuss the trainee's performance, evaluate it and

most importantly find the weaknesses and strengths in the trainee's performance. The supervising teacher would keep guiding, instructing, and evaluating the trainee for more than three months so that a final mark was given to the trainee. This mark included different aspects, such as teaching skills, classroom management, the trainee's proficiency in the language, and other aspects. The trained teacher would sit for a final formal exam that evaluates the knowledge he had studied in the theoretical training. Though success was guaranteed in this exam, it was important to work hard for this exam as it decided where the teacher would be appointed. By the end of the training, teachers would have received adequate educational and professional training to possess adequate knowledge and teaching skills and to be able to dedicate them to the teaching profession.

It should be noted that this pre-service training was designed exclusively for novice teachers while the in-service training was directed to teachers who are already in service and included mainly seminars and workshops.

2.5.3. The Training of the École Normale Supérieure

The teacher training schools are higher education institutions whose creation, evolution, and missions are closely linked to the needs of the Ministry of National Education. The first ENS was created in 1964 in Kouba, Algiers. All teachers for all school levels, primary, middle, and secondary are now trained at the National School of Teachers (ENS). In the Algerian educational context, universities do not usually provide students with, and involve them in, any teaching training and professional development programmes except for Baccalaureate holders who register in the ENS. According to the ministerial decree of July 1999, the diploma of basic education teacher, a BAC+3 qualification is required to teach at

the primary education level. Meanwhile, the diploma of middle school education, a BAC+4 qualification represents the minimum requirement to teach at the middle school.

For those who chose to study English for the award of the Diplôme de Professeur d'Enseignement Secondaire, they have to study subjects that allow them in mastering the language as a whole, designing courses, establishing goals and learning outcomes in lessons, raising their awareness about the importance of effective warm-ups in lessons, developing competence and mastery of knowledge in subject matter areas, learning the different methods and strategies used to teaching and so on (Boudersa, 2016). In the final year of the five-year degree or after the professional examination, they are required to attend practical training in a given secondary school that allows them to work in authentic contexts of teaching, and their teaching is followed by a mentor to guide them.

It should be noted that some teacher training and professional development programmes can also be prepared and organised by some independent agencies. In the teaching of English as a foreign language in Algeria, the British Council in Algeria organises annually some interesting events intended at gathering Algerian teachers and informing them about new methods, strategies/techniques in the teaching of different subject matters. They also provide teachers with practical and up-to-date insights that might help them in their teaching practices. Though such modest attempts help Algerian teachers to get more informed and improve the quality of their teaching, they remain limited, not to say non-effective.

The importance of teachers' training cannot be neglected in any educational context. Teachers must have the ability to reflect on their current teaching to identify problems and try to solve them. It is more useful to see training and professional development as two

complementary components of a fully rounded teacher education: this ensures that teachers are good in what they do in classrooms and understand how teaching and learning in their schools can be improved.

Conclusion

The Algerian educational system, with its strengths, weaknesses, and properties, was not born overnight. It is the result of the interaction of a certain number of historical, political, and socio-cultural factors. One prominent factor that had the deepest impact on education was French colonisation. Though it was left in 1962 in chaos, Algeria insisted on making its own steps toward improving its educational system. After independence, Algeria had undergone a series of educational reforms that attempted to take into consideration both the country's specifications and the latest developments in teaching. Nowadays, the attempt to enhance the educational system is still an ongoing process as teachers are being formed and trained to teach according to the CBA as part of the last educational reform. Reformers believe in the appropriateness of the CBA to teaching English at Algerian secondary schools; it is regarded as the panacea for all the ills of education and training and the solution to the problems faced by education for many decades. However, to what extent is the CBA appropriate to the specifications of education in Algeria with regard to the context, the teachers, and the learners as well? The present chapter demonstrated the interweaving variables that control the teaching and learning context of EFL from different and multifarious facets; the following chapter will attempt to shed light and investigate what hinders the appropriate implementation of educational reforms with a brief exploration of the CBA challenges provided in the literature.

Chapter Three

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Chapter Three

Reform and Its Implications on Teaching English

Introduction

Education is always considered the backbone of any society. It contributes significantly to the development of any country. Thus, governments are increasingly looking into how to improve their education by achieving ambitious reforms in education to ultimately improve their countries. However, such changes are not easy to make; education change takes time; reforms may be inhibited by conflicts of interest (Carnoy, 1999) and other contextual inhibitions. Being aware of the importance of educational reforms, Algeria embarked, in 2003, ambitiously, on implementing a general educational reform that introduced new curricula and a new teaching methodology that are compatible with the CBA tenets. However, one has to bear in mind that reforms of education are undoubtedly one of the most complex and controversial subjects because of the effects- in case of success or failure- that they generate on the societies and countries where they take place.

For education reforms to be successful, a certain number of critical ingredients must be available in the right portion and quality. It is well known that not all changes are successful. A successful change in school can take place simultaneously through subject leaders who should have a plan and then spare no effort to implement this plan successfully. The implementation will involve behaviours, beliefs, and attitudes. However, with the Algerian case, the optimistic view of implementing the CBA into teaching English at Algerian secondary schools soon started to fade as EFL teachers find themselves confronted with a series of challenges and obstacles in the process of implementing the CBA. The present chapter will present the main challenges that are attributed to reforms in general, with a brief account of the English teaching challenges in Algerian secondary schools.

3.1. Definition of Educational Change

The developments of the knowledge era require school systems to undergo substantial changes to improve their student outcomes (Dorman, et al., 1997; Fullan, 2007). Globalisation, developments in information and communication technology, economic crises, and demographic changes dramatically force human beings to change structural-functional aspects in their systems (Ragsdell, 2000). In other words, time changes, and the ways of teaching and learning change accordingly. Change in education and its family of change words, such as ‘educational reform’, ‘educational policy’, and ‘paradigm shift’ are among the key concepts of modernity. Educational change is a broad term that refers to both shifting paradigms within education and efforts of reform within education. Change which is defined as the movement from one state to another (Hargreaves, 2004) is conceptualised also as the involvement of organisations in order to respond to increasing diversity of people, advances in information and communication technology, improvements in information processing, dynamic and extensive competition of market place and governmental regulations (Burke, 2008; Dawson, 2003; Moorhead and Griffin, 1995).

Change is a complex process that happens within an organisational ecology (Hargreaves, 2000; Hopkins, 2000). It is difficult to achieve (Fullan, 2000; Sarason, 1996) as it operates on three levels, namely, symbolic, linear, and appropriation (Fullan, 1991, 2003), and is often an expression of political symbolism (Goodson, 2001). Educational change is a central topic of inquiry in education, and a recognised field of study. When speaking of change in the field of education, reference is often made to educational reforms and the various transformations they exercised in the scholastic system in relation to such factors as educational philosophy, student policy, curriculum, pedagogy, didactics, organisation, management, and financing (Vasquez-Martinez, 2013). Louznadji (2008) views educational

reform as a long-term process that requires focused objectives, perseverance in their implementation, and the application of the knowledge gained from the experience of others, if necessary. There is no shame to incorporate foreign practices if the benefit results from them.

Since the early 1980s, the term "*paradigm shift*" has been used as a means of thinking about change in education. Fullan (1992, p. 22) asserted, "Change is a process of learning new ideas and things. It is learning to do and learning to understand something new". To put it simply, if a paradigm shift takes place, things are seen from a different perspective as focus is on different aspects of the phenomena in our lives. Twentieth-century paradigm shifts across a wide variety of fields can be seen as part of a larger shift from positivism to post-positivism (Berman, 1981; Capra, 1983; Merchant, 1992, cited in Jacobs and Farrell, 2003, p. 7). Being aware of the broader shift from positivism to post-positivism helps clarify the change or shift that takes place in any one particular field (Jacobs and Farrell). Table 3.1 provides a brief look at some contrasts between positivism and post-positivism.

Positivism	Post-Positivism
Emphasis on parts and de-contextualisation	Emphasis on whole and contextualisation
Emphasis on separation	Emphasis on integration
Emphasis on the general	Emphasis on the specific
Consideration only of objective and the quantifiable	Consideration also of subjective and the non-quantifiable
Reliance on experts and outsider knowledge-researcher as external	Consideration also of the "average" participant and insider knowledge-researcher as internal
Focus on control	Focus on understanding
Top-down	Bottom-up
Attempt to standardise	Appreciation of diversity

Focus on product	Focus on the process as well
------------------	------------------------------

Table 3.1. Contrasts between Positivism and Post-Positivism (Jacobs and Farrell, 2003, p. 6-7)

The rapid changes and increased complexity of today's world present new challenges and put new demands on our education system. In the field of L2 learning, the principal paradigm shift over the past 40 years flowed from the positivism to post-positivism shift and involved a move away from the tenets of behaviourist psychology and structural linguistics and toward cognitive, and later, socio-cognitive psychology and more contextualised, meaning-based views of language. Jacobs and Farrell (2003. p, 7-8) believed that the key components for this shift concern:

1. Focusing greater attention on the role of learners rather than the external stimuli learners are receiving from their environment. Thus, the center of attention shifted from the teacher to the student. This shift is generally known as the move from teacher-centered instruction to learner-centered or learning-centered instruction.
2. Focusing greater attention on the learning process rather than on the products that learners produce. This shift is known as a move from product-oriented instruction to process-oriented instruction.
3. Focusing greater attention on the social nature of learning rather than on students as separate, de-contextualised individuals.
4. Focusing greater attention on diversity among learners and viewing these differences not as impediments to learning but as resources to be recognised, catered to and appreciated. This shift is known as the study of individual differences.

5. Focusing greater attention on the views of those internal to the classroom rather than solely valuing the views of those who come from outside to study classrooms, evaluate what goes on there and engage in theorising about it. This shift led to such innovations as qualitative research - with its valuing of the subjective and affective, of the participants' insider views and of the uniqueness of each context.
6. Along with this emphasis on context came the idea of connecting the school with the world beyond as a means of promoting holistic learning.
7. Helping students to understand the purpose of learning and develop their own purposes.
8. A whole-to-part orientation instead of a part-to-whole approach. This involves such approaches as beginning with meaningful whole texts and then helping students understand the various features that enable texts to function, e.g., the choice of words and the text's organisational structure.
9. An emphasis on the importance of meaning rather than drills and other forms of rote learning.
10. A view of learning as a lifelong process rather than something done to prepare for an exam.

Fullan (1991, p. 105-109) provided the following set of assumptions that relate to change in education:

- Do not assume that your ideas about changes are the ones that ought to be implemented.
- Assume that individuals who are attempting to implement changes will continually need clarification about them in order to make sense.
- Assume that successful change will inevitably involve some conflict and disagreement.
- Assume that people will only change if there is pressure to do so, a supportive environment, and opportunities to share experiences with others in similar situations.
- Assume that it will take two or three years for significant change to take place.
- Do not assume that the change itself has been rejected if it fails to be implemented-there may be other factors, which have contributed to the failure.
- Assume that it is impossible to bring about widespread change in a school: aim to increase the number of people affected.
- Do not assume that knowledge can be the sole basis for a decision. They will usually be based on a combination of knowledge, politics, and intuition.
- Assume that change will be fraught with problems and new challenges.

3.2. Managing Educational Change

Schools, just like all other organisations, undergo change regularly. However, change does not happen by providing schools with a new book, teaching method, or curriculum and

then asking them to implement the desired change effectively. Change in education needs to be managed effectively, i.e., planned, implemented, and evaluated in the most efficient possible way. To achieve success, no effort is to be spared in managing change is going to take place.

3.2.1. Dimensions of Educational Change

Change is ubiquitous, and so is the concept of ‘change’ (Altrichter and Elliott, 2000). Fullan operates with three dimensions of educational change. The first one, which is also the most visible one, is when new or revised materials are introduced, such as curriculum materials or technologies. The second one, which is more difficult to implement, is new teaching approaches, that is, teaching strategies or activities. Finally, the third dimension, which is the most difficult one to employ, is changing people’s beliefs, for example, assumptions and theories underlying particular policies or programmes. All these three aspects of change represent the ways of achieving some educational goal and they are indispensable to achieving what Fullan calls ‘real change’ (2007, p. 39).

There can be little change if new materials are introduced without being followed by new teaching approaches, or if changes are articulated in terms of beliefs and values without actually understanding their implications for practice (Burner, 2018). Fullan has made an enormous contribution to the field of educational change. His ideas of capacity building for individuals, schools, and the system, leading to deeper learning to enhance teaching, and sustainability are the key current school improvement challenges today (Stoll et al., 2001).

The understanding of the processes that are involved in learning second languages has changed considerably and CLT is partly a response to these changes. CLT has led to a radical

change in ideas about syllabus design and methodology in the last 50 years and prompted a rethinking of how language is learned and thus how it should be taught and presented to learners. Jacobs and Farrell outlined eight major changes associated with the CLT paradigm shift. These eight essentials are:

1. Encourage learner autonomy
2. Emphasise the social nature of learning
3. Develop curricular integration
4. Focus on meaning
5. Celebrate diversity
6. Expand thinking skills
7. Utilise alternative assessment methods
8. Promote English language teachers as co-learners. (2003, p. 9)

The eight essentials for successful language teaching have been selected because of the impact they already have had on teaching and for the potential impact they could have if they were used in a more integrated fashion. Figure 1 provides an illustration of the interdependence of these eight changes of the paradigm shift in L2 education (Jacobs and Farrell, 2003, p. 9).

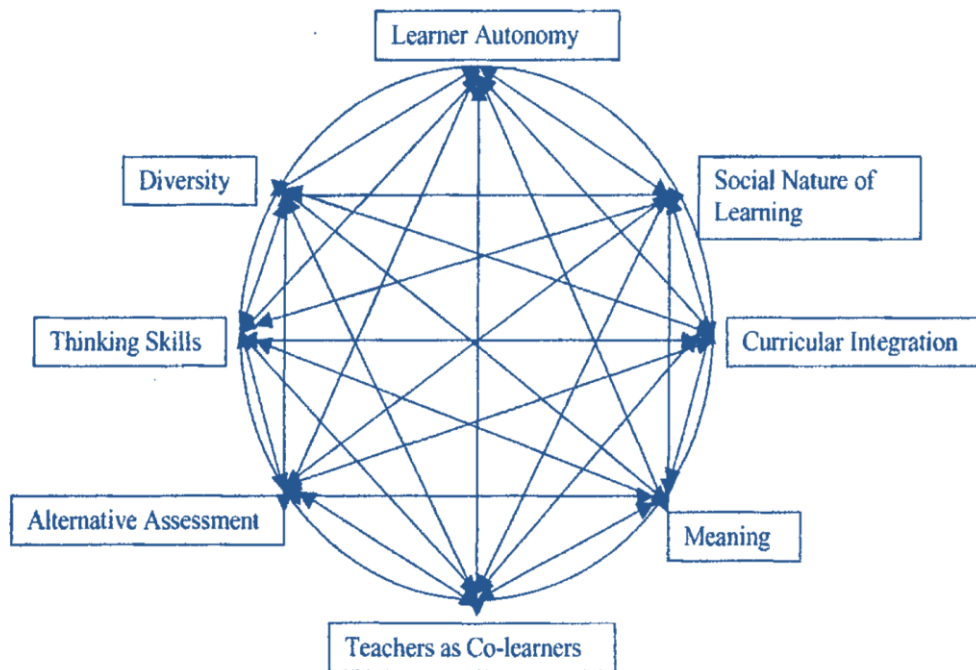


Figure 3.1. Illustration of the Interdependence of the Eight Changes in L2 Teaching
(Jacobs and Farrell, 2003. p, 9)

Jacobs and Farrel (2003) asserted that the circular nature of the above figure emphasises that all the changes are parts of a whole and that the successful implementation of one is dependent on the successful implementation of the others.

3.2.2. Objectives of Educational Change

The goal of educational change is to improve schools and enhance the quality of education (Burner, 2018) which results in the improvement of student learning, learning conditions, and/or learning processes (Hargreaves et al., 2010). Carless (2013) sees that governments, school managers, and teachers work hard to make education more effective for students.

In theory, the purpose of educational change is to help schools accomplish their goals more effectively by replacing some structures, programmes, and/or practices with better ones. The participants in education want to investigate whether, how and under what conditions educational change can improve schools (Fullan, 2001). Fullan emphasised that the implementation of educational change is multidimensional: it involves a change in practice which occurs at many levels, such as the teacher, the school or the school district. He defined the ideal educational reform as deriving from the goal of “raising the bar for all the students and closing the gap for lower-performing groups, equipping them with the skills and abilities required to be successful world citizens” (2011, p. 3).

To sum, Biesta (2010, p. 3) maintained that despite the change and innovation going on at classroom, school, and policy levels, the focus is often more on the how-“How can these new ideas introduced in the classroom ?”-Than on the why-“And why should this actually be done?”

3.2.3. Phases of Educational Change

The change process in schools can be handled in four broad phases in relation to outcomes: initiation, implementation, continuation, and outcome (Fullan, 2007). Initiation, which is also labeled as mobilisation or adoption involves the processes leading up and comprising a decision to adopt or proceed with a change. It may take different forms taking in a decision of a single authority or a broad base mandate. Various factors are affecting whether a change is initiated. These sources influencing initiation are the existence and quality of innovations, access to innovations, advocacy from central administration, teacher advocacy, external change agents, community pressure, new policy, problem-solving, and bureaucratic orientations. The second phase is that of Implementation: a phase of attempted use involving

the first experiences of attempting to put an idea or reform into practice. Implementation consists of the processes that put an idea, programme, and set of activities or structures new to the people into practice. In this sense, implementation is considered as the means to achieving certain outcomes. Characteristics of change for different stakeholders in local and governmental levels in terms of need of change are clarity about goals and needs, complexity, local factors like school district, principal, teacher, board of community and external factors such as government and other agencies are identified as factors affecting implementation process in schools. Fullan and Stigelbauer (1991) identified three areas of the major factors affecting implementation: characteristics of change, local characteristics, and external factors (government and other agencies). They identified different stakeholders at local, and federal and governmental levels. They also identified characterisations of change to each stakeholder and the issues that each stakeholder should consider before committing a change effort or rejecting it. The three major three areas affecting implementation are summarised in the table below.

Characteristics of Change	Local Factors	External Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need of change • Clarity about goals and needs • Complexity: the extent of change required to those responsible for implementation • Quality and practicality of the programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school district • Board of community • Principal • Teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government and other agencies

Table 3.2. Areas of the Major Factors Affecting Change in Education (Fullan and Stigelbauer, 1991)

Continuation, institutionalisation, incorporation, and routinisation are all labels for the third phase of the process of educational change. An educational change is considered to be continued or institutionalised when it becomes a taken-for-granted feature of everyday practice (Datnow, 2005). This phase is an extension of the implementation phase and refers to whether the change builds as an ongoing part of the system or becomes unnoticeable with a decision of discarding or by attrition (Fullan, 2007). Reactions during this phase vary from positive to negative and depend on whether or not:

1. The change gets embedded/built into the structure (through policy/budget/timetable)
 2. The change has generated a critical mass of administrators or teachers who are skilled and committed
 3. The change has established procedures for continuing assistance
- (Fullan, 2007)

In the end, these three phases are related to outcomes that refer to several different results depending on the objectives, especially whether or not the objectives are achieved, whether or not student learning is enhanced, and whether or not experiences with change increase subsequent capacity to deal with future changes. Attention to the following perspectives on the change process may support the achievement of a positive or successful change outcome:

1. Active initiation and participation
 2. Pressure, support, and negotiation
 3. Changes in skills, thinking, and committed actions
 4. Overriding problem of ownership
- (Fullan, 2007)

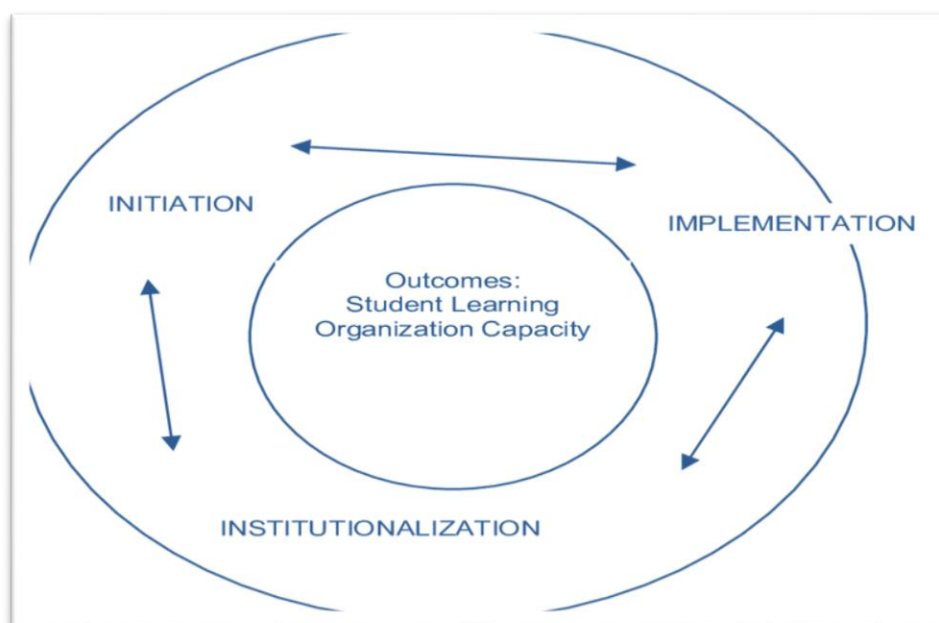


Figure 3.2. A Simplified Overview of Change Process (Fullan, 2001)

Studies on the process of change provide other models emphasising phases for the implementation of change. To illustrate, Lewin's (1947) notion of unfreezing, moving and refreezing steps from the conceptualisation of the change process. Later on, Schein elaborated Lewin's three stages into three steps: unfreezing, changing and refreezing,

1. Unfreezing: The school should understand its own capabilities and the need for change, the initiation and the hindrance to change, as well as the preparation of human resources and the resources for learning and teaching.

2. Changing: This includes the implementation, the change of the management, the change of teaching and learning as well as the change of values and beliefs; the monitoring process in order to achieve; clarification of worries and uncertainty so as to reduce the damages caused by the change; and promotion of new ideas of learning and teaching as well as the new culture.

3. Refreezing: Unfreezing of an organisation is achieved by the creation of motivation and readiness to change. This includes identification of the favourable outcomes of the change, removal of the unfavourable effects, evaluation of what is sacrificed during the change and the effectiveness of the change, putting the favourable outcomes into the system, and internalisation of the success (Schein, 1987)

Although Lewin has been criticised by scholars for over-simplifying the change process, he is widely considered the founding father of change management (Bridgman et al, 2016). In addition to the aforementioned process models, recent studies such as Kotter (1995), Galpin (1996), Armenakis, Harris, and Field (1999) also proposed widely used change process models.

3.3.The Difficulty of Educational Change

The experience of educational change may be complicated, and thus making sense of it can be extremely problematic (James, 2010). Burner (2018) maintained that attempts at change have been on a small scale and there have been neither systematic evaluations nor a research field covering educational change to shed light on the difficulties of change. He added that the question about the difficulties of educational change and the ways to making it more effective contains the underlying assumptions that educational change is in fact difficult, and necessary.

Few of the different studies of innovation in the field of education report on successful innovations. After an extensive study of educational change programmes, Parish and Arrends

(1983) concluded that educational innovations had approximately a twenty percent success rate. Fullan (1993. p, 19) reflected upon the complexity of educational change in the following words

Take any educational policy or problem and start listing all the forces that could figure in the solution and that would need to be influenced to make for productive change. Then, take the idea that unplanned factors are inevitable government policy changes or gets constantly redefined, key leaders leave, important contact people are shifted to another role, new technology is invented, immigration increases, recession reduces available resources, a bitter conflict erupts, and so on. Finally, realize that every new variable that enters the equation those unpredictable but inevitable noise factors produce ten other ramifications, which in turn produces tens of other reactions and on and on

Timperley and Parr (2005) pointed out that educational change, whether involving policy or what goes on in schools, often fails to achieve the desired impact. Change in school organisations is complex and difficult to achieve. Without discussion of the change process, problems and the power that change creates may not be understood in schools. For the successful implementation of an educational change, the dynamics and implications of change should be understood effectively. Fullan (1999) pointed out the importance of the recognition that the process of educational change is complex. To deal with such complexity is not to control the change, but to guide it. He developed this point as follows:

All of these changes to be productive require skills, capacity, commitment, motivation, beliefs and insights, and discretionary

judgment on the spot. If there is one cardinal rule of change in human condition, it is that you cannot make people change. You cannot force them to think differently or compel them to develop new skills (Fullan, 1993, pp. 33-34)

In considering the complexity of educational change, Fullan (1993, p. 32-33) provided eight lessons about thinking of change.

1. You can't mandate what matters: the more complex the change the less you can force it
2. Change is a journey, not a blueprint: change is non-linear, loaded with uncertainty and excitement, and sometimes perverse
3. Problems are our friends: problems are inevitable and you can't learn without them
4. Vision and strategic planning come later: premature visions and planning blind
5. Individualism and collectivism must have equal power: there are no one-sided solutions to isolation and groupthink
6. Neither centralisation nor decentralisation work: both top-down and bottom-up strategies are necessary
7. Connection with the wider environment is critical for success: the best organisations learn externally as well as internally
8. Every person is a change agent: Change is too important to leave to the experts, personal mindset and mastery is the ultimate protection.

Fullan (1993, p. 46) maintained that education reforms are “hard to conceive and even harder to put into practice”. This is not surprising when the complex nature of innovation is considered. Not only the forces operating both outside and within the country implementing change need to be considered, but also the situations of those who are most affected by the change.

3.4. Challenges of Educational Change

Educational change is hard to conceive and even harder to put into practice: this is the reason why the success of innovation and its implementation is conditioned by the application of a number of key features (Fullan, 1992; Markee, 1997; Williamson and Cowley, 1998). Richards and Rodgers (1986) stated that the proliferation of methods and approaches in the twentieth-century urges teachers and programme coordinators choose methods and materials according to the needs of learners, the preferences of teachers, and the constraints of the school or educational setting.

Louznadji (2008) argued that there is also no shame to admit that weaknesses are discovered: he rather suggested that it is a sign of strength to admit that three or four years of school reform have not achieved the assigned objectives. In this situation, critics and reports should be taken into consideration to learn how to implement the reform in the most efficient way involving the contribution of the experts in the field whose task is revising and updating the teaching-learning materials. Any problem in school reform needs to be remedied starting at the very beginning, particularly when it relates to the future of a nation.

Given concerns over the declining education quality in Algeria, the government embarked on the CBA reform with optimism; however, some studies conducted by the

Ministry of Education as an initial evaluation of the process revealed that the reforms had not met great enthusiasm. In this context, Toulbi-Thaâlibi (2006, p.25) asked, “Do these recriminations reflect the effect of misunderstanding and frustration of actors not associated with the reform process or are they, more prosaically, the expression of simple resistance to change?”

Attempts have been made by researchers to identify factors, which have an impact on the adoption and implementation of curriculum innovations (Fullan, 2001; Owston, 2007; White et al., 1991). The main challenges facing educational innovation in English teaching and learning can be related to teachers, the system, and learners. Thus, challenges are to be broadly grouped into three main categories.

3.4.1. Teacher-related Challenges

It is indisputable that teachers are keys to the success of curriculum reform (Guskey, 1995; Smith and Desimone, 2003). Their knowledge, beliefs, and perceptions play a fundamental role in understanding the reforms (Haney and Lumpe, 2002). Thus, it would be irrational and naive to expect teachers to accept educational reforms easily or without any objections. Educational theoreticians agree on the role of the teacher as being the most important member of educational unity. He applies and puts into practice all previously planned teaching theories and approaches with his students. He is also supposed to be aware of all hazardous obstacles that may occur in the achievement of the different teaching theories when being practiced in classrooms. Besides, he needs to be aware of the individual differences between learners even in the same classroom; therefore, successful implementation of a new curriculum at the classroom level largely depends on teachers.

While some educational change is easily accepted, unwelcome change can lead to discomfort and disorientation (James, 2010). There are two main reasons for the effect of unwelcome change: the disruption of defensive behaviours and the complex feelings that result from loss of meaning. Thus, an educational change requiring a change in practice can be associated with difficult feelings and anxieties. Day and Smethem (2009) highlighted that reforms may not always lead to renewal and when forced by governments may raise resistance among those supposed to implement them in the field.

One of the most important obstacles relates to resistance, a social defense that teachers often adopt to protect themselves against unacceptable feelings that may imperil their sense of identity, legitimacy, and value. Resistance is defined as a direct refusal to accept information or to defy or oppose a proposal, request, or order of some kind (Fineman, 2003; Gabriel, 1999, cited in James, 2010, p. 54). Peiperl (2005, p. 348) referred to resistance as “the active or passive responses on the part of a person or group that militate against a particular change, a program of changes, or change in general”.

While Newton and Tarrant (1992) pointed out that resistance is as natural as a phenomenon as change itself, Burnes (2017) argued that resistance can signal that the proposed change may be ill-thought-out, not radical enough, wrong, or even illegal. This resistance creates one of the challenges to successfully implementing the change. James (2010, p. 54) established the connection between educational reforms and teachers’ resistance as follows:

Resistance results from a powerful and deeply seated sense of anxiety, which, in turn, may result from a perceived threat to an individual’s sense of their identity, esteem and worth. Imposed educational change

may be experienced as just that kind of threat, which is why opposition to it can be so strong

The factors that affect school change and lead to the teachers' resistance can be identified and categorised into four categories: psychological, personal, school-culture, and organisational factors.

3.4.1.1. Psychological Factors

Psychological factors have a tremendous effect on teachers' resistance to change. Examples of these factors are feelings of loss, threat, doubt, discomfort, and worries. It is commonly known that change moves people away from what is known and comfortable to what is unusual and uncomfortable. This uneasiness leads people to resist change. Teachers are believed to resist change simply because they do not want any change to affect their 'comfort zone' (Alamassi and Al Jneibi, 2015, p. 62).

Innovation in education cannot be accomplished by having teachers learn only the surface form of reform practices. It requires grappling with the underlying ideas and may require deep conceptual change, in which teachers rethink an entire system of interacting attitudes, beliefs, and practices. Van Veen and Slegers (2006) indicated that the manner in which teachers react to educational reforms is largely determined by whether they perceive their professional identities as being reinforced or threatened by reforms.

Resistance occurs when conflict arises because the reality of teachers' backgrounds is not considered or when change is not given sufficient time to be incorporated into their philosophies (Flamholtz and Randal, 2008). Stress also accumulates from physical and mental

exhaustion that negatively affects the job performance and satisfaction of teaching. This stress will increase in relation to the extent and rate of change and the degree to which teachers perceive the change to be imposed rather than shared. The common expectation is that teachers will comply with the policies and plans; however, teachers sometimes struggle with the implementation of such a pre-determined teaching approach of the higher authorities. In this respect, Fullan (1993, p. 34) stated: "if there is one radical of change in the human condition, is that you cannot make people change, you cannot force them to think differently or compel them to develop new skills".

According to Chacon (as cited in Ololube, 2015, p.246), "if curriculum change is externally imposed, teachers can view it as a threat, which can undermine their beliefs, and shake their confidence in their established practices and feeling of self-efficacy". In this sense, Sikes (1992, p.43) maintained that because of such imposition, teachers "lose their sense of meaning and direction, their 'framework of reality', their confidence that they know what to do, and consequently they experience confusion and a kind of alienation". Besides, Fullan (1993) pointed out that the more mandates are "tightened", the more educational goals and means are narrowed, and consequently the less impact there is.

Teachers are now expected to become curriculum workers who can assume the position of leadership in curriculum matters in order to ensure the successful implementation of the new curriculum. Their roles would change from experts of factual knowledge to coordinating, directing, and consulting players. Countries are now shifting to decentralised education systems because they have become quite aware that teachers' participation in any educational reform has a positive effect on the teachers' psychology and decreases the resistance associated with change, and thus view their participation as indispensable for its

success. Finland, one of the leading countries in education which rely on a decentralised educational system, involved 70% of its teachers in 2017 in shifting the education system towards a phenomenon-based approach as part of a newly planned reform. Not to mention that it is now allowing teachers to alter their lesson plans and arrange schooling according to their local needs and preferences (FNBE, 2016). This greatly differs from the more centralised approach taken in our country.

To sum up, careful consideration of these factors may help achieve the psychological equanimity of teachers, which, in turn, facilitates the successful implementation of change.

3.4.1.2. Personal Factors

The nature of human beings defies any change. In teaching contexts, personal factors are those factors that are associated with teachers' identities, attitudes, beliefs, adaptability, and trust. Van Veen and Slegers (2006) explained that teachers will accept change only if it is in agreement with their specialty and skills. Van Wyk, (2009) added that resistance stems also from some school members who see innovation as unnecessary. These teachers have been using a particular teaching method and refuse the implementation of the new proposed approach but still believe in the success of their own methods. They also strongly believe they are doing a good job in the current context and that the proposed changes would threaten their professionalism and the quality of their work. This may be the case for some EFL experienced teachers who believe they had been teaching enough to have the ability to judge what best suits their learners. Some common practices of those self-confident teachers or rather change resisters who blindly believe in their own teaching skills and practices include refusing to attend seminars and workshops organised by inspectors and rejecting modifications that relate either to the syllabi distribution or to the teaching methodology. This category of teachers

might unintentionally deprive not only themselves, but also their learners of any chance of embracing the latest teaching innovations.

Mckenzie and Scheurich (2008) added more personal factors that make teachers resist change. First, teachers blame external factors such as the carelessness of learners, parents, culture, and L2. Second, they also might perceive the system as restrictive because they are always being watched and judged. Third, teachers consider any suggestion for change as criticism and thus put themselves in the position of defense, as they feel threatened. The conclusion is that if teachers see that change is less threatening to them, matches their attitudes and beliefs, they will be less likely to resist it.

3.4.1.3. School-culture Factors

School culture has become a central concept in many efforts to change how schools operate and improve educational results (Tamir and Ganon-Shilon, 2021). While culture is broadly defined as the stream of “norms, values, beliefs, traditions, and rituals built up over time” (Peterson and Deal, 1998), school culture develops as staff members interact with each other, the teachers, the students, and the community at large (Hinde, 2004). Traditionally, schools do not have the organisational capacity to formulate the goals and vision necessary to bring about an effective change in culture. The input of practitioners -especially teachers- in schools is crucial in creating lasting change (Hinde, 2004).

School culture has a great effect on the teachers’ perception of change and its adoption or rejection: it may exercise a positive influence on learning or it can seriously inhibit the functioning of the school (Rossman, 2008). Per (2004) explained that cultural factors include how norms and values are shaped; how the work is organised; how interpersonal relations are

created, and how the idea for change and renewal is interpreted in schools. For change to occur successfully, the norms and values represented by the change should be in agreement with the organisation's culture and its basic values. Otherwise, it will be resisted or rejected. Similarly, Hinde (2004) believes that if the staff members are committed to the reform introduced, then the culture will be conducive to change.

Change in a school will involve many aspects. A school has many small groups with different ideas: this raises the possibility that not all groups can understand the implications of the change, and thus will not effectively participate in the process of change. Fullan (1991, p.XIV) pointed out, 'It isn't that people resist change as much as they don't know how to cope with it.'

The changing school culture necessitates an efficient leader whose behaviours originate from moral values and beliefs that are congruent with change. The leader needs to share information and ideas about education with all stakeholders involved in the change process; raise their awareness about change; keep them informed; address their concerns, and assist in reducing their feelings of anxiety and frustration. Therefore, the more participation, trust, and communication are evident, the more teachers become open to change (Silcox, et al., 2003).

3.4.1.4. Organisational Factors

Although psychological factors appear to be strongly related to teacher learning, the organisational design of schools also matters (Kwakman, 2003). Organisational factors are conditions that promote learning in the workplace. They include opportunities for individuals to work with and learn from similar and dissimilar others and the nature of interactions among

individuals with whom one works (Bandura, 1986). Cooperative, friendly, and collegial relationships; open communication; and the free exchange of ideas may provide emotional and psychological support for teachers' work and promote critical reflection, experimentation, and other types of learning (Smylie and Lazarus, 1996). Collaboration also provides opportunities for teachers to work together to solve problems, feedback and information, and assistance and support (Kwakman, 2003).

Teacher participation in decision-making, as a condition that supports an organic form of school organisation, can add to personal goals and teachers' sense of self-efficacy and thus motivate teacher learning (Geijsel and Slegers, 2009). Participative decision making- especially when the decision concerns issues that are strongly related to teaching and student learning- leads to increasing teachers' ownership of organisational goals and reinforcing the extent to which teachers have internalised school goals and values as their personal goals (Slegers, et al., 2005). If teachers have no say in the formulation and planning of educational policies and reforms, they will see change as imposed by policymakers in a centralised decision system. Thus, when they get into putting the reform into practice, they will start with the idea of just complying with imposed instructions and not improving the system. The feeling of being left aside will also nurture the sense of non-responsibility when it comes to their learners' underachievement in school. They will also feel undervalued because they are unable to make their influence and direct change in educational policies and reforms.

“Resistance also stems largely from how change is initiated and administered”, (Ibrahim et al, 2013). School reform cannot be planned, initiated, or accomplished against the will of the teachers: it could be easily resisted at its earliest phases of planning and

implementation, particularly when it calls for a change in their beliefs and practices at the classroom level.

Teachers resist change if they have gone through frequent changes in a limited period or if they have witnessed negative effects from previous changes (Palmer et al, 2009). Keeping teachers aware of any change and training them on different components of any planned reform are important components of the organisational factor. Cavanagh (2004) emphasised the significance of teachers' input in staff development programmes and school reform efforts. If teachers are not provided with or involved in professional development on change, they can easily resist it. To change teacher thinking and behaviour, training is required: this takes time, especially at the outset of the process. Troudi and Alwan (2010) found that teachers accepted the parts of change that they were more acquainted with but were distressed by other parts that required them to exert extra effort. Therefore, not only is some sort of professional development necessary for teachers to understand the introduced reform, but they also need time to understand what is expected of them and time to reflect on it.

To sum up, when upsetting feelings associated with change are managed and given credibility, change is more likely to proceed. Change resisters are better not ignored or deferred; rather, their input should be encouraged. As Fullan (1997, p. 294) explained: "with greater emotional intelligence and empathy, initiators of change 'learn from resisters', they know that emotion is energy". Resisters provide insight into the proposed reform that may facilitate the change and reveal otherwise overlooked hindrances. Their role can be as vital as that of the supporters.

3.4.2. System-related Challenges

Education systems are, by nature, extremely complex and multifaceted, and the challenges entailed in reforming or improving them can be similarly complex and multifaceted. Even if reform is built on the strongest educational theories, it is subject to a certain number of impediments which relate to the system of education per se.

3.4.2.1. Politicisation of the Educational System

Governments and policymakers around the world are introducing a range of strategies that aim at improving the delivery of education services. One such strategy is to decentralise education decision-making by increasing parental and community involvement in schools. Decentralising decision-making authority to parents and communities fosters demand and ensures that schools provide the social and economic benefits that best reflect the priorities and values of a country (Chen, 2011). While there are top-down and bottom-up types of decision-making strategies, it is important to determine appropriate decision-making strategies that can be used in education systems, especially in curriculum innovation endeavours (Chance and Chance, 2002).

Fullan (2011, p. 3) explained the role of policy makers in deciding the success or failure of reforms as follows:

‘Whole system reform’ is the name of the game and ‘drivers’ are those policy and strategy levers that have the least and best chance of driving successful reform. A ‘wrong driver’ then is a deliberate policy force that has little chance of achieving the desired result, while a ‘right driver’ is one that ends up achieving better measurable results for students

Educational change and reforms need to be administered through dialogue among educators at all levels within and across the respective systems rather than confining discussions and decisions to only the most senior leaders in the system (Hargreaves et al., 2010).

3.4.2.2. Insufficient Teacher Education

Fullan maintained, “Competence breeds confidence” (Fullan, 1993, p.113). It is widely recognised that teacher training and professional development are highly rewarding and demanding processes at the same time. Fullan (1993) maintained that society has failed its teachers in two senses of the word. It gives teachers failing grades for not producing better results. At the same time, it does not help improve the conditions that would make success possible. Is the blame to be put on society, the system, or the teacher? Alternatively, do they share the same amount of blame as an educational unity?

Since the teacher is the first decision-maker in his classroom, the absence of training, or limited training, will make him face the challenge of having poor subject knowledge and limited professional and pedagogical skills to teach a given subject, deliver the lesson, assess learning, and provide the learner with the appropriate knowledge and learning experience (Boudersa, 2016). According to Fullan (1993), teacher background and competence, the content of teacher training, political influences, cultural appropriateness, as well as processes and methodologies of training programmes are elements that needed consideration when making change. He (1993) added that initial teacher preparation must provide prospective teachers with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will form a strong foundation for effective teaching, and for continuous learning and development throughout their careers. In the same respect, Zouaoui (2013) concluded that teaching problems encountered by novice

teachers resulted largely from ignoring the theoretical aspects behind the methodology, mainly those relating to the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Steyn (2011) identified five key factors that can influence the effectiveness of professional development programmes. These include:

- An emphasis on teacher's learning: professional development programmes must be tailored to meet teachers' individual needs, varying levels of content knowledge and skills. In addition, effective professional development programmes must be research-based, supported by nationwide and local education policies, well-planned and sustained, conducted by knowledgeable and well-prepared facilitators who are aware of teachers' difficulties. They should also take place over an extended period, focus on developing teachers' skills for classroom practice, and promote collective learning.
- The commitment of teachers: it is essential that teachers have positive attitudes towards professional development. In addition, the selected professional development programmes must be adequate with teacher needs and align with their beliefs about teaching and learning.
- Effective leadership: Principals should be involved in the design and implementation of appropriate professional development programmes in their schools, based on the training needs of the teaching staff. These programmes should aim at monitoring teachers' understanding of the new paradigm and evaluating the overall implementation of the reform.

- The particular school context: school culture and teacher collaboration can significantly influence school-based professional development programmes. Effective collaboration between teachers and the school administration creates an environment that is conducive for successful professional development.
- Feedback on teachers' development: Teachers need regular feedback on how they adapt to new approaches in their classrooms. In addition, principals need to make sure that all teachers are adjusting to the new teaching initiatives.

Summing up, effective teacher training and ongoing professional development require the involvement of the teacher and the inspectors in organising beneficial seminars and the coordination and contribution of colleagues to improve and innovate their way of teaching with the aim of improving their learners' abilities and allowing them to be competent citizens, which is the ultimate goal of educational reforms.

3.4.2.3. Poorly Designed Syllabi and Textbooks

Language teaching has five important components: students, teachers, materials, teaching methods, and evaluation but the essential constituents of EFL classrooms and programmes are the textbooks and instructional materials that are often used by language instructors. Tomlinson (2012, p.143) defined materials as “anything which can be used to facilitate the learning of a language including coursebooks, videos, graded readers, flashcards, games, websites and mobile interactions” while Hutchinson and Torres (1994, p. 315) defined textbooks as follows:

The textbook is an almost universal element of [English language] teaching. Millions of copies are sold every year, and numerous aid projects have been set up to produce them in countries...no teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook

Materials are resources designed specifically for language teaching and learning. They include worksheets, computer software, newspaper articles that are particularly selected for teaching purposes, and teacher-written materials. Materials development refers to anything which is done by writers, teachers, or learners to provide sources of language input in ways that maximise the likelihood of intake. In doing so, materials developers, including teachers, may bring pictures or advertisements into the classroom, compose a textbook, design a student worksheet and read a poem or an article aloud. If they are properly designed, skillfully produced, and effectively used, materials will have a great positive influence on teaching and learning. In this respect, Nunan (1991, p. 279) stated that “materials are important components with the curriculum, and are often the most tangible and visible component of pedagogy”.

EFL textbooks should be present in most lessons in EFL classrooms. Teachers and learners should use them systematically following the curriculum because they provide them with the image of the target language. Richards (2001, p. 254-255) listed the advantages of relying on textbooks in EFL instruction for both teachers and learners. They are as follows:

1. They provide structure and a syllabus for a program: without textbooks, a program may have no central core and learners may not receive a syllabus that has been systematically planned and developed.
2. They help standardise instruction: the use of a textbook in a program can ensure that the students in different classes receive similar content and therefore can be tested in the same way.
3. They maintain quality: if a well developed textbook is used students are exposed to materials that have been tried and tested, that are based on sound learning principles, and that are paced appropriately.
4. They provide a variety of learning resources. Workbooks, CDs and cassettes, videos, CD ROMs, and comprehensive teaching guides often accompany textbooks providing a rich and varied resource for teachers and learners.
5. They are efficient: they save teachers' time, enabling teachers to devote time to teaching rather than material's production.
6. They can provide effective language models and input: textbooks can provide support for teachers whose first language is not English and who may not be able to generate accurate language input on their own.
7. They can train teachers: if teachers have limited teaching experience, a textbook together with the teachers' manual can serve as a medium of initial teacher training.
8. They are visually appealing. Commercial textbooks usually have high standards of design and production and hence are appealing to learners and teachers.

Despite their unquestionable utility and long roots in ELT, textbooks have also been criticised because of their dominant status. Tomlinson (2008) listed the ways he thinks some teaching materials at present inhibit language learning. First, he believes teaching materials underestimate learners' language level as well as cognitive ability, through which they impoverish the learning experience in a misguided attempt to make learning easier. Secondly, he added that teaching materials are overusing the "Presentation/Practice/Production", i.e. the PPP approach, which simplifies language use and results in shallow processing. They also create an illusion of language learning by making sure that most activities can be done by involving little more than memorisation, repetition of a script, or simple substitution or transformation. Moreover, teaching materials focus too much on the practice of typical examination tasks, which then takes up valuable class learning time.

Finally, Tomlinson (2008) stated that teaching materials in general fail in helping learners to make full use of the language experience available to them outside the classroom since they provide learners with too much de-contextualised experience of language exemplification and not enough language in contextualised use.

Though materials developers might write textbooks, tell stories, bring advertisements into the classroom, express an opinion, provide samples of language use or even read a poem aloud (Tomlinson, 2008), the scope of materials is often restricted to course books or textbooks including any activities or task conducted in language classrooms. However, it is a fact that a textbook does not always meet the variety of conditions in a language class. According to Richards (2006, p. 11),

A useful exercise for teachers doing courses on materials' development involves examining classroom texts and teacher's manuals to try to identify assumptions about language and language learning underlying materials and how these lead to particular decisions about syllabuses and exercise types in classroom materials

Materials in EFL teaching are evaluated to review their usefulness or appropriateness by considering a number of important factors such as teachers' expectations, methodological preferences, learners' needs and syllabus requirements. Teachers as materials developers are the most aware of their learners' needs and interests. Sometimes, they need to explore teaching materials outside textbooks and modify them in order to be relevant to the needs and demands of a particular group of students. In fact, all language teachers have to be able to evaluate, select and adapt materials according to the learners' needs, goals and materials objectives. Thus, the teacher remains the ultimate selector of adequate teaching materials.

The selection and design of a syllabus should go hand in hand with the intended learners, be appropriate to the situation and fulfill the aims of a specific curriculum or change in education. A syllabus can be broadly defined as a guide or a programme that provides teachers with goals to be achieved. Yalden (1987, p. 87) defined the syllabus as "a summary of the content to which learners will be exposed". The definition of the English syllabus in secondary education in Algeria is narrowly restricted to a division of four units for scientific streams and five units for the literary streams that need to be covered throughout the school year. This definition suggests that the syllabus is seen from two perspectives: one is time and the second is quantity. Since the teaching of each of the units comprising the syllabus is time bound, the teacher is not allowed to devote more class time in the hope that a given

competency is mastered. In fact, teachers are required to inform their inspectors regularly about the progress achieved of the syllabus; if it happens that a teacher is not working in accordance with the yearly planning, he or she will be required to justify the delay and may be subjected to punitive measures. This unpleasant atmosphere of worry and pressure becomes more intense if one happens to teach third-year students who would sit for the Baccalaureate exam. A teacher in this case will not be able to fulfill one of the intrinsic requirements of the CBA which is going up the competency ladder only when the current competency has been satisfactorily mastered.

3.4.2.4. Lack of Appropriate Resources

As society keeps getting more and more technologised, it is inevitable that future teaching and learning will be based on technology more than before. Media and information communications technology (ICT) are seen as central to the teaching of English in the twenty-first century. The pace of technological change has been so dramatic that no one can foresee innovations in this field. However, it is something beyond the reach of developing and underdeveloped countries to adopt a digital approach to teaching languages while it is exposed to a series of obstacles. These include a lack of computer access, malfunctioning networks, not to mention the inability of some teachers to use the new technologies.

Teachers cannot be expected to enhance their learners' level when they are just provided with a textbook and a syllabus to be accomplished within a specific period. Compared to their counterparts in the Western world or even with some developing countries, Algeria is delayed in so many ways when it comes to the use of media in teaching. According to the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics (2010), 97% of teachers had one or more computers in their classrooms, and Internet access was available for

93% of those classroom computers. Additionally, teachers have LCD or DLP projectors, interactive whiteboards, and digital cameras. Statistics from Turkey show that from 1998 to 2008, the Ministry of National Education invested more than one billion U.S. dollars in personal computers, printers, notebooks, projections, and scanners as well as connecting 98% of secondary students, and 93% of all primary students to the Internet in their schools (Uluyol, 2013). For Algeria, some humble initiatives aimed at keeping pace with the current situation of integrating technology in the field of teaching and education existed. According to statistics from the Mid-Pacific Information and Communication Technologies Center, over 9.000 schools of various levels are actually connected to the national Internet network where teaching courses in schools are being digitised (Issaad, 2013). Besides, another programme spread to the year 2020 concerns the provision of the tactile digital tablet replacing the classic satchel to more than 8 million pupils in two stages. Initially, the operation was supposed to cover 2.000 schools from 2014 to 2016 and the second stage concerned 5.000 middle schools and 18.000 primary schools. Until today, no digital tablet has been yet provided by the Algerian Ministry of Education: it is still struggling with providing textbooks to students (Gherbi, 2015).

The Algerian Ministry of Education is working on building its infrastructure for enabling the ICT environment. All secondary schools were equipped with computer labs (15 computers: 10 for students, five for teachers) connected to the Internet through Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line (ADSL), and 30% of them had Internet access via cable modem. Half of the middle schools have adopted ICT as an integral part of the educational programme (Hamdy, 2007). In the case of the primary school, the ICT policy remains limited to the administrative staff and teacher training. The existence of computer labs at primary schools remains subject to local contributions and donations by parents and community members. The

process of integrating technology in the field of education can thus be described as shy and insufficient.

It is true that the development of ICT requires appropriate and adequate telecommunications infrastructures; however, teacher professional development is essential if the technology provided to schools is to be used effectively. The mastery of using ICT effectively by teachers is as important as providing ICT itself. Bouchaiba and Guemide (2012) believe that spending scarce resources on informational technology hardware and software without financing teacher professional development as well is wasteful. Though ICT constitutes a basic module in teachers' training, it has been limited to basic information, with most receiving 30-60 hours of training. Despite the fact that 100% of secondary teachers and 60% of middle school teachers received it, this has to date very little impact on the quality or method of delivery of education in the classroom.

Hamdy (2007) listed the core factors and summarised the current stage of development in Algeria in terms of enabling or constraining ICT applications in the education system. These factors were categorised according to the policy framework, infrastructure and access, availability of appropriate learning materials, rural and urban divisions, gender equity, human resource development, and finally sustainability. Details of what enables and constraints implementing ICT in Algerian education are provided in Appendix B.

Despite the delay in adopting wise policymaking of ICT in the field of education, some hopeful indications of prosperity in the area of educational technology are on the horizon. It is high time Algeria accelerated and intensified its efforts if it aims at enabling ICT effectively in its education.

3.4.2.5. Large Classes

I believe that answering the question of how large a class can be considered a large one is relative. Teachers agree that a large class is any class that includes fifty or more students. Hayes (1997) believes that there is no quantitative definition of what constitutes a large class, as teachers' perception of this varies from context to context. As Ur (1996) concluded, what is relevant to the class considered a large one is how the teacher perceives the class size in the specific situation, regardless of the exact number of students in it. Teachers who work with large classes share a negative view of teaching English in large classes as they find themselves confronted with some physical, psychological and to a great extent technical problems. Hayes (1997) classified the problems associated with teaching in large classes into five categories: discomfort caused by physical constraints; control problems (discipline aspects); lack of individual attention; difficulty in evaluation; and problems of charging learning effectiveness.

The ideal CBLT classroom has about ten to fifteen students (Marcellino, 2005); thus, it would be challenging a teacher to work with competencies with large classes in this case. A teacher, for example, might find himself in a chaotic state where he needs to concentrate both on the lesson and on solving problems connected with noise and discipline. It is also difficult for this teacher to make contact with the students sitting at the back and to provide students with individual attention or appropriate feedback when needed. With a large class size, the students' population becomes much more differentiated in terms of achievement and educational capacity and this hinders the teacher from knowing and following the progress of all the individuals in the class. Therefore, there would be no room for a follow-up or concentration on the individual student.

Similarly, it is impossible for the teacher to organise dynamic and creative teaching and learning sessions as he wishes. The CBA requires group work and cooperative learning, but the fact of having a great number of students in small classrooms will hinder the possibility of working in groups or transform it into a nightmare. Experience shows that if the teacher tries to divide his class into small groups, he will devote more energy to controlling the process for he must help, supervise, guide, evaluate and give feedback to each group. In addition to this, instead of concentrating on the achievement of his lessons objectives, the teacher loses much of his time and effort to calm down the students and then tries to go back to the point that he was explaining. This might also create a sense of frustration, boredom, and de-motivation for students who fail to grasp knowledge according to their specific pace. Physical conditions have a great effect on learning and can alter a student's motivation either positively or negatively. Classrooms that are badly lit and overcrowded can be excessively de-motivating, but unfortunately, many of them exist in schools (Harmer, 1991).

Though teaching in large classes is often associated with some problems, some researchers feel optimistic about them. Ur (2000), argues that large classes can provide richer human resources and greater opportunities for creativity than smaller classes. They provide more opportunities for student interaction foster an atmosphere of cooperation and encourage creativity and innovation. Such a view encourages teachers to take adaptive teaching strategies to cope with the problems arising from the environment of large classes.

3.4.3. Learners' Related Challenges

Language teaching nowadays is seen not as an ability to teach but as an ability to make learners learn. The last educational reform centers on learner-centered methodology by putting the learner at the center of classroom organisation. The CBA entails new roles and

behaviours, and responsibilities for the learners. Algerian EFL students' role is vital for the reform because they are receivers of innovation.

3.4.3.1. Attitudes towards the Language

There are many possible reasons for studying a foreign language. Probably a major number of language students in the world do it because it is on the curriculum. Some people want to study English or another foreign language because they think it offers a chance for advancement in their professional lives. The ever-increasing advancement of science and technology and the advent of globalisation changed the whole scenario of the status and use of English in the entire world but not in Algeria: English stands as the second foreign language whose teaching starts in the first year in the Middle school. In response to the changing scenario of language teaching theories and methodologies, Algeria adopted the CBA as a teaching approach which puts the learners, rather than the teacher, at the center of the teaching-learning process. Since the learners are gaining a central position, the learners' attitude plays a vital role in maximising learning and teaching output. Learners' attitudes can be defined as a collection of feelings regarding language use and its status in society. The feelings are good, bad and neutral. They can nurture or hinder the learning process effectively. Richards and Schmidt (2002, p.297) defined language attitudes as:

..The attitudes which speakers of different languages or language varieties have towards each other's languages or to their own language. Expressions of positive or negative feelings towards a language may reflect impressions of linguistic difficulty or simplicity, ease or difficulty of learning, degree of importance, elegance, social status, etc. Attitudes towards a language may also show what people feel about the speakers of that language. Language attitudes may have

an effect on second language or foreign language learning. The measurement of language attitudes provides information which is useful in language teaching and language learning

There has been a great deal of research on the role of attitudes and motivation in L2 learning. The overall findings show that positive attitudes and motivation are related to success in L2 learning (Gardner, 1985). Dörnyei (1998, p.524) defined motivation as “the dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritised, operationalised, and (successfully or unsuccessfully) acted out”. Numerous pieces of research have emphasised different aspects of the learners’ significant role in the successful mastering of a foreign language and recognised the significance of their attitudes towards learning foreign languages. Knowledge of students’ beliefs about language learning may provide language educators with a better understanding of their students’ "expectations of, commitment to, success in and satisfaction with their language classes" (Horwitz, 1988, p.283). A learner, for example, who studies English because it is part of the curriculum, is not aware of its importance and objectives: thus, he will have low or no motivation for learning. For this kind of learner, English has no special standing as he considers this language as just one more theoretical subject with no recognition of its practical use as an international language. If this learner had been aware of the importance of English within the world of communication and globalisation, he would have developed a merely positive attitude towards the learning of this language and stopped viewing it as a compulsory part of the curriculum.

Learners might also develop a negative attitude towards learning English because they find it difficult to learn or because they find it very difficult because of a certain number of hindrances that relate to their learning environment. For instance, a learner has a negative attitude toward learning English because it is difficult for him to keep up with the pace of his colleagues in class or he has a weak background in the language. In this case, the negative attitudes are being nurtured for the learner and for the teacher instead of teaching interdisciplinary competencies; the teacher might be obliged to equip his learner with the basic language competencies before asking him to learn interdisciplinary matters as he does not possess any language perquisites upon which learning is to be built (Roegiers, 2011). In addition to the low level of learners, other cases of nurturing negative attitudes toward learning might be attributed to the content of the syllabus which is supposed to be pitched at the level of the average student (Shehdeh, 2010). Slow learners might be kept behind and thus feel ignored and helpless while the fast ones feel bored and frustrated because they cannot follow what they already know. In this case, the two sectors of the class are marginalised and thus benefit little from the teaching process.

Being in similar situations, teachers need to gain insight into the students' attitudes toward learning the language and eventually undertake the necessary steps to alter the negative attitudes.

3.4.3.2. Difficulty to Adopt Roles

Due to the wide acceptance of learner-centered methods and approaches to teaching foreign languages, more weight is currently put on the role of the learner in the learning process. No more are learners viewed as passive recipients of information, but as active interpreters and processors of knowledge which they seek based on their own interests and

needs. This interest in the learner's role in the learning process has given rise to the concept of learner autonomy. Autonomy, in short, "is the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (Holec, 1981, p. 3). Learner autonomy has certain implications both for the individual and education as well as for the whole society. On the individual level, autonomous learning means, first, efficient learning; there is no doubt that a person who knows how to learn will learn efficiently (Benson, 2011). Secondly, Kohonen asserted that learner autonomy promotes life-long learning, which is a necessity in today's world in which information exchange is faster and wider than ever (1992). Furthermore, life-long learning helps in keeping up with the continuous change in occupational life and enables engaging in constant self-development. Lastly, learner autonomy is highly empowering, because through it learners gain their own voice and become the authors of their own stories (Pennycook, 1997). In addition to the individual and educational levels, Benson (2011) believes that learner autonomy has an influence on the whole society; it promotes active, critical participation in the community, which, in turn, helps develop the community.

The shift to CBA reshaped both learners' and teachers' roles and responsibilities. In teaching English at Algerian secondary schools, the concept of learner autonomy gained prominent importance within the last reform as it puts the learners at the center of the learning process and requires them to be autonomous and responsible. In teaching with the CBA, teachers need to work with learners who assume their responsibilities in the learning process. The former are required to be partners in achieving common goals and not a fountain of knowledge whose words or actions are never questioned.

To sum up, autonomous learners are not born overnight. Autonomy is not an easy task since teachers cannot directly ask their learners to become autonomous. It needs will from teachers and learners, reflection, and time within an organised pedagogical framework.

3.4.3.3. Concentration on Marks

Most, if not all learners have a different, or rather pragmatic, reasoning for achieving success in learning a language; therefore, they rely heavily on grades as a motive for learning which extremely minimises the chances of motivation and positive attitudes towards the language to evolve. On the one hand, learners see language learning as a subject matter that allows them to benefit from some extra points that might allow them to succeed and pass to the next level. Thus, they learn the language with the intention of gathering as many points as possible without any focus on achieving mastery of the language. Adopting a purely instrumental motivation in learning EFL aiming not at learning the language per se, but to get a good grade, alienates all positive attitudes and motivation to learning or achieving goals. On the other hand, the specialty the learner chooses decides the status of the language. For some Algerian learners following a scientific stream, learning English is optional because they have other subject matters with a higher coefficient to focus on. These include mathematics and physics, so English is given an inferior status. The mark, in either case, becomes the main objective for the learners rather than the learning process.

Concentrating on marks is not without consequences. Travis and Wade (1997) stated that the fact that our school system relies heavily on grades might help explain why the average college graduate reads few books. Like all extrinsic rewards, grades induce temporary compliance but not necessarily a lifelong disposition to learn. Giving more importance to marks kills creativity and intelligence and hinders the learner from making research for the

sake of gaining knowledge. Thus, teachers need to get learners to focus more on learning and not grades in order to remedy such problems. In fact, teachers can be active agents in making their students want or need to learn a foreign language. They can help motivate their students and encourage them to learn by creating environments that are conducive to learning.

One should admit also that some motivating properties and working conditions need to be introduced into the educational arena for a better accomplishment of the teaching goals. These include mainly careful planning for change with consideration of the properties of the teacher, learner and the community as a whole. This will be dealt with in detail in the coming chapters of this study.

3.5. Failure of Educational Reforms

It has been recognised that not all change is an improvement, but all improvement involves change (Langley et al, 2009). Effective change in any educational institution is not an easily obtainable goal. Sometimes, reforms are confronted with a bulk of difficulties and inadequacies that ultimately condemn educational reforms to failure. In summarising the literature on why reforms fail, Fullan (1993) asserted that educational reform is not an easy process, and so are the solutions to the problems associated with it. He stated:

There are two basic reasons why an educational reform is failing. One is that the problems are complex and intractable. Workable, powerful solutions are hard to conceive and even harder to put into practice. The other reason is that the strategies that are used do not focus on things that will really make a difference. They fail to address fundamental instructional reform and associated development of new collaborative cultures among educators (1993, p. 46)

In addition to Fullan's view, Schwahn and Spady (1998, p.52) cited five reasons why reforms fail. These are:

1. The purpose is not compelling enough. Schwahn and Spady remark that if the staff is unable to restate the purpose of the reform in their own words and with enthusiasm, then the purpose is lost to them;
2. The reform effort was developed without the stakeholders' involvement. People involved in and affected by the reform must have a sense of ownership in the effort if the change is going to last;
3. The change was not immediately implemented. The vision of the proposed reform must be integrated into all decisions and actions, and the principal and other school leaders must model it throughout the year;
4. Everyone in the school was not aligned to the vision or purpose of the reform initiative. People involved in the change must have a clear picture of what the change will look like for them personally;
5. Organisational support for the change was not there. Teachers will not change if there are not structures, policies, and procedures in place that support them in their reform effort.

Markee (1997) made the useful distinction between primary innovations (changes to teaching materials or pedagogy) and secondary innovations (organisational changes which provide enabling support for the primary innovation). One of the reasons for the lack of success in implementing change is the failure to promote secondary innovations.

Hargreaves (1997) argued that there are many reasons why educational change is so difficult. These common causes of failure to bring about educational change have been well documented in the change literature by Hargreaves (2005, p.1-2). Among them:

- The reason for the change is poorly conceptualised or not clearly demonstrated. It is not obvious who will benefit and how. What the change will achieve for students, in particular, is not spelled out
- The change is too broad and ambitious so that teachers have to work on too many fronts, or it is too limited and specific so that little real change occurs at all
- The change is too fast for people to cope with, or too slow so that they become impatient or bored and move on to something else;
- The change is poorly resourced or resources are withdrawn once the first flush of innovation is over. There is not enough money for materials or time for teachers to plan. The change is built on the backs of teachers, who cannot bear it for long without additional support
- There is no long-term commitment to the change to carry people through the anxiety, frustration and despair of early experimentation and unavoidable setbacks
- Key-staff that can contribute to the change, or might be affected by it, are not committed. Conversely, key staff might become over involved as administrative or innovative elite, from which other teachers feel excluded. Resistance and resentment are the consequences in either case
- Students are not involved in the change, or do to have it explained to them

- Parents oppose the change because they are kept at a distance from it
- Leaders are either too controlling, too ineffectual, or cash in on the early success of the innovation to move on to higher things
- The change is pursued in isolation and gets undermined by other unchanged structures. Conversely; the change may be poorly coordinated with and engulfed by a tidal wave of parallel changes that make it hard for teachers to focus their efforts.

To put it in a nutshell, there is no shame in admitting that a given reform has failed or has not yielded its pre-stated goals; the shame is to undergo a reform without providing variables and conditions that would guarantee its success because the consequences would be on the learners to whom the reform was first addressed.

Conclusion

The rapid changes and increased complexity of today's world present new challenges and put new demands on our education system. There has been generally a growing awareness of the necessity to change and improve the preparation of students for productive functioning in a continually changing and highly demanding environment. Though change in education is ubiquitous, it has never been an easy process. It is often challenged by factors that relate sometimes to teachers, learners, the educational context and other times to the educational unity as a whole. Thus, if a change is to produce a positive effect, it must not simply be a step towards a hoped-for modernisation, with no clear direction - or worse still, with ever-changing directions-while innovation remains neglected. Change aims at improvement; therefore, it is necessary to consider the complexity of the education system

itself and the multitude of problems that must be addressed. Clearly, no simple, single uniform recipe of change can be applied with the expectation that significant improvements to the system will occur.

Chapter Four

Algerian EFL Teachers' Attitudes towards the CBA Implementation

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Chapter Four

Algerian EFL Teachers' Attitudes towards the CBA Implementation

Introduction

The current chapter presents the results and analyses qualitatively as well as quantitatively the data collected through the questionnaire. The questionnaire is one of the data collection procedures used in this study. It was administered to a sample of Algerian secondary school teachers of English. However, before providing any detail about the questionnaire, it is useful to see the use and value of this means of research that is considered one of the most widely used means of research in the EFL context.

4.1. The Questionnaire as a Research Tool

Asking questions is considered one of the most natural and direct ways of gathering information (Dörnyei, 2003). Since the essence of any scientific research is trying to find answers to questions in a systematic manner, questionnaires are often used in L2 research in order to collect data on attitudes and opinions from a relatively large group of participants. Brown (2004) defined the questionnaire as any written instrument that presents respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react by either writing out their answers or selecting from existing answers. Thus, questionnaires allow researchers to gather the information that respondents such as learners, teachers, and material designers are able to report about themselves relating to their beliefs and motivations. Although questionnaires are of various types and serve different purposes, in EFL, Dörnyei asserts that questionnaires can yield three types of data about the respondents: factual, behavioural, and attitudinal.

- **Factual Questions:** in L2 studies or L2 in brief, this type of data often includes facts about the learners' language history, amount of time spent in an L2 environment; the level of parents' L2, proficiency or the L2 course book used.

- **Behavioural Questions:** perhaps the most well-known questions of this type in L2 studies are the items in language learning strategies: inventories that ask about the frequency one has used a particular strategy in the past.
- **Attitudinal Questions** are used to find out what people think. This broad category concerns attitudes, opinions, beliefs, interests, and values.

The type of questions asked in a questionnaire strongly depends on the research questions addressed by the study. A questionnaire generally includes two types of questions: closed and open-ended questions. The first type is known as closed items, where the researcher determines the possible answers, whereas the second type is known as open-ended questions and allows respondents to answer in a less restricted or oriented way (Creswell, 2009). Closed-ended items involve a greater uniformity of measurement and therefore greater reliability; thus, they often lead to answers that can be easily quantified and analysed, whereas open-ended items give respondents more freedom and space to express their own thoughts and ideas in their own manner.

Researchers often add another type of question; this type of question is known as the “contingency questions”. Siniscalco and Auriat (2005) defined it as a special case of closed-ended questions because it applies only to a sub-group of respondents. The filter question is used in order to determine the relevance of the question to a subgroup. The purpose of including filter questions is to direct the subgroup to answer a relevant set of specialised questions and instruct other respondents to skip to a later section of the questionnaire.

The typical questionnaire is a highly structured data collection instrument asking about very specific pieces of information or giving various response options for the respondent to

choose from, therefore, this makes questionnaire data particularly suited for quantitative, statistical analysis (Dörnyei, 2003). However, it is important to look at their advantages and disadvantages before adopting them as a research technique. On the one hand, researchers often resort to questionnaires in their studies for the following advantages they might offer.

- Low cost in time and money.
- Easy to get information from many people very quickly.
- Respondents can complete the questionnaire when it suits them.
- Analysis of answers to closed questions is straightforward.
- Less pressure for an immediate response.
- Respondents' anonymity.
- Lack of interviewer bias.
- Standardisation of questions (but true of structured interviewer).
- Can provide suggestive data for testing a hypothesis. (Gillham, 2007, p.6)

On the other hand, like any other means of research, the questionnaire has limitations.

These include the following:

- Problems of data quality, especially when it comes to completeness and accuracy.
- Problems of motivating respondents.
- The need for brevity and relatively simple questions.
- Misunderstandings cannot be corrected.
- Questionnaires development is often poor.
- Seeks information just by asking questions.

- Assumes respondents have answers available in an organised fashion.
- Lack of control over order and context of answering questions.
- Question wording can have a major effect on answers.
- Respondents' literacy problems.
- People talk more easily than they write.
- Impossible to check the seriousness or honesty of answers.
- Respondent uncertainty as to what happens to data.

(Gillham, 2007, p.8)

4.2. Context of the Investigation and Sample

The investigation took place in the region of Jijel. The seventy teachers involved in it work in the different secondary schools of the region. Some of these schools such as El-Kendy, Bouraoui Ammar, Terkhouche Ahmed, Draa Mohamed Sadek, Kaoula Tounes and, Lycée 8 May 1945 are located in the main city of Jijel whereas some other secondary schools such as Mati Ahcen, Bourazak Ahmed, Cheraitia Youcef, Nasri Ramdan, Derbah Mohammed and others are located in the surrounding villages. Thus, the present investigation encompassed urban as well as rural areas.

The target sample consisted of seventy in-service EFL teachers who worked in the different secondary schools of Jijel; thus, the surveyed sample is composed of different educational backgrounds, ages, and teaching experiences.

4.3. Description of the Questionnaire

In contrast to what one might expect, the questionnaire design does not start with the questionnaire. Before one can even start to think about the wording of the questions, the conceptual basis of the questionnaire has to be specified and operationalised. As far as the present study is concerned, the preparation of the questionnaire is vital. Focusing on the aim of this study which is identifying the challenges that confront EFL secondary school teachers while the implementation of the CBA and considering how the data is to be analysed before collecting will also ensure the success of this study.

4.3.1. Structure and Objectives of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire designed as part of this investigation was addressed to secondary school teachers of English as a foreign language. It is meant to contribute to the purpose of this research which is identifying the challenges that confront the implementation of the CBA in the secondary school EFL context.

The structure of the questionnaire can be summarised in the table that follows:

Sections	Titles	Divisions	Items
General Information	Background and Profile	/	1-3
Section One	Teachers' Related Challenges	a. Attitudes towards the CBA b. Teachers' Education c. Teaching Methodology	4-7 8-12 13-20
Section Two	Learners 'Related Challenges	/	21-25
Section Three	Contextual Challenges	/	26-29

Section Four	Prospects and Perspectives	/	30-32
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Table 4.1.: Structure of the Teachers' Questionnaire

In the abstract, questionnaires are constructed, piloted, re-administered, analysed and reported with the views of establishing paradigms and patterns. In the same vein, the questionnaire was conducted to search for the challenges that face English teaching and learning in Algerian secondary schools under the CBA.

Three main hypotheses were formulated in order to target three aspects that are of primordial importance to secondary school EFL teaching. The main hypotheses deal with challenges which are related to teachers themselves, their learners as well as the teaching context. As far as the methodology of this study is concerned, the questionnaire targeted the following hypothesis:

- **Hypothesis 1:** The quality of the teachers' training and the politicisation of the educational system inhibit implementing the CBA successfully.

4.3.2. Piloting the Questionnaire

The data collection phase went through three stages: construction, piloting, and distribution. The first phase consisted of the design and construction of the questionnaire which took practically two years of extensive readings and unstructured interviews with secondary school teachers with the purpose of refining the wording and content of the questionnaire. The second phase was that of piloting or what Blaxter et.al, (2010, p. 138) called a re-assessment without tears, and defined as “the process whereby the researcher tries

out the research techniques and methods which he has in mind, sees how well they work in practice, and, if necessary, modifies his plans accordingly” (Blaxter et.al, 2010, p. 138).

Piloting our study questionnaire took place in December 2015 with the distribution of ten questionnaires whose aim was to check the clarity and readability of the different question items. This pilot study indeed allowed the refining of certain questions as well as the adding of further items to the questionnaire to make it comprehensible and easy to fill by the teachers.

The third and final stage involved the distribution of the final version of the questionnaire to the sample. Like the pilot study, the final version was totally anonymous and contained an introductory section that explained the aim of the questionnaire. This took place in May 2016. The questionnaire was handed to EFL teachers during a teacher training seminar “How to Teach Reading” with their inspector. The seminar was the occasion for the teachers working in the different secondary schools of Jijel to meet on May, 17th and 18th, 2016. To ensure that they would fill in the questionnaire with ease, teachers were asked to take them home to remove all types of pressure. Questionnaires were collected from the teachers’ working schools after a week.

4.3.3. Debriefing

By definition, debriefing is a brief account of something. In research, debriefing presents a critical part of any experiment or study that involves human participants. It involves a structured verbal conversation between the researcher and the subjects, and is often conducted after the experiment or study has been concluded. Under the code of ethics, once a study has been completed, researchers are required to provide the participants with accurate

and appropriate information about the nature of the study, its objectives, content, hypothesis and method of completion as well as what the findings indicate. The researcher does not need to share all the details of the study prior to its beginning as that knowledge could impact the data collection and subsequent results.

Since questionnaires were handed to teachers in a seminar on how to teach reading, all the questioned teachers were provided with accurate information about the nature of this study. It should be noted also that the research findings are to be communicated to teachers in one of the coming English seminars.

4.3.4. Ethical Precautions

Here are outlined the ethical guidelines that were honoured while the questionnaire was in the designing and administration phases:

- It had been attempted to eschew intimidating respondents; the questions were not too personal and the questionnaire had been completed at home at leisure. In other words, teachers had been given sufficient time to respond to the questionnaire.
- Patronising the respondents had been avoided; they had been urged to respond the way they felt and not necessarily adopt and/ or be influenced by other views on the topic.
- Every precaution had been made to pay special care to the wording of the question items; they were simple, direct and specific.
- To avoid ambiguity and confusion, short statements were often opted for.
- Confidentiality and privacy had been respected; the respondents' identities have neither been collected nor revealed.

- Every effort was made to avoid falling into false assumptions; thus different options had been given.
- Finally, the pilot study invited the respondents to express freely their appraisals for the questionnaire.

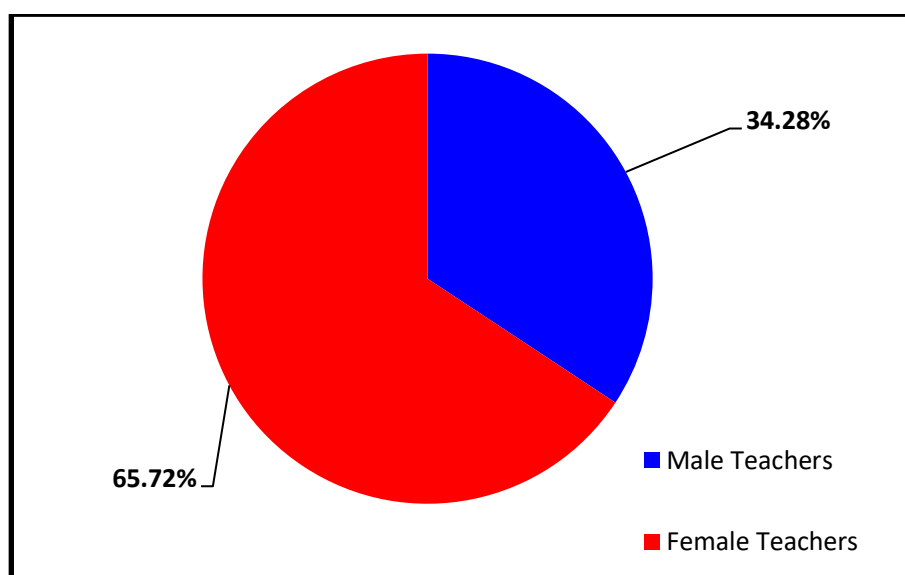
4.4. Analysis of the Results

Section One: Background and Profile

Question 1: Gender

a. Male teacher

b. Female teacher



Pie Chart 4.1. Teachers' Distribution According to Gender

The results display a significant dominance of the female gender over the male gender as **65.72%** represents female teachers while **34.28%** of the questioned sample are male teachers. Female dominance can be attributed to some reasons. First, male university graduates have a variety of jobs to choose from when getting their diplomat: this includes joining army forces with their different branches as well as going abroad. Second, female university graduates are restricted to working in certain positions like education, health, and

services sectors. Third, most male university graduates are requested to spend one year as part of their national army service before being enrolled in teaching positions, which may also account for the decreasing number of male teachers in secondary school.

Question 2: The degree held

- a. B.A. (Licence Classique)
- b. M.A. (Master)
- c. École Normale Supérieure Degree

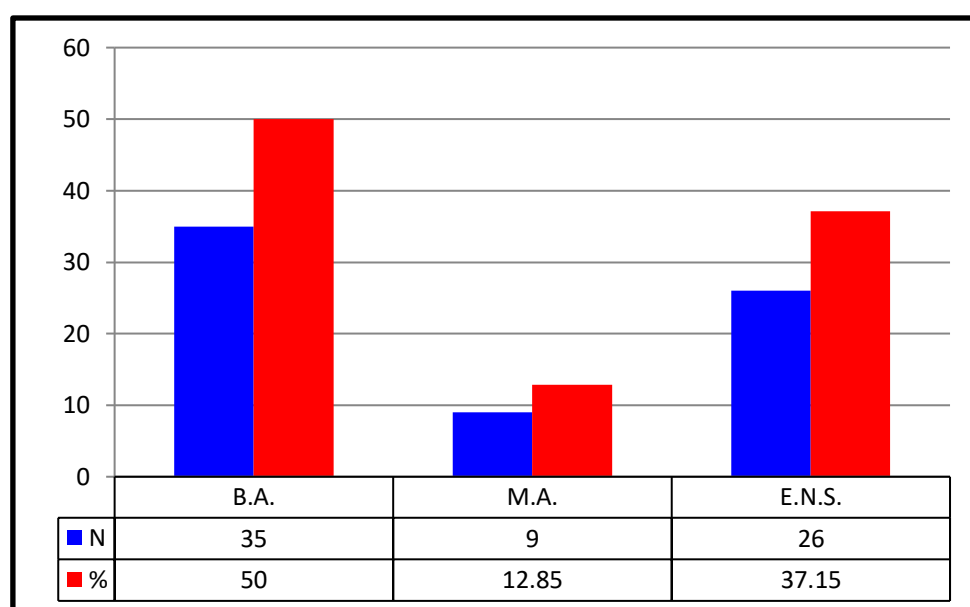


Figure 4.1. Teachers' Distribution According to Degree

The results of the above figure indicate that half of the sample of this study holds a BA (License Degree) and thus started teaching after succeeding in the competitions organised by the National Ministry of Education or by satisfying a certain number of conditions, such as working as a substitute teacher in the same level. Having such an experience in the field of teaching might allow for direct employment such as integrating the teachers in the position they are holding. In the second position came teachers who graduated from the Ecole Normale

Supérieure representing **37.15%** of the whole sample. Teachers who graduated from the E.N.S. are allowed direct recruitment thanks to the pre-signed contract they had with the National Ministry of Education in their first year of studies. Finally, only **12.85%** of the teachers hold an MA degree; the Algerian university system operates on the LMD system (License, Master, and Doctorate) which aims at developing the university and preparing more competent and responsible future citizens. Thus, it is believed that the sample of the study is as representative as possible of the population for which it is designed.

Question 3: How long have you been teaching English at secondary school?

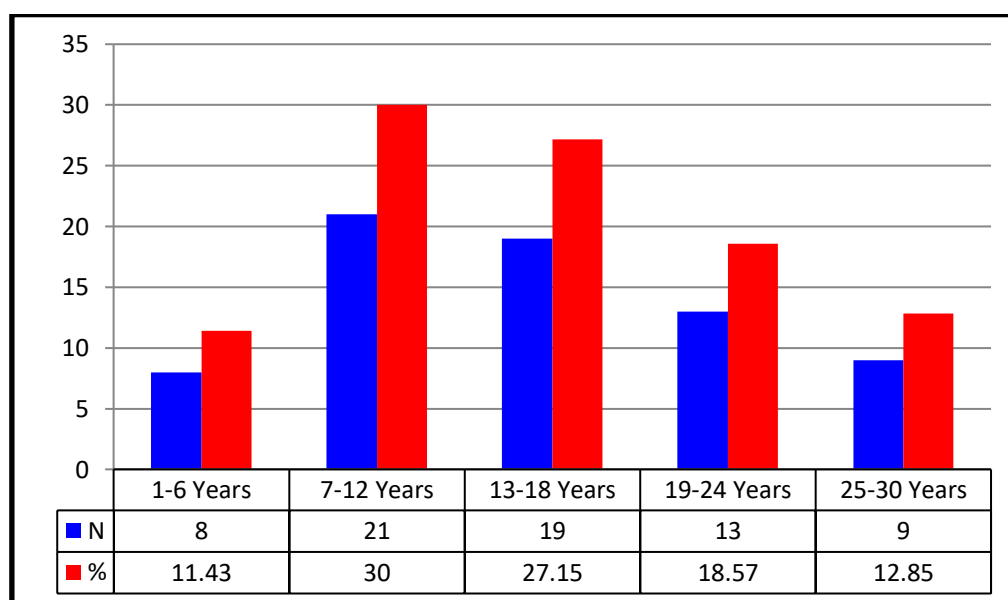


Figure 4.2. Teachers' Teaching Experience

From Figure 2, it is clear that the majority of the questioned teachers accumulate teaching experience that ranges between seven years to eighteen years. This means that, in addition to novice teachers, the sample is rich with experienced teachers who have been in the field for a long period and thus practiced teaching in different teaching approaches. The mean of teaching experience of this group of teachers was calculated as follows:

Teaching Experience in Years	Mid Points (x)	Frequency (f)	Frequency \times Mid Points (f) \times (x)
1-6	3.5	8	28
7-12	9.5	21	199.5
13-18	15.5	19	294.5
19-24	21.5	13	279.5
25-30	27.5	9	247.5
Total	/	$\Sigma f = 70$	$\Sigma fx = 1049$

Table 4.2.: The Mean of Teaching Experience

$$\text{Mean } x = \frac{\Sigma fx}{\Sigma f} = \frac{1094}{70} = 14.98$$

The mean of the sample is 14.98; this means that statistically speaking, these teachers have been teaching for more than a decade, which serves appropriately the aims of this study.

Question 4: How far do you agree or disagree with the statement below:

“The implementation of the CBA in teaching English is successful”

- a. Strongly agree**
- b. Agree**
- c. Disagree**
- d. Strongly disagree**

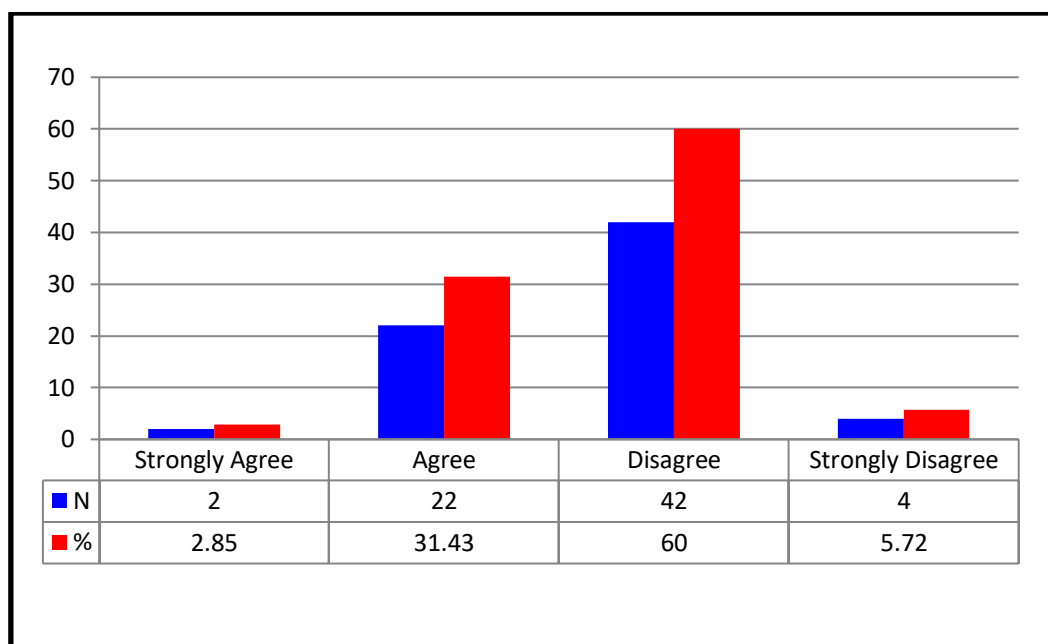


Figure 4.3. Teachers' Evaluation of the CBA Reform

The development of modern countries is now measured by the development of their educational system; therefore, education represents now the spinal cord of any nation. The developments that are seen in education urged Algeria to take a bold step which is adopting the CBA which brought a radical change in roles, syllabi and methods of teaching at different levels and in all subject matters. The fourth question of the questionnaire gave teachers the opportunity to indicate to what extent they consider the CBA reform successful in the Algerian educational context in general and in teaching English in particular. The collected data are summarised in the above figure. The majority of the teachers **60%** disagree with the reform's success and **31.43%** of the sample sees the reform as successful. This means that one-third of the teachers have a favourable attitude toward the CBA reform. **5.72%** of the sample strongly disagrees while only a minority of the teachers **2.85%** strongly agrees with the given statement. In short, the majority of teachers represented in two-thirds of the teachers do not consider the CBA reform successful. This proportion directly affects the teachers' attitudes and the students' performance in the language.

Question 5: According to you, what are the reasons of introducing the CBA for teaching English?

- a. Political Reasons**
- b. Economic Reasons**
- c. Cultural Reasons**
- d. Pedagogical Reasons**
- e. Other. Please specify**

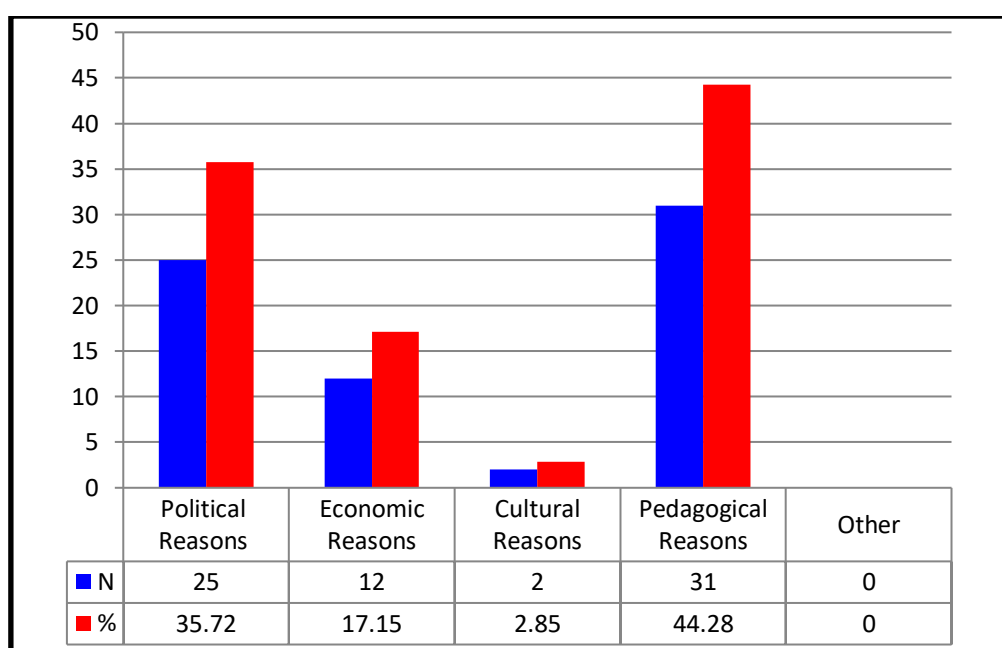


Figure 4.4. Teachers' Perception of the Reason behind Implementing the CBA Reform

The aim of question five is to determine what the Algerian EFL teacher thinks of the reason for adopting the CBA reform. The graph shows that **44.28%** of the teachers attribute the reform to pedagogical reasons, i.e., preparing learners to be competent in real-life tasks, which is one of the main goals of teaching with the CBA. **35.72%** of the sample considered that the CBA is implemented for political reasons; thus, the reform is a merely political step the Algerian authorities choose to take as education is strongly embedded in policy.

Moreover, **17.15%** of the teachers relate the implementation of the CBA to economic reasons and the growing importance of English as a global language, whereas only **2.85%** believe that the last reform has been accelerated by the opening up to the culture of other countries such as the spread of globalisation and its impacts all over the world.

Question 6: If you had been consulted before implementing the CBA, what would your reaction have been?

- a. Approve
- b. Disapprove

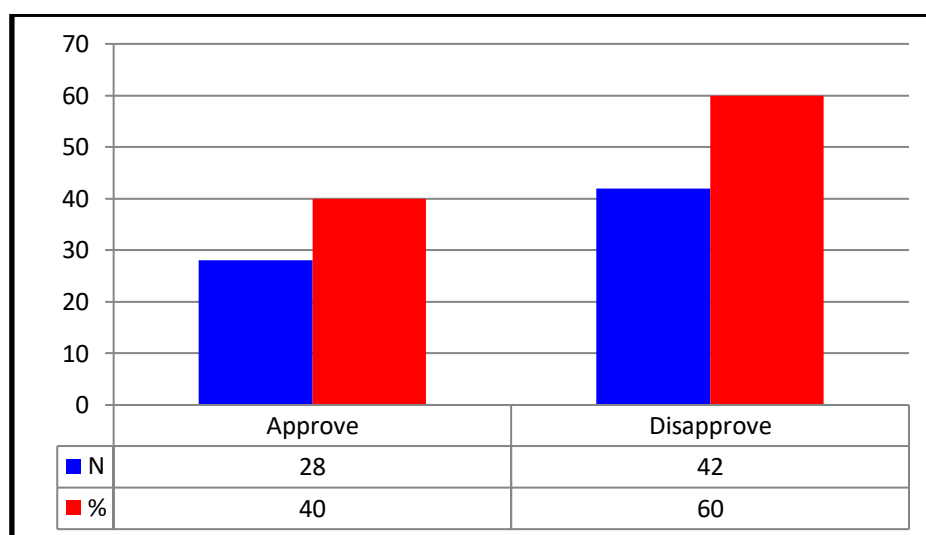


Figure 4.5. Teachers' Attitude towards the CBA Reform

Question six provides teachers with the opportunity to decide about the reform in case they had been consulted. The graph shows that **60%** of the teachers have not been in favour of the CBA implementation whereas the rest of the teachers representing **40%** would be in favour of the CBA reform.

Question 7: Whatever your answer is, please justify it.

When asked to justify their answer, teachers who are in favour of the CBA reform asserted that teaching English in Algeria had been worsening, and such a step was a necessity. This answer shows dissatisfaction with the status of English and eagerness for changes and improvements. Other teachers argue that the CBA implementation has proved to be fruitful and successful in other countries such as Canada and Belgium. Teachers who are not in favour of implementing the CBA reform justified their choice by claiming that this reform was just a change for the sake of change, as it will not solve the problem of underachievement of Algerian learners in EFL. They added that they were not convinced by the CBA reforms because the Algerian educational authorities did not refer to the teacher's point of view or recommendations when taking such a big decision: there was no involvement of teachers neither in the choice of the methods nor for the syllabi development process.

Question 8: Did you receive any kind of training which is based on how to teach with the CBA?

- a. Yes**
- b. No**

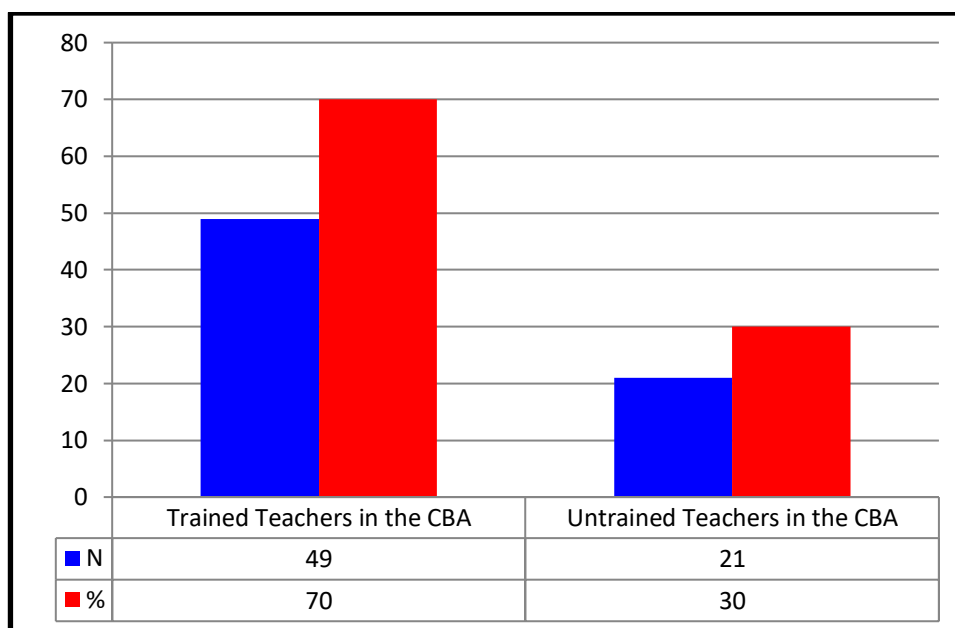


Figure 4.6. Trained Teachers in the CBA

Teachers are the main roles of implementation. Research proved that inspiring and skilled teachers constitute an influencing factor in educational change; however, it is well known that implementation involves new beliefs and behaviours. In teacher development, training is thought of as a form of professional development (Newton and Tarrant, 1992). The National Ministry of Education asserted that starting from 2005 until the academic year of 2014/2015, and with close cooperation with the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, all the teachers without exception would be trained in how to teach with the CBA and no effort would be spared in achieving this goal (Benbouzid, 2009). The efforts made by the Algerian educational authorities did not go in vain, as the results show that **70%** of the teachers received training on how to teach with the CBA, whereas the rest **30%** of the teachers did not. The high proportion of trained teachers reflects the educational authorities' awareness of the importance of teachers' training and development; however, it is the quality of the training and trainees that actually matters. The fact that some teachers have benefited from the training while others did not is the result of the unwise policy chosen by the Ministry

of Education which does not have a specialised staff or institutions that prepares EFL future teachers.

Question 9: What aspect did this training focus on?

- a. Theory**
- b. Practice**
- c. Theory and practice**

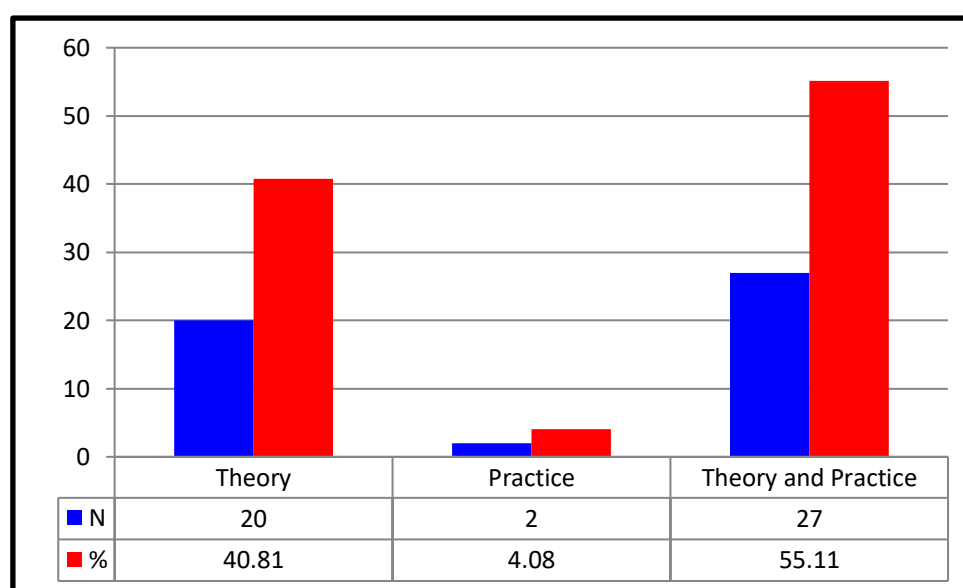


Figure 4.7. Forms of Teachers' Training

This question is directed to the trained teachers. It aims at defining the type of training as it was divided into three main categories; theory, practice and both, .i.e. in theory and practice combined. The results in figure 7 show that **55.11%** of the teachers received both theoretical and practical training in how to teach with the CBA while **40.81%** of them received theoretical training in the CBA. It should be noted that by theoretical training, teachers referred to the different guidelines as well as the official documents received from the Ministry of Education or the inspector. Only **4.08%** of the teachers received practical training.

Question 10: Was the training useful to your teaching practices?

- a. Yes
- b. No

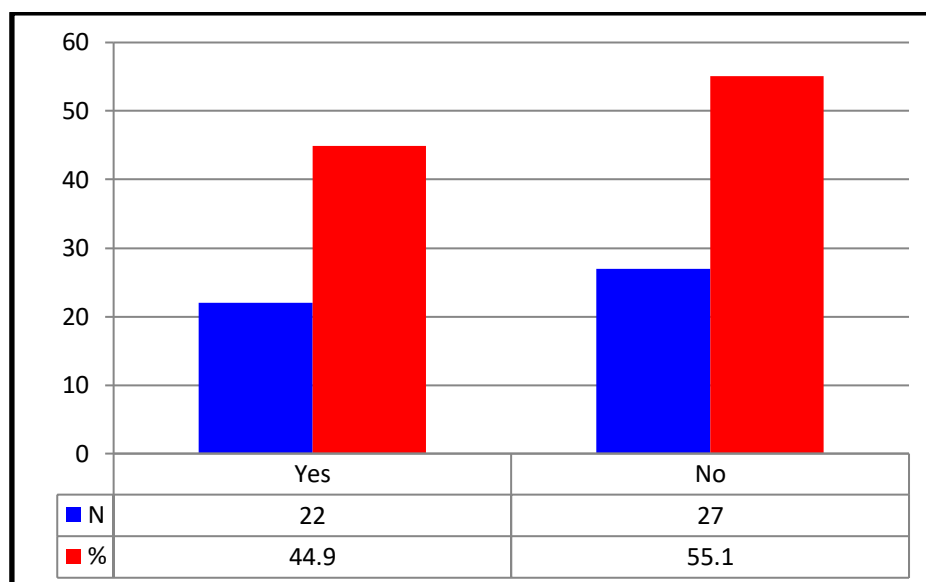


Figure 4.8. The Training Usefulness in Teaching Practices

The aim of this question is to see if teachers really benefited from the training they received. The results in the above figure show that **55.1** of the sample believe that the training is useless while **44.9** of them think it is useful. The variance in the teachers' answers regarding the usefulness of the training as well as its adequacy with the teaching practices might be due to the different contexts, methods, forms of training and the trainees' competence.

Question 11: How far do you agree or disagree with the following statement

“I believe I need more training in the CBA”

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Disagree

d. Strongly disagree

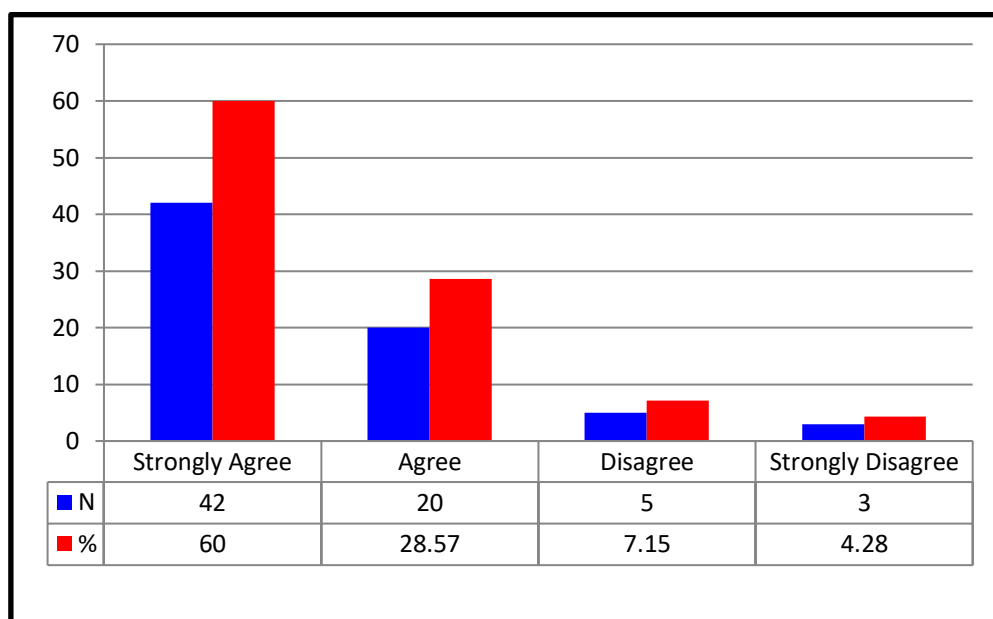


Figure 4.9. Teachers' Needs for more Training in the CBA

The results of the above Figure showed that the overwhelming majority of the surveyed teachers **60%** expressed their strong agreement regarding the need for more training. This implies the necessity for further training and urges the National Ministry of Education to provide more training sessions or revise the current policy as most teachers demand more training. **28.57%** of the questioned teachers agreed with the statement above and thus expressed their need for further training in the CBA. Then, only **7.15%** of the teachers disagreed with the statement that asks for more training in the CBA and **4.28%** of them strongly disagreed.

Question 12: Relying on your background knowledge, would you please define the following two concepts.

a. A competency

b. The CBA

Not all the questioned teachers answered this question. Only **45** out of **70** of the teachers defined the term competency while only **51** out of **70** defined what the CBA is.

a. A Competency

Answers	N
1. “The ability to do something well.”	11
2. “It refers to the integration of knowledge, skills and capacities that the learner needs to have in order to learn a language.”	8
3. “It refers to the abilities and pre-requisite skills to deal with such situations and solve problems.”	5
4. “It is the ability and acquisition of skills and performances.”	3
5. “A competency is defined as an ability or skill that students already have.”	3
6. “It is a skill which requires knowledge and abilities.”	2
7. “Any competency is composed of three aspects: knowledge, skill and attitude.”	2
8. “It is an ability that students already have.”	2
9. “It is a-know-how to act process.”	2
10. “It is the skill of knowing how to do (knowledge) and knowing how to be (attitude).”	2
11. “It is the ability of doing something in a correct way and knowing language structures.”	1
12. “It refers to the knowledge of language structure.”	1
13. “It refers the learner’s ability of interacting with a given task.”	1
14. “A competency is what a learner can do and perform after a learning session.”	1

15. “It is the ability to deal with new situations using previous knowledge.”	1
16. No answer	25

Table 4.3. Teachers’ Definitions of Competency

The aim of the above question is to see how teachers conceptualise competency. In their attempt of defining what competency is, most teachers shared three terms which are ability, skill and knowledge. According to teachers, these terms relate to learners as they are going to integrate ability, skill and knowledge to have a competency that could be used to carry on tasks inside the classroom or later outside the confines of the classroom to solve problems. Though this answer shows the teachers’ awareness of what competency is, **25** out of **70** teachers provided no answer for the term competency.

b. The CBA

Answers	N
1. “It is a learner-centered approach in which the role of the teacher consists of guiding the learner.”	13
2. “It is an approach which focuses on the students’ roles and competencies.”	9
3. “An approach which focuses on the competency of the learners to deal with the learning process”	7
4. .”A learner-centered approach which focuses on the group work ”	5
5. “A teaching method which is based on the competence of the learners to cope with the syllabus and the ability to use their own skills and	4

performances when learning a language.”	
6. “It is the integration of what has been acquired previously in solving problems.”	3
7. “It is a method of teaching and learning that is built on self-reliance of learners in learning and the slight importance of the teacher in the learning process.”	2
8. “It is an approach which is based on the students’ work.”	2
9. “It is a teaching approach that involves knowledge, skill and capacity.”	2
10. “It is an approach that is based on the realisation.”	1
11. ”It is an approach that is based on the realisation of the project at the learning process. It is also an approach where the teacher acts as a guide to the learners.”	1
12. “A teaching method that Algeria has imported from other countries and implemented in our teaching practices”	1
13. “It is a modern teaching method”	1
14. No answer	19

Table 4.4. Teachers’ Definitions of the CBA

The aim of the above question is to see how teachers view the CBA. The teachers’ definitions focused on the learners’ role as one of the major pillars of the CBA. Teachers agree that it is a learner-centered approach which downsides the teachers’ role. The learners are responsible for their own learning as they are acquired to use the acquired competency to solve problems. Group work and project realisation are important aspects when teaching with the CBA. **19** out of **70** teachers did not define the term CBA.

Question 13: What is the common approach or method that you follow to teach English?

a. The Communicative Approach

b. The C.B.A

c. The Eclectic Method

d. Other: please specify

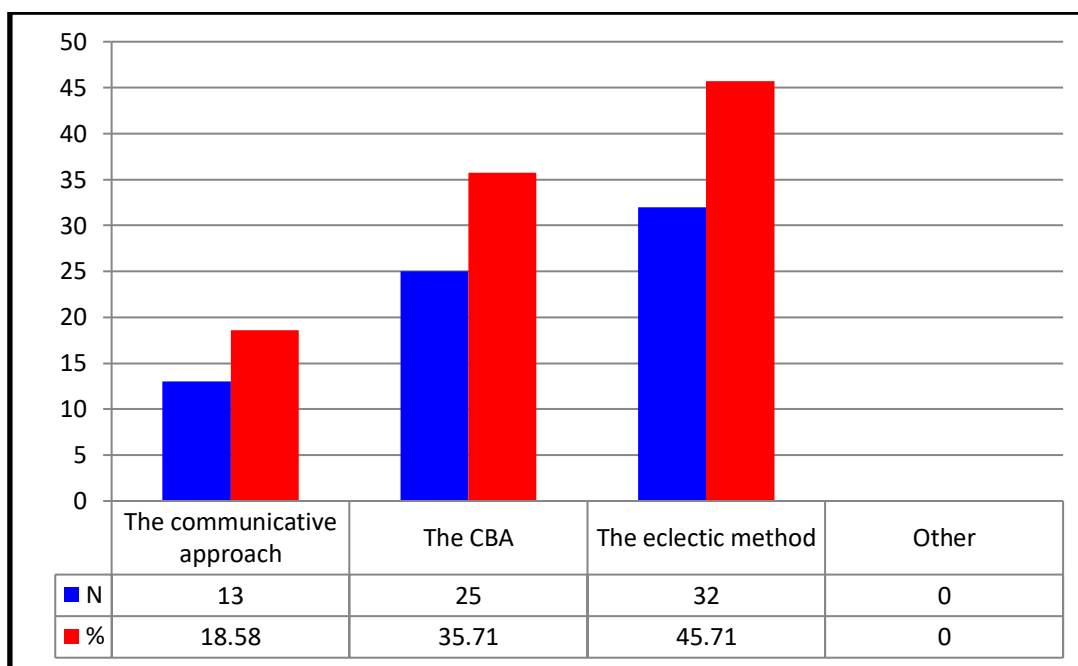


Figure 4.10. Adopted Approaches to Teaching English

Over the years, teaching methods and approaches have always been drawn from the strongest theories of learning. Language researchers and syllabus designers are trying to provide the most effective teaching methods so that learning takes place. However, teachers cannot be slaves to one method along with what Prabhu claimed when he stated that it is not believed that there is a single best method to teach a second language (1990).

The aim of the twelfth question is to see if teachers are implementing the CBA in their teaching practices. The results of the figure above show that the majority of the teachers **45.71%** relied on the eclectic method which is the label given to teachers' use of techniques

and activities from a range of language teaching approaches and methodologies depending on the aims of the lesson and the learners in class. **35.71%** of the questioned teachers asserted that they used the CBA in teaching English to secondary school students as the National Ministry of Education requires reliance on this approach. Finally, the rest of the sample **18.58%** implemented the communicative approach to teaching English. No other teaching method was reported to be used by these teachers.

Question 14: How often do you use the CBA in teaching English?

- a. Always
- b. Frequently
- c. Occasionally
- d. Never

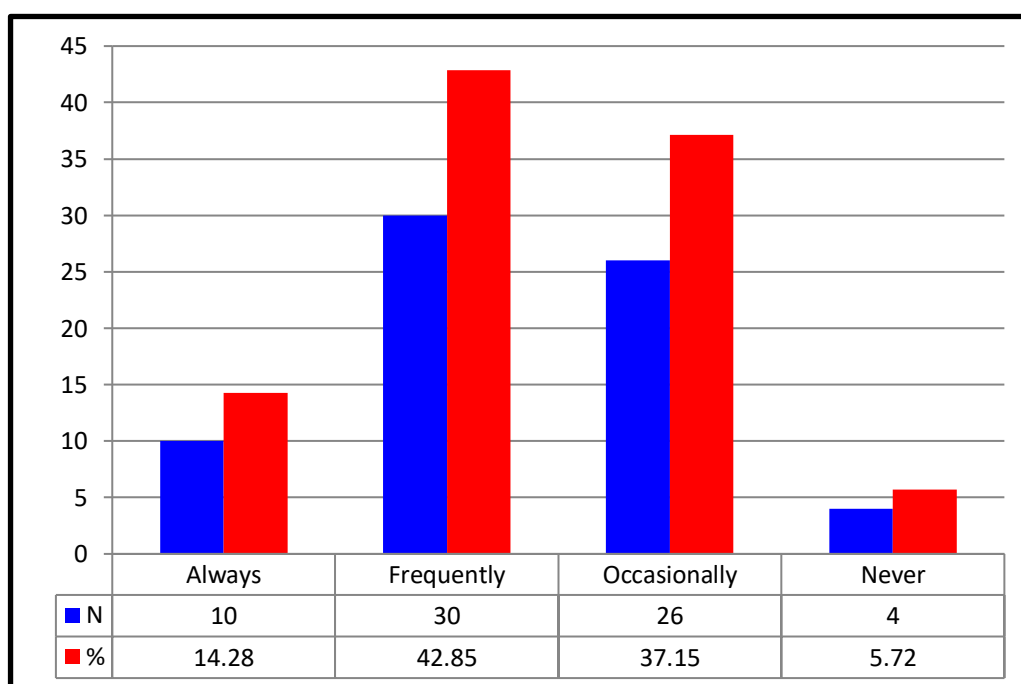


Figure 4.11. Frequency of the CBA Use in Class

The fifteenth question item in the present questionnaire attempts to establish quantitatively the frequency of implementing the CBA by secondary school teachers, and then it went further to explore the reasons that would justify every teacher s' choice. The teachers' answers as highlighted in Figure 11 show that **42.85%** of the questioned teachers *frequently* used the CBA and **37.14%** of these teachers *occasionally* used it in class. **14.28%** of the sample *always* used the CBA while only **5.71%** of the surveyed teachers *never* did.

Question 15: Whatever your answer is, would you please explain why.

First, the majority of the teachers who *frequently* used the CBA in teaching English **42.85%** follow a unified pattern when justifying their choice in that they referred to the benefits and strengths of the CBA and then moved to report some of the factors that did not allow the total reliance on the CBA. The reasons given by this category of teachers are the following:

-“It is true that this approach helps learners act individually and acquire the different social skills needed, but unfortunately this is not case for all learners.”

-“The CBA is useful for some lessons and useless for others.”

-“I don't really know how to teach with the CBA, so each time I use my own style of teaching.”

-“The learner is always at the center of the learning process, but sometimes the teacher needs to step in and give more information so that the lesson can proceed.”

-“It is up to the teacher to choose the most appropriate method when dealing with various rubrics.”

-“Teaching with the CBA does not sometimes suit the students’ knowledge.”

-“Overcrowded classes do not always permit the use of the CBA.”

-“The CBA is not always practical especially with students who have poor background knowledge and low competencies in the language.”

-“Using the CBA depends on the nature of the lesson as well as the learners’ response.”

-“The lack of materials hinders the use of the CBA.”

-“Learners are not always motivated.”

-“Because of time constraints and the length of the syllabi, teachers refrain from implementing CBA in all lessons.”

As highlighted in Figure 11, **37.14%** of the teachers *occasionally* used the CBA. The reasons provided by the teachers to justify the frequency of teaching with the CBA focused on listing the various factors that hinder the implementation of the CBA. These factors are related to the CBA as an approach but mostly extend to encompass the teaching environment conditions. Some of the questioned teachers attributed the low frequency of the CBA use to the suitability of the latter to some lessons only, while others related it to the learners’ inability to assume their roles and lack of knowledge. However, the majority of the teachers agreed on a certain number of factors that hindered the CBA use; these included the overcrowded classes, the syllabus and other common teaching conditions. The justifications provided by the teachers are as follows:

-“It is true that the CBA constitutes a fruitful method; however, it can be useful only in some lessons and useless in others, thus it is the teachers’ responsibility to select the most appropriate approach when dealing with the different rubrics.”

-“There are no suitable conditions which pave the way to the application of this method.”

-“I use it only when it is necessary .i.e. when it is the last way to teach the objectives.”

-“Low students’ background and abilities.”

-“It all depends on the lesson and the students’ level.”

-“It is not easy to use the CBA with a class of 40 students.”

-“large classes with students of mixed abilities.”

-“Not enough time to finish the syllabus.”

-“It depends on the nature of the task and the objectives assigned to it.”

-“The CBA focuses more on the learner who should participate in the learning process; however, in the classroom, the teacher does almost everything.”

The reasons put forward by teachers who *always* rely on the CBA **14.28%** fall into two main categories. The first category of the surveyed teachers enumerated the strengths and benefits while the second affirmed that it was just a matter of obligation and not a matter of choice. The reasons advanced by the first category of teachers are as follow:

- “The CBA is simply the best method.”

- “It is an effective method of teaching as it allows learners to improve their level.”

- “It helps learners depend on themselves and become involved in the learning process.”
- “It activates the learners' background knowledge.”
- “It is very beneficial as it helps learners develop their language.”
- “It allows the teacher to present the lesson easily because learners take the greatest part in the building of the lesson.”

In addition to teachers who use the CBA while teaching English, **5.71%** of the surveyed teachers *never* use the CBA. Only one of the teachers has justified his choice: “I have never (in almost 30 years of teaching) used any approach properly as a slave to it. I use only my own method as I perceive it.”

Question 16: Due to the shift to teaching English under the CBA, what do you think the purpose of teaching is?

- a. To enable an individual to acquire the desired behaviour through shaping his behaviour with various stimuli and responses.
- b. To help the individual acquire various cognitive skills through pre-specific activities designed in a particular sequence.
- c. To create learning environments which help the individual to build his own knowledge and to work collaboratively with other learners.

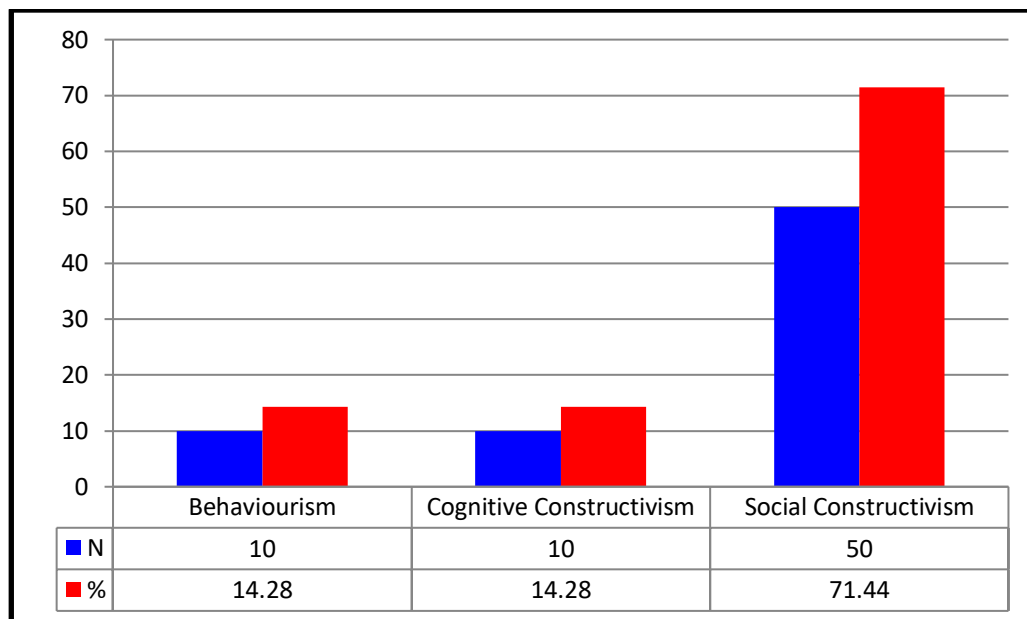


Figure 4.12. Teachers' Conceptualisation of Teaching

An approach in language teaching is defined as the different theories and basic assumptions about the nature of language and how a language is learned. In other words, the change in the way language and learning are viewed necessitates a change in the way language is taught. This is the case when new reforms are applied, where teachers are required to approach language learning and teaching in a new and different way.

Question sixteen attempts to discover how secondary school teachers of English conceptualise teaching. The results of Figure 12 reflected the teachers' awareness of the aim of teaching under the CBA. The majority of the teachers, **71.44%** asserted that the aim of teaching with the CBA was creating a learning environment that helped the learner to build his own knowledge and work collaboratively with other learners and therefore considered that learning under the CBA is constructed on social constructivism. **14.28%** of the informants affirmed that the aim of teaching is to help the learner acquire various cognitive skills through pre-specific activities designed in a particular sequence and thus relate learning to cognitive constructivism. The rest of the sample, representing **14.28%** reported that the aim of teaching

was enabling the learner to acquire the desired behaviour through shaping his behaviour with the various stimuli and responses; therefore, this category of teachers possessed a traditional knowledge-transmission view of teaching based on the behaviourist theory of learning.

Question 17: Does teaching with the CBA motivate you?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not really

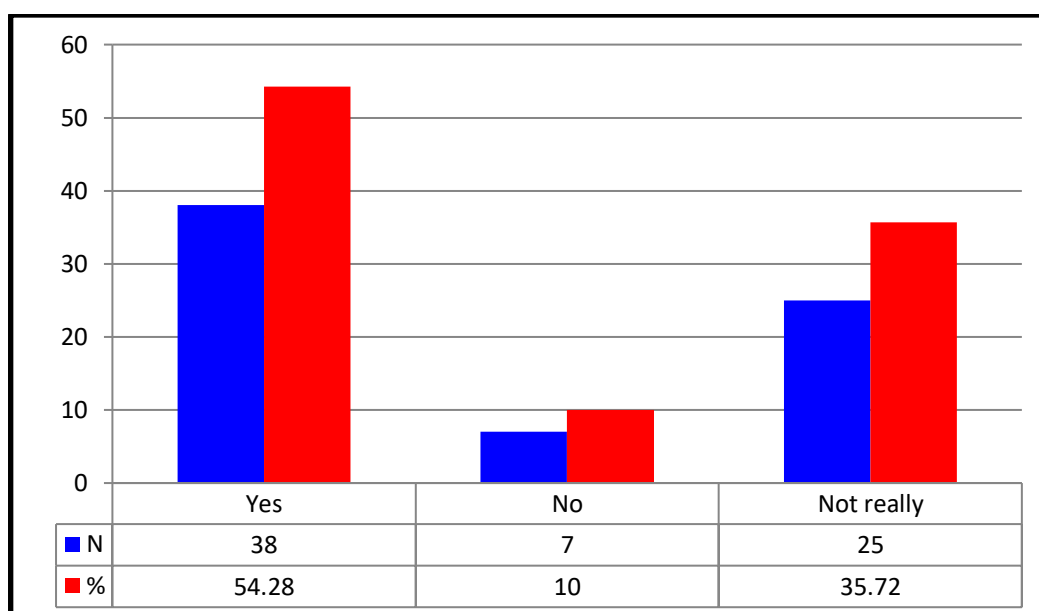


Figure 4.13. CBA and the Teachers' Motivation

In the Algerian context, the CBA reform brought radical changes to EFL teaching. Though a part of these changes places learners at the center of the learning process and requires the teacher to be a guide on the side, the teacher's role is still regarded as elementary for the success of the CBA implementation. Stated differently, teachers should know how to perform their new role with regard to the CBA. More importantly, they should be motivated to teach and work with the latter because any negative attitude towards this approach may result in the teachers' frustration and might go further to the reluctance or fear to work with

the CBA. The results of Figure 13 show that **54.28%** of the teachers were motivated to teach with the CBA. This motivation may be due to the fact that learners take the greatest part of learning as they were actively involved in the process of learning and the teacher's task is then to help, guide, monitor and coach. **37.72%** of the questioned teachers did not really feel motivated while **10%** of the questioned teachers clearly stated that they did.

Question 18: Does teaching with the CBA improve your students' proficiency?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not really

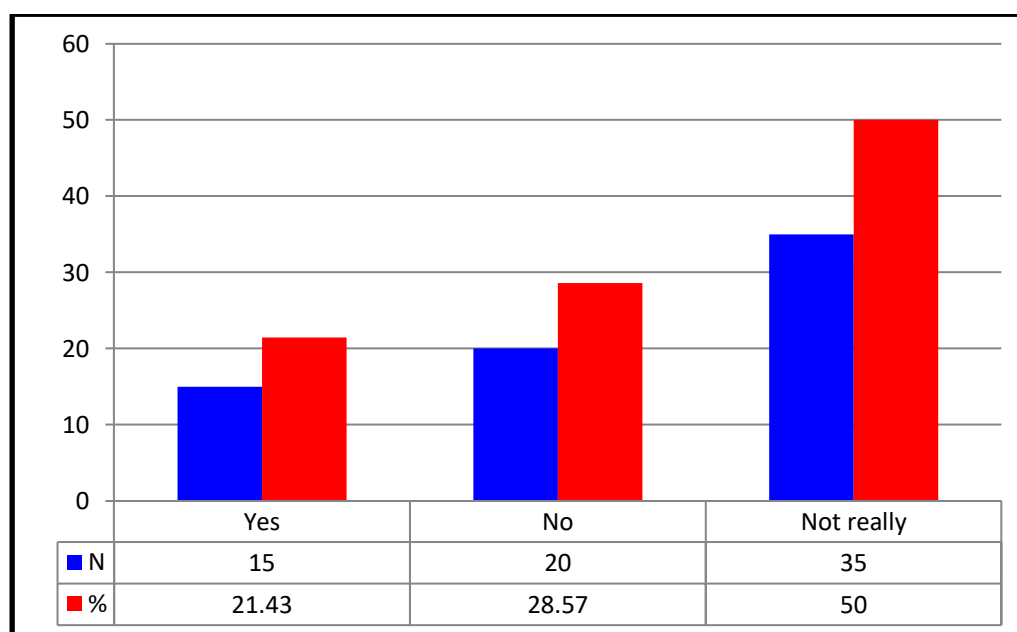


Figure 4.14. The CBA and the Students' Proficiency

Teachers are asked in question sixteen to see if the CBA is improving the learners' level in the language or not. The results of the above figure show that **50%** of the questioned teachers did not believe that the CBA has really improved the students' proficiency in the language whereas **28.57%** of the sample held a negative attitude towards this approach when

it comes to students' proficiency in the language. **21.43%** of the questioned teachers believed that the CBA had a positive impact on their learners' achievement. These results express the teachers' dissatisfaction with the CBA in improving their students' proficiency in English.

Question 19: The assessment of a competency must be:

(You need to tick more than one box)

- a. Transparent**
- b. Observable**
- c. Measurable**
- d. I do not know**

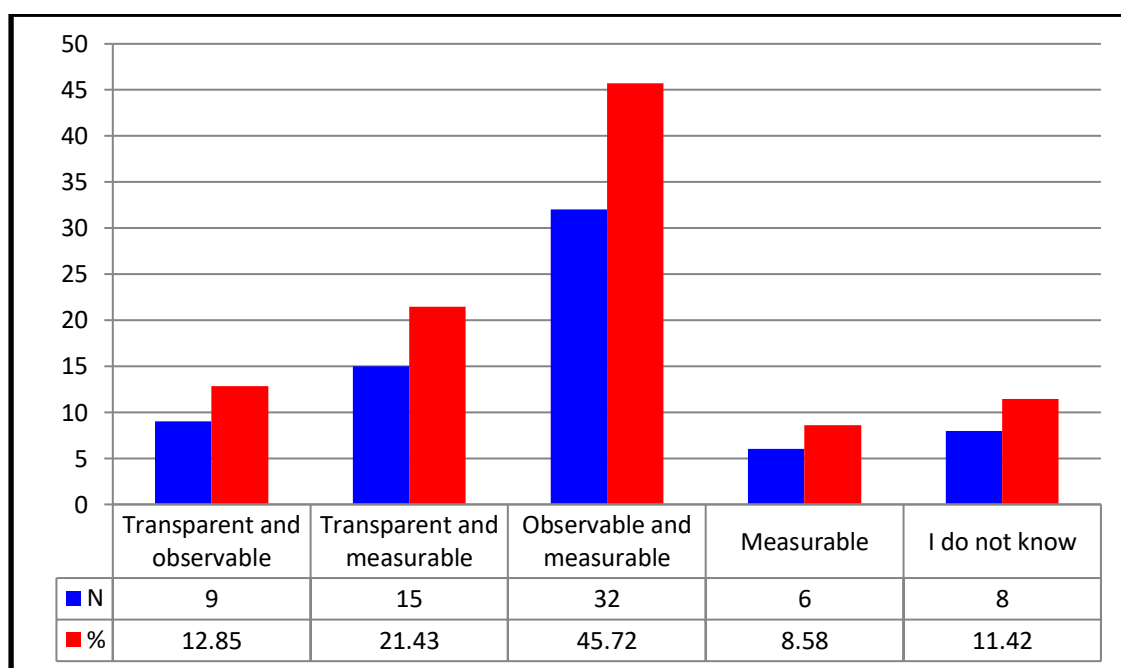


Figure 4.15. Criteria for Competency-based Assessment

Along with the change in the teaching method in Algerian secondary schools, a change in assessment should have taken place. Instead of grades, CBE programmes focus on the real-world aspect of applying the acquired knowledge rather than the ability to recall the

knowledge (O'Connor, 2002); therefore, the aim of assessment shifts to the distinction between learners who mastered the targeted competency and those who did not.

The aim of the question above is to see whether teachers are aware of how to measure competencies and are able to make judgments on whether or not their learners have mastered the targeted competency. The results of Figure 15 show that **45.72%** of the sample stated that assessing a competence should be observable and measurable while **21.43%** of them asserted that it must transparent and measurable. **12.85%** of the questioned teachers believed that the assessment has to be transparent and observable and only **8.58%** of them argued that it should be measurable. Surprisingly, **11.42%** of the questioned teachers did not know what the criteria for assessing competence are. Despite the variance in the teachers' answers, teachers seem to be aware of how to assess the mastery of a competence.

Question 20: How do you evaluate your learners?

- a. Formal evaluation at the end of a lesson or unit**
- b. Evaluation during the learning process (journal assessment, peer-assessment, self-assessment)**
- c. Other forms of assessment**

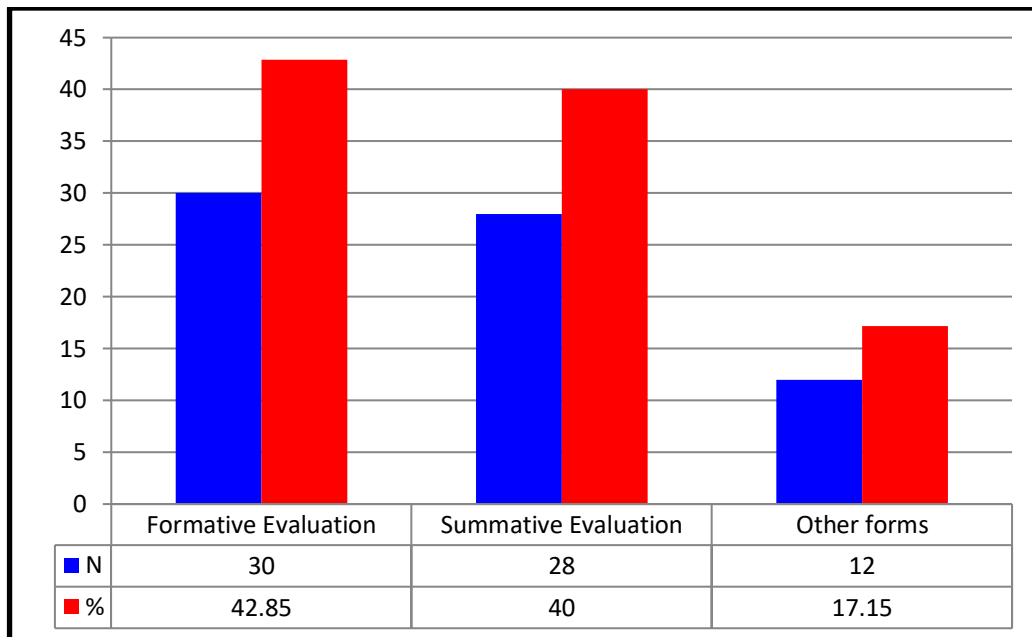


Figure 4.16. Forms of Evaluation Used by Teachers

The shift to a new approach requires the shift to new means of assessment. Griffith and Lim (2014) asserted that most assessment types within the CBA will be formative. He added that summative assessments, on the other hand, are designed to determine whether the student has mastered the competency. The results of the above graph show that **42.85%** of the questioned teachers relied on the different forms of summative assessment while **40%** of them on formative assessment. The rest of the questioned teachers, who constituted **17.15%**, relied on other forms of assessment.

Question 21: According to you, the largest impact on students' achievement comes from:

- a. Small class size**
- b. Students' abilities**
- c. Teacher quality**
- d. The teaching methodology**

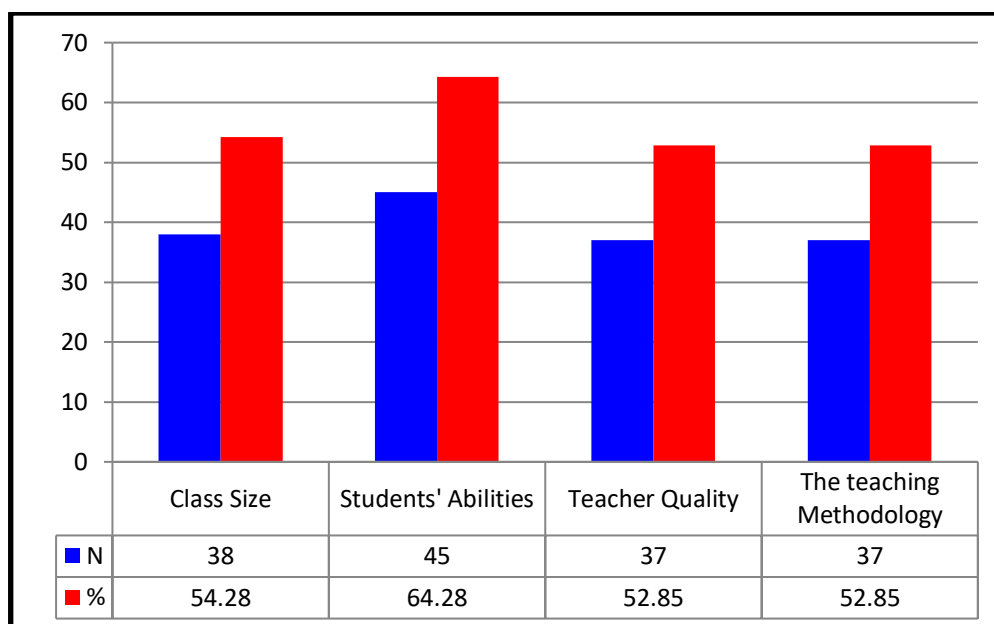


Figure 4.17. Factors Influencing Learners' Achievement in the Language

The aim of question twenty-one is to know what affects the learners' achievement in English learning. In recent times, the research literature on teaching provides evidence that learners' achievement is strongly related to the quality of teachers and thus the quality of teaching as Ferguson stated "skilled teachers are the most critical of all schooling inputs" (1991,p. 490). The results of the above table show that teachers considered that the learners' performance in the language is respectively subjected to the students' abilities, their number per class, the teachers' quality and finally the teaching methodology. According to **64.28%** of the questioned teachers, the greatest impact on learners' achievement in the language results from the students' abilities in the language. **54.28 %** of the informants added that the impact on students' achievement related to the students' number per class. Finally, **52.85%** of the questioned teachers asserted that both the teachers' quality and the teaching methodology play a relatively important role when it comes to EFL learners' achievement at secondary school. It should be acknowledged that the informants believed that the various teaching impediments come from factors which are out of their control, namely the students' low level

in the language and their number per class, and then mention both the teachers' quality and the teaching methodology as factors that affect the students' achievement in the language.

Question 22: What roles do you often assign to your learners?

- a. Followers of your instructions and lectures.**
- b. Active participants in the learning process.**

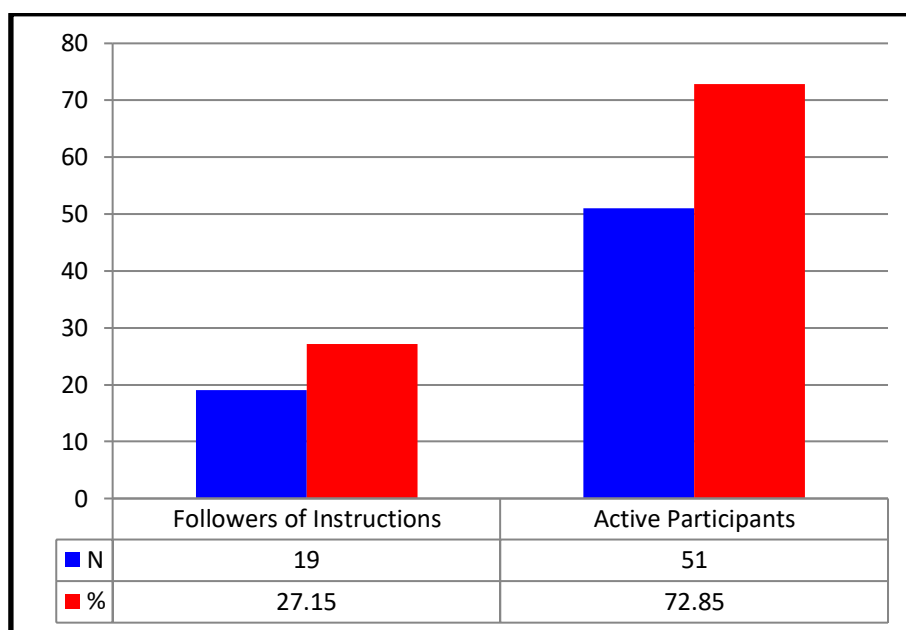


Figure 4.18. Learners' Roles within the CBA

Question twenty-two investigates what roles learners are assigned within the CBA. The overwhelming majority of the informants **72.85%** perceived their learners as active participants in the learning process: this complies with the CBA teaching principles since it is up to the learners to take an active part in their own learning and work toward being autonomous learners. The rest of the questioned teachers **27.15%** asserted that they considered their learners as followers of their instruction and lectures following one of the traditional methods in which teachers are considered fountains of knowledge whose words and practices are never questioned.

Question 23: Do you think that Algerian EFL learners are ready to handle their learning process, i.e., be autonomous?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not really

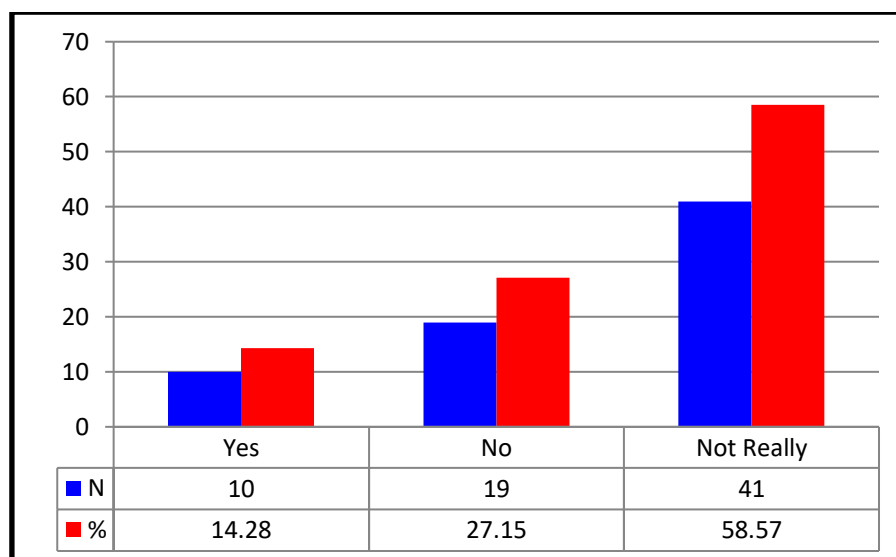


Figure 4.19. Teachers' Attitudes towards Learners' Autonomy

The question above targets learners' autonomy which is receiving much attention in research and education lately. When asked about the learners' autonomy, the highest percentage of the informants **58.57%** believed that Algerian learners were not really able of controlling and taking responsibility for their own learning. **27.15%** of the questioned teachers considered that Algerian EFL learners were not autonomous while the rest of the informants **14.28%** believed that they considered that their learners were ready to handle their own learning process.

Question 24: Are your learners motivated to learn English with competencies?

a. Yes

b. No

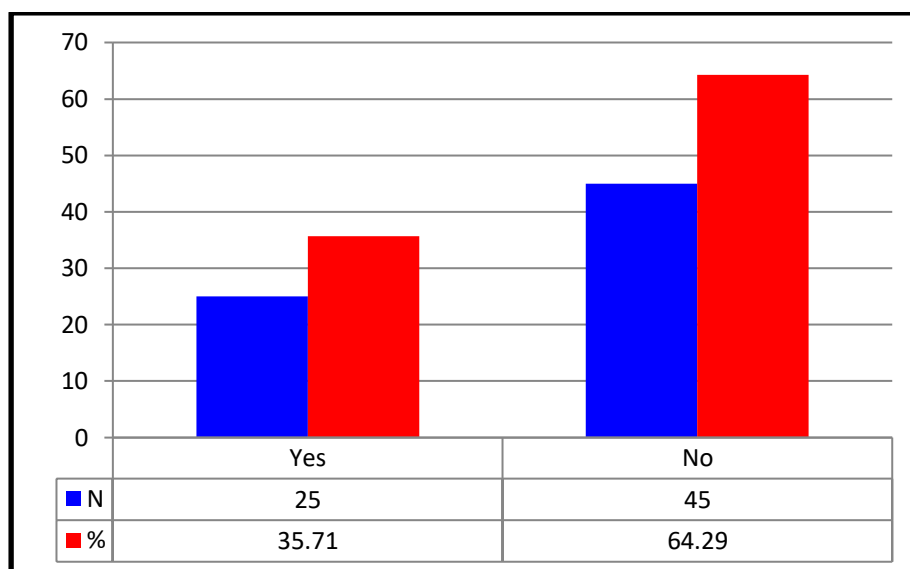


Figure 4.20. Learners' Motivation within the CBA

Due to its eminent importance in learning L2, teachers should not forget that all their learning activities are filtered through their students' motivation; hence, without student motivation, there would be no pulse or life in class. The question above targets learners' motivation under the CBA. The results of Figure 20 show that **64.29%** of the questioned teachers sustained that their learners were not motivated to learn English with the CBA while the rest of the informants **35.71%** believed that their learners were motivated to learn English with the CBA.

Question 25: How far do you agree with the statement below?

“Thanks to the CBA, Algerian EFL learners have become capable of solving problems and constructing their own learning path ”

a. Strongly agree

- b. Agree
- c. Disagree
- d. Strongly disagree

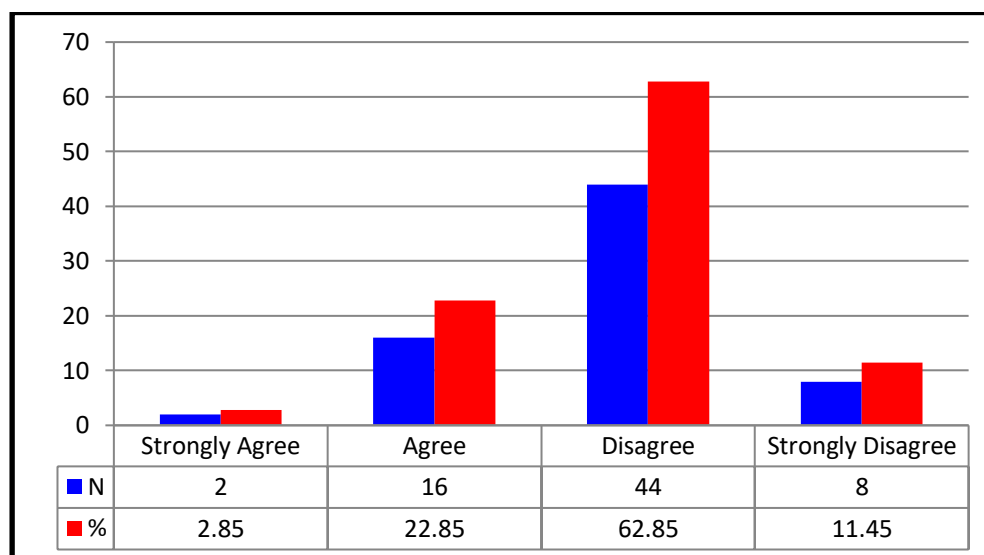


Figure 4.21. Learners' Ability of Solving Problems

The present question item aims at investigating the learners' ability to solve problems and demonstrate the ability to construct their own learning path which constitutes one of the pillars of the constructivist learning theory in general and teaching with the CBA in particular. The results in Figure 21 show that **62.85%** of the informants disagree with the above statement which sustained that Algerian EFL learners were capable of solving problems and constructing their own learning path. **22.85%** of the questioned teachers agreed with the above statement, **11.45%** strongly disagreed and only **2.85%** strongly agreed with the above statement.

Question 26: All the working conditions suit teaching with the CBA.

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not really

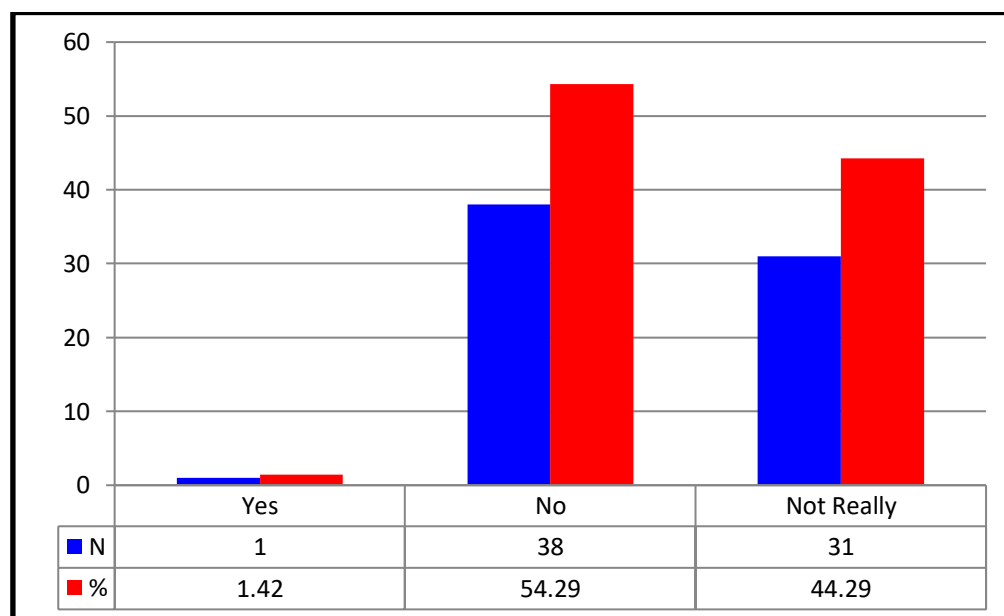


Figure 4.22. Local Working Conditions and the CBA

The questionnaire item above is a general question that attempts to identify the teachers' attitudes toward the suitability of their working conditions for the implementation of the CBA. The results of Figure 22 show that **54.29%** of the informants believed that their working conditions did not suit the CBA. **44.29%** of them considered that the working conditions do not really suit teaching with the CBA and only a minority of the informants **1.42%** claimed that the working conditions suited the implementation of the CBA. The obtained results suggest that Algerian EFL teachers believe that the Algerian educational system is not suitable for such an approach as it was not prepared appropriately to host the CBA.

Question 27: Is your school equipped with ICT?

a. Yes

b. No

If yes, what are they?

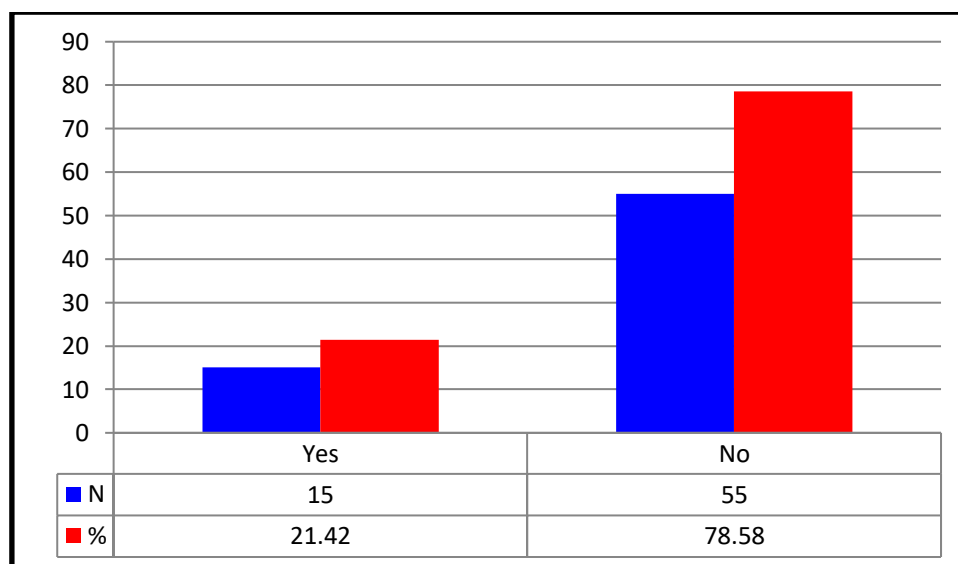


Figure 4.23. Availability of ICT within Schools

The Algerian Ministry of Education stressed, on several occasions the importance of ICT within modern teaching methods and claimed that all schools are to be provided with ICT that would facilitate learning. However, when asked about the availability of ICT in their schools and classrooms, a high percentage of the questioned teachers **78.58%** overtly stated that they did not have them while the rest of the informants **21.42%** confirmed that the school provided them with ICTs.

Teachers whose schools are equipped with ICT were required to mention the different kinds of ICT available in schools. Teachers specified that the ICT they had at school were

data shows, projectors and speakers; however, they added that the school possessed only one data show for all the subject matters which obliged them to take it in turns.

Question 28: Do you occasionally feel inhibited by your teaching environment because of:

- a. Long files (syllabi) and the limited time allowed**
- b. The requirements of the school's administration**
- c. The inspectors demands**
- d. Other. Please specify.**

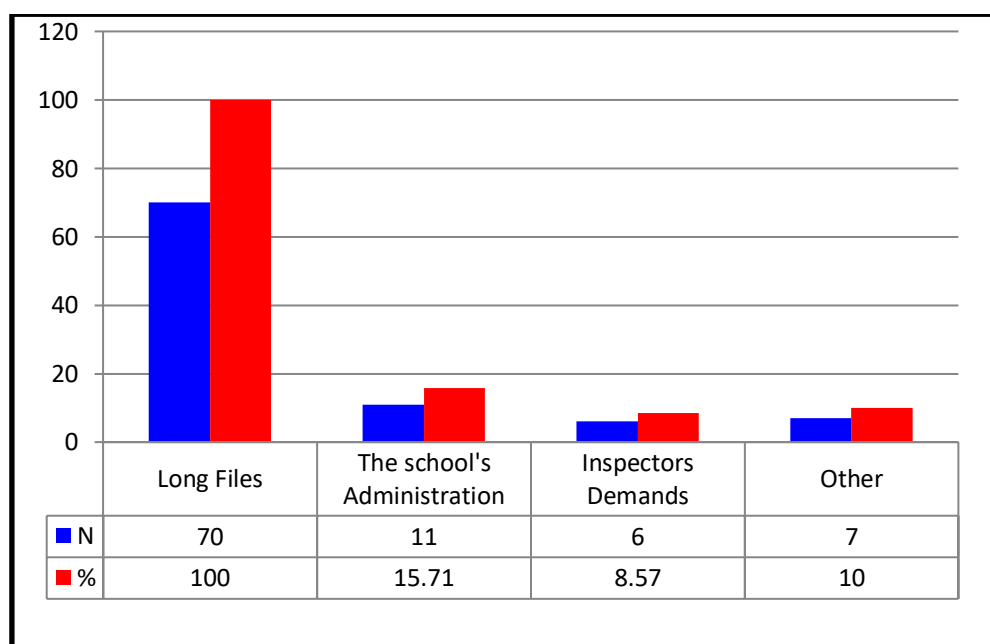


Figure 4.24. Teachers' Attitudes towards Contextual Inhibitions

In addition to preparing lessons, coping with classes of mixed abilities and other pedagogical tasks, teachers are overloaded with some other administrative duties. Ornstein et al. (2011, p. 320) asserted:

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 obtained from this questionnaire demonstrate that teachers shared some constraints affecting both teaching efficiency and learning productivity. The whole sample of teachers **100%** prioritised as their main concern the lengthy syllabi as opposed to the short time available for teachers to meet the deadline. The long syllabi put teachers in a paradoxical situation; on the one hand, they needed to encourage students to construct their knowledge and be autonomous learners and be selective and creative while designing tasks. On the other hand, they needed to follow a strict schedule so they would finish the syllabus on due time. **15.71%** of the questioned teachers ranged the schools' administrations as one of the factors that inhibited them in their working environment. **10%** of the informants specified other inhibitions. The latter included the extremely poor streaming system which directed all the weak students to some specific streams, namely Letters and Philosophy, Economy and Management, and Math-Techniques. In addition to the poor streaming system, the questioned teachers added random and non-pedagogic timetables for both learners and teachers constituted another impediment for both of them. Only **8.57%** of the informants felt occasionally inhibited by the demands of their inspectors.

Question 29: What is the average students' number per class?

- a. Less than 25 students.**
- b. Between 25 and 35 students.**
- c. More than 35 students.**

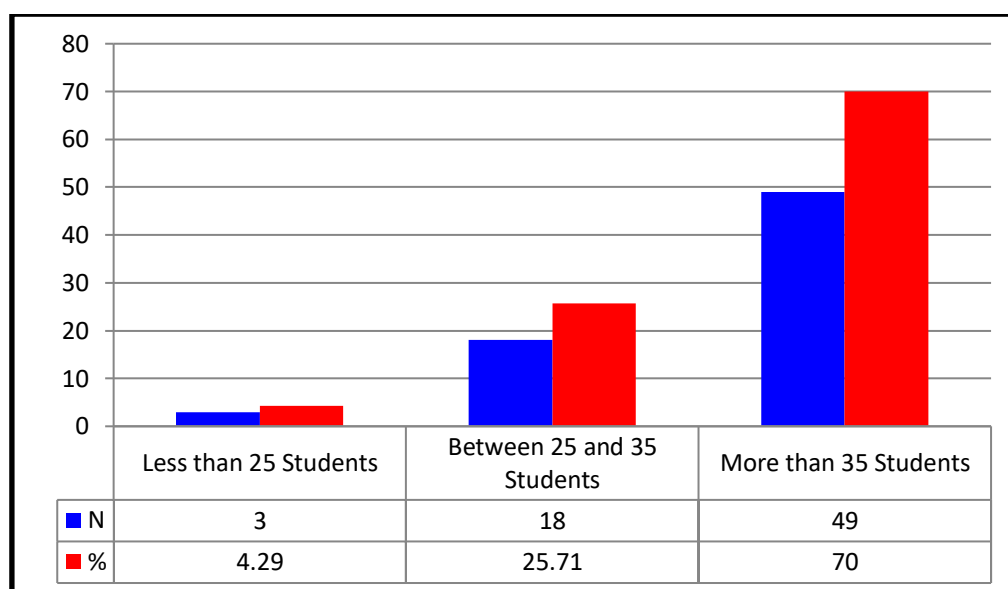


Figure 4.25. Students' Number in EFL Classes

Though there is no agreement on the quantitative definition of what constitutes a large class in teaching contexts, teachers' label of a 'large class' depends mostly on context and expectation. The results of Figure 25 confirm that teachers' complaints about large classes are legitimate. The highest percentage of the sample, representing **70%** worked in classes of more than 35 students. **25.71%** of the informants worked with classes whose students' number fluctuated between 25 and 35 students, whereas only a minority of them representing **4.28%** of the sample worked with classes of less than 25 students.

Question 30: Now, after almost a decade of teaching with the CBA, if you were given the opportunity to decide about the future of this approach in Algerian schools, what would your reaction be?

- a. Keep the CBA.**
- b. Go back to the previous approach.**
- c. Implement a new approach.**

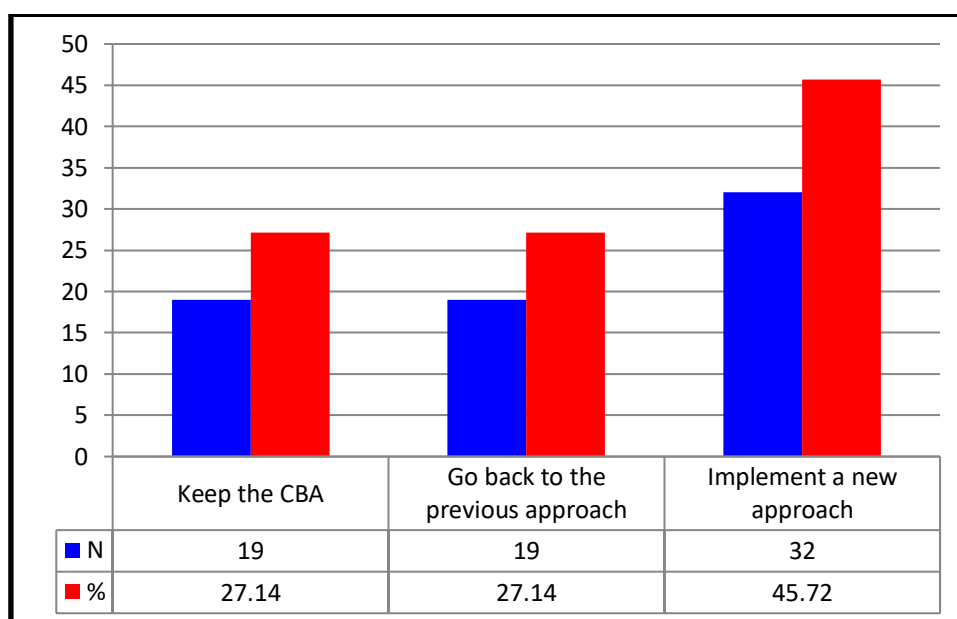


Figure 4.26. Teachers' Attitudes towards the Future of the CBA in the Algerian Secondary School

Question thirty provided EFL Algerian teachers with the opportunity of deciding the future of CBA in the Algerian educational system. The results of Figure 26 show that **45.72%** of the informants would be with implementing a new approach to teaching English if they were given the opportunity to decide about the future of this approach in Algerian schools. **27.14%** of the questioned teachers believed that going back to the previous approach would

improve teaching English and the same percentage of the sample **27.14%** asserted that the CBA should be kept as a teaching method.

Question 31: Whatever your answer is, would you please justify.

The results of Figure 26 demonstrated that **45.72%** of the teachers would be in favour of implementing a new approach to teaching English. In fact, this suggested that these teachers were neither satisfied with the CBA nor with the previous approaches that teaching English had gone through in Algeria. Therefore, this category placed its ultimate hopes on a new teaching method which might improve learning English in Algeria. When justifying their choice, they called for a radical change that would encompass different aspects of teaching, including the teaching method, the teachers' training process, syllabus design, materials and media and other aspects that are all mentioned in the table below:

	Teachers' Justifications
T1	"Implement teaching approaches that suit the learning conditions and syllabi designed for Algerian learners then providing the necessary material for success of any approach"
T2	"I think it would be better to use an eclectic method that takes into consideration the students' level, the nature of lessons itself and the teaching conditions"
T3	"Implementing any approach which is not too demanding for learners "
T4	"Teachers should be given total control over which approach suits their teaching objectives"
T5	"Because both the CBA and the previous approaches proved to be not successful: a new renewal wave is the key solution"
T6	"To study the Algerian educational properties beforehand carefully. To conduct a case-study analysis then to choose the teaching methodology. i.e., the starting point

	should be the country's conditions and then the quality of the approach"
T7	"We have to implement a new approach that takes into consideration the number of hours vis-à-vis the syllabus, number of students per class, teachers' timetables and the cultural environment"
T8	"We need to focus on teaching English since Middle school, or better to introduce teaching English at earlier stages of learning"
T9	"We have to implement a new approach that guarantees success in our country and not in other countries. We need a reform that results from an objective analysis of education in Algeria and generates effective solutions, and choosing the appropriate teaching methods is just one of the steps to be gone through before opting to any other new educational reforms"

Table 4.5. Teachers' Justifications for Implementing a New Approach

Some of the informants **27.14%** put their trust in the CBA and asserted that they wanted the CBA to be maintained in teaching English. This claim must be attributed to the positive aspects of the CBA, namely the learners' autonomy as well as their ability to use English outside the confines of the classroom. To justify their standpoint, teachers provided the following justifications.

	Teachers' Justifications
T1	"Keep the CBA only if good working conditions are provided"
T2	"The CBA is a successful approach as it made our learners active and allowed them develop their learning skills by themselves"
T3	"The problem has never been the approach, it is rather the working conditions"
T4	"keep the CBA and reduce the number of students per class"

T5	“The CBA is to be kept and a certain number of conditions have to be enhanced, such as providing ICT’s and taking into consideration the large classes”
T6	“It makes learners active and provide them with the opportunity of expressing themselves freely, especially in the project work”
T7	“Take the positive aspects of the CBA and focus on them”
T8	“To do an overall evaluation of the CBA, taking into consideration the Algerian educational context”
T9	“With introducing CBA to EFL, learners have become capable of using English outside the confines of the classroom”

Table 4.6. Justifications Provided by Teachers for Keeping the CBA

The third proportion of the questioned teachers **27.14%** pointed out that the future of teaching English in Algerian secondary schools would be in going back to a previous approach. This choice belonged mainly to experienced teachers who were in fact comparing the CBA with the previous approaches, with a strong conviction that previous approaches were much more fruitful and successful. The surveyed teachers justified their choice by relying on the arguments that follow.

	Teachers’ Justifications
T1	“The previous approaches were much more successful and enabled learners to grasp and master the language”
T2	“The CBA does not work with such a generation”
T3	“Teaching by objectives was more successful and more acceptable by our learners”
T4	“ We taught with the communicative approach and the results were better”
T5	“Teaching with objectives is the best way to teach English because it enables weak

	level pupils to follow and understand”
T6	“Since at the present moment, we do not see that there are positive results of the CBA. It works only with 20% of the students: it is better to go back to the communicative approach because the purpose of teaching a language is to use it in our daily life for communication”
T7	“The CBA has proved to be not successful because of the different social backgrounds of Algerian learners”
T8	“I would prefer teaching with objectives rather than the CBA because this latter does not suit our country: it was imposed on us”

Table 4.7. Teachers’ Justifications for Going Back to the Previous Approach

Question 32: If you are not satisfied with the present situation of English teaching in the Algerian secondary school, what do you suggest to improve the system and face all the challenges mentioned above?

The aim of the aforementioned item is to allow the teachers to express themselves freely concerning the solutions they believe will have a determinant role in enhancing the teaching of English in Algerian secondary schools. The respondents’ answers varied from one teacher to another, as each respondent saw the problem from his own angle. However, they all fall into one aim which was facing the challenges they were struggling with in teaching English. Solutions and suggestions were categorised as follows:

1. Teaching Approach

- To free teachers from imposed methods and give them freedom of how and what to teach.

- To rely on experts in the field of pedagogy who would be able of choosing what best suits our country.
- To adopt an approach that takes into consideration the social and cultural backgrounds of Algerian learners (e.g. those who are from rural areas).
- To go back to the previous approach because it better fits our learners' level and demands.
- To take into consideration all the obstacles that may face any approach before implementing it.

2. Status of English Learning

- To make the learners aware of the importance of learning foreign languages.
- To teach English at earlier ages (in primary school).
- To focus on Middle school teaching since our learners start learning English at this stage.
- To upgrade the status of English in comparison to other subject matters by raising the coefficient of English.
- To focus on motivating learners so that they start appreciating learning English.

3. Syllabi, Teaching Materials and Media

- To design syllabi in cooperation with teachers because they know best about learners' needs interests and abilities.
- To design syllabi in accordance with the time allocated to English as a subject matter: this would help teachers to focus more on developing their learners' capacities and not finishing the syllabi on due dates.
- If teaching English in our country is to be improved, we have to be realistic and provide the right tools for teaching foreign languages, such as laboratories. The blame

should be put neither on the learner nor on the teachers because the quality of teaching results from other factors.

- ICT should be implemented -and above all available-, mainly for weak learners to help them acquire the language easily.

4. Working Conditions

- To improve both the learning conditions for learners and the working conditions for the teachers.
- To decrease the number of students per class and give more time to teachers' training.
- To improve the working conditions for teachers because if we work with ease, our students will have better results.
- To take into consideration learners with a weak level in the language who have a lack of interest and motivation too.
- To raise the teachers' salaries.

5. Decision Making

- To make the teacher an active member when it comes to implementing new educational reforms.
- To stop political interference in education, like laws that are established or changed without careful consideration by the Algerian educational authorities.
- To be careful and meticulous when employing any-would be- teacher because teachers have to graduate from professional schools of teaching.

6. Teachers' Training and Development

- Teachers' training should be more serious. A lot of money had already been spent on training the teachers but in vein. Workshops and training sessions should be organised regularly.

7. Evaluation

- To resort to modern means of evaluation, such as portfolios.

Conclusion

The aforementioned results decidedly demonstrate that the surveyed secondary school teachers struggle in implementing the CBA in teaching English: teachers are faced with a variety of obstacles and difficulties that inhibit successful learning from taking place. The general atmosphere of the CBA implementation reforms nurtured negative attitudes as teachers were excluded from being a contributing part of the school reforms, curriculum development, syllabus design, textbook writing and programme evaluation. Moreover, the training and the weak teachers' development programmes put Algerian teachers in a dilemma when it comes to the appropriate implementation of the CBA in teaching English. Contextual inhibitions that are part of the Algerian educational context make implementing the CBA much more challenging: the lack of ICT and the large number of students are examples of these challenges. In addition to this, when implementing a new teaching method, all aspects should be respected: this is not the case for reforms in Algeria. Some major aspects such as assessment and the evaluation system have been neglected. Teachers are still relying on traditional methods of evaluation which are not compatible with the CBA. All the teachers' complaints are legitimate when it comes to the long syllabi and the time allotted to finish them. However, the teachers' complaints might not be legitimate when it comes to the

Algerian learner who has always been qualified as a passive and weak learner who impedes the CBA implementation. Therefore, all the challenges mentioned above breed the teachers' dissatisfaction with the current status of English in Algerian secondary schools and urge them to ask for a new strong reform that would really solve all the existing problems and refrain from reforms that are just ink on paper.

Chapter Five

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Chapter Five

Classroom Observation and Instruction within the CBA

Introduction

To enable the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, qualitative research makes use of a variety of methods and data collection strategies. As part of a mixed method approach to this piece of research, the questionnaire was administered at the beginning of the investigation as a first step or an entry into research; it was followed by other steps, namely classroom observation and then the inspectors' interview.

This chapter presents findings of the classroom observation that took place in EFL Algerian classrooms. It served as a data source that permitted us to observe and identify the challenges of EFL teaching within the CBA reform in a naturalistic setting. It was also designed to document classroom practices and interactions so that CBA and non-CBA teaching practices could be characterised. It gave more insights into how lessons are presented, the teachers and learners' roles, interactions, media and materials used and the different forms of assessment.

5.1. Classroom Observation as a Research Technique

There are varied types of observation and wider related terminology, such as formal and informal, structured and unstructured, systematic and participant, which are all used to describe the features of observation approaches. Broadly speaking, however, observation approaches can be divided into two major types: non-participant and participant observations. Non-participant observation is an approach or a process whereby the observer devises a systematic set of rules for recording and classifying events. It is perceived to be as objective

as possible with the least intervention of the observer in the process being observed; besides, the result of this kind of observation is usually expressed in quantitative terms. While participant observation, on the other hand, suggests a more detailed and involved relationship between the observer and the process under observation. This type of observation is an approach that is often associated with ethnographic or qualitative observation techniques in which the observer attempts to arrive at an understanding of the meaning of activities for the subjects being observed (Croll, 1986). A variety of instruments or tools can be used for both non-participant and participant observations, these include, checklists, field notes, and even audiovisual recordings (Montgomery, 2002; Tilstone, 1998).

Educational research encompasses different forms of observation with varied comprehensive or specific criteria. Some observation forms may focus on the students' behaviour while others may seek out the response of teachers to such behaviours. According to Hopkins (2002), there are four methods of observation: open, focused, structured, and systematic. Depending on the observation technique, some forms or instruments may simply be a blank sheet, a worksheet, a scale, a checklist, a computer software, or a tally sheet. Some observers may be affected by the setting in which the lesson takes place and may focus on some particular feature of the teaching of one specific subject, like English. This in turn may influence whether they adopt a quantitative style, which is a type of systematic approach, counting and recording of individual events; or a qualitative method, which is a type of the open observation approach, trying to look behind and beneath the mere frequencies (Cohen et al., 2007).

Observations allow the researcher to witness certain patterns of behaviour and collect data about the teaching process and student learning. Although one might argue that any

desired information could be obtained solely by questionnaires, it is important to note that individuals are most often unaware of their own conduct, especially of practices and routines to which they have been accustomed over time. EFL secondary classes are no exception: both teachers and learners possess unconscious attitudes and beliefs toward teaching and learning English, which inexorably govern their actions in the classroom confines. Observations are also used to collect data on how learners use language in a variety of settings, to study language learning and teaching processes in the classroom, and to study teachers' and students' behaviour (Seliger and Shohamy, 1989).

5.2. Design and Methodology of Classroom Observation

Any kind of method, including techniques, instruments, or tools, should be in accordance with the specific purposes of a research, that is, the chosen methods or techniques should aim to “illuminating a particular research issue, or solving a particular research or evaluation problem” (Sanger, 1996, p. 40). If the chosen research methods or techniques are suitable to the particular purpose of a piece of research, the procedure of research will have validity.

Classroom observation in this study is used to test the second main hypothesis of this piece of research which states that “teachers find working with the CBA difficult because learners have a weak background in the language and do not assume their roles in the learning process”. Accordingly, the first motivation behind the choice of using observation in this particular study was to document classroom practices, behaviours and interactions so that CBA and non-CBA teaching and learning practices could be categorised, including their variations, and link these variations to students' outcomes. This would allow us to establish whether what the teachers said in the questionnaire was borne out in practice. To put it

simply, the classroom observation would complement and consolidate the results obtained from the teachers' questionnaire regarding teachers' attitudes towards the CBA as part of the last educational reform. Both teachers and learners are to be seen in their natural setting with their complexities and ambiguities in order to uncover how the CBA is implemented by teachers and perceived by learners. More importantly, it would help see whether the CBA enjoys a favourable teaching environment within Algerian secondary school EFL classes. Accordingly, the second and most important reason behind using classroom observation is to identify, in the real context the inhibitions, obstacles and challenges that impede the teaching of English as a foreign language under the realm of the CBA.

The researcher visited six classes in the secondary school of El-Kendy in Jijel, which is the largest lycée in the city. It includes a total number of 625 students: 308 boys and 317 girls. This secondary school includes six streams; Mathematics, Technical Mathematics, Experimental Sciences, Economic Sciences, Literature and Philosophy and finally Foreign Languages. The number of teachers being observed was five whereas the number of students under investigation varied from one class to another but it fluctuated in the interval of (25) to (40) students per class. The sample included five teachers and 174 students distributed in six classes of both scientific and literary streams and three levels: the first, second and third years. General information about the teachers' educational backgrounds is summarised in the table below.

Teacher	Degree Held	Experience
T1	Licence	29 years
T2	Licence	27 years
T3	École Normale Supérieure	21 years
T3	École Normale Supérieure	11 years

T5	Master	9 years
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Table 5.1. Teachers' Profile

Because it was necessary for the researcher to take into account a number of considerations in planning the classroom observation procedure, the researcher needed to consider a variety of factors such as the frequency and duration of observations, and how the observational data are collected, tabulated and analysed (Griffiee, 2018). In this research, the classes had been observed for two months of the first term school year 2019, distributed in two to three hours a week per class. This was an attempt to make learners more familiar and less distracted, because“...if the observer...is present during several lessons, students may become accustomed and consequently revert back to their normal classroom behaviour” (Cohen, 2011, p. 78). In essence, such a research instrument would enable the researcher to establish fixed ideas about the teaching situation being investigated through direct contact with the class.

A total of 64 observations were carried out between October 13th and November 20th 2019: 21 sessions for the first years, 22 for the second years and 21 for the third years. It was hoped that the use of this technique would allow the investigator to confirm the assumptions of the present research and test the research hypotheses as well. The table below summarises the classes and the number of sessions for each class observed.

Level	Stream	Students Number	Total Number of sessions
First Year	Scientific Stream	32	9
	Literary Stream	28	12
Second Year	Experimental Sciences	27	10
	Foreign Languages	28	12
Third Year	Math and Technology	29	9
	Letters and Philosophy	34	12

Table 5.2. Classroom Observation Sample

Classroom observation was conducted using a classroom observation sheet. In order to facilitate the analysis of the data, each classroom observation sheet included a heading with the following information: class, observation number, date (day, month, and year), time (beginning and end) of observation, name of the school, number of students and finally the materials and media used to present the lesson. In addition to the setting in which the lesson takes place, the classroom observation procedure is devised into the pre-, while- and post-observation phases. The classroom observation sample is provided in Appendix D.

5.1.1. The Pre-observation Phase

This is the first section of the observation form. Prior to each observation, the researcher would meet the teacher to discuss the nature of the class to be observed, the kind of material to be taught, the teachers' approach to teaching, the objectives and expected outcomes of the lesson. The task of observation would involve collecting information about

some aspect of the lesson, but would not include any evaluation of the lesson. This pre-observation discussion between the teacher and the observer helps to alleviate anxiety and provides the observer with information about how the session is going and what the teacher would like to accomplish on the day of the visit. It also informs the researcher about the objective and competencies that are to be achieved during the observed lesson so that he can follow the different steps of the lesson presentation.

5.1.2. The While-observation Phase

This is the second phase of the classroom observation procedure. It collects as much data as possible about what really goes on in the classroom. After saying hello to the class, the researcher sits in a corner of the classroom with the learners without interrupting the flow of the class and then starts the classroom observation by filling in the checklist. The while-observation checklist collects data about the teacher, the learner, and the lesson: it does not aim to evaluate the performance of the teachers or his/ her learners but rather to unveil the possible hindrances that may oppose them in the natural setting of teaching and learning under the CBA, i.e., in class. Thus, the while-observation phase comprises 22 items with a yes or no answer divided into the following rubrics: knowledge about the competencies, objectives; syllabus and language content; teaching methodology; assessment; learning styles; learner's background; classroom interaction; ICT's and media and materials (See Appendix E).

5.1.3. Post-observation Phase

This is the last phase of the classroom observation procedure; it was done after the end of the observed lesson either in class in the little remaining time or while the teacher is leaving his or her class to teach another one. The researcher and the involved teacher would

meet as soon as possible after the lesson. The observer would report on the information that had been collected and discuss it with the teacher (Richards and Lockhart, 1991). The teacher would be invited to reflect on the content and quality of his or her teaching and the learning effectiveness. The post-observation phase includes four questions that respectively inquire about objectives, evidence of students' learning, comments on the instructional delivery and the like. The aim of this phase is to allow teachers to reflect upon their performance by providing them with the opportunity to think over their teaching practices, analysing how something was taught and how the practice might be improved or changed for better learning outcomes. Thus, the aim here is not to be judgmental about the teachers' or learners' performance, but rather to deduce what went right, what went wrong and most importantly how to improve performance and teaching practices for future teaching situations.

The post-evaluation phase ended with a sub-section dedicated to comments which allowed the researcher, after discussion with the teacher, to add a variety of different aspects of the lessons that were considered relevant to this study. This sub-section allowed the researcher also to ask questions and request complementary information that he considered related to his study. These include organisation of the lesson, teacher's time management, and students' performance on tasks, time-on-task, teacher questions and student responses, students' performance during pair work, classroom interaction, class performance during a new teaching activity, and students' use of the first language or English in class and the like.

5.2. Analysis of Pre- and While-observation Results

5.2.1.. Knowledge about Competencies and Objectives

This aspect of the observation checklist includes three items that are common to any CBE programme. These statements examine knowledge about the objectives, competencies, and syllabus goals.

- **Item One: The teacher is aware of the targeted competencies of today's lesson.**

Item One	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	49	76.56
No	15	23.44
Total	64	100

Table 5.3. Observation Checklist Item One

In general, learning competencies are the main ideas or skills students are expected to master. ‘To interact orally in English, interpret oral and written messages and produce oral and written messages’ are the three main competencies targeted by the Algerian curriculum for secondary school classes (Teacher’s Book Getting Through, 2006). Results obtained from the classroom observation showed that in **76.56%** of the observed sessions, teachers possessed knowledge about the competencies targeted in their teaching while **23.44%** of the observed sessions were presented to learners without possessing any knowledge about the lessons’ competencies.

- **Item Two: The teacher is aware of the objectives of today's lesson.**

Item Two	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	36	56.25
No	28	43.75
Total	64	100

Table 5.4. Observation Checklist Item Two

Learning objectives which can be broadly defined as the specific abilities necessary to accomplish the learning or the targeted competency should be written as a single sentence that describes the specific activities students will do to show that they have learned. This suggests that competency can have several objectives. With the aim of gaining insights into the teachers' knowledge about the learning objectives of each observed lesson, teachers were asked during the pre-observation phase to provide the objective of the lesson to be presented. **56.25%** of the lessons were presented with clear, specific and measurable objectives, either stated orally or written on the teachers' lesson plans. In **43.75%** of the observed sessions, teachers did not provide the researcher with the lesson's objective.

Though the majority of teachers had clear objectives for their instruction, they stumbled in formulating them. In analysing the teachers' answers and lesson plans, some of them started their objectives with a standard beginning such as: "Upon completion of this lesson, the student will be able to....", followed by an action verb, while others referred to one of language skill as an objective, or to a grammar item such as conditional type 1 as a lesson objective: these are not objectives, but rather can serve as titles for lessons. Objectives should also include an action verb that helps the students understand what they are going to learn and

how they will be assessed. Thus, another pitfall that teachers encounter when stating objectives is the use of the verbs that are not part of Bloom's taxonomy. An example of this is the use of the verb "to understand" which is difficult to observe or measure.

5.2.2. Syllabus and Language Content

- **Item Three: The teacher can establish the relation between the objectives of today's lesson and the goals of the syllabus.**

Item Three	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	0	0
No	64	100
Total	64	100

Table 5.5. Observation Checklist Item Three

The philosopher Seneca once said, "If one does not know to which port one is sailing, no wind is favorable": When you know where you are headed, you can more easily get there. Well-defined and articulated learning objectives are important and so is knowledge about the general goals of the syllabus. While learning objectives can be defined as brief and clear statements about what students will be able to do when they complete instruction, goals refer to statements that describe the competencies, skills, and attributes that students should possess upon completion of a course. Unexpectedly, during the pre-observation discussion, no teacher was able to establish the relationship between objectives and goals. Though objectives are part of goals, this is justified by the teachers' comments who said that they were just following the syllabus as it was given by the Ministry of Education.

We disagree with the teachers who behaved as if no choice was given to them, and that the Ministry of Education was acting as an autocratic entity. Despite its strong emphasis on finishing the syllabus in a pre-determined period of time, teachers have the choice to modify the language content, or the syllabus provided that the objectives, competencies and goals will be maintained. In fact, through the regular visits and in the pre-and-while training sessions of their inspectors, teachers are encouraged to alter the syllabus content to cope with their learners' level, socio-cultural backgrounds, and needs.

5.2.3. Lesson planning

- **Item Four: The teacher had a clearly discernible lesson plan.**

Item Four	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	64	100
No	0	0
Total	64	100

Table 5.6. Observation Checklist Item Four

A lesson plan often describes what the teacher wants learners to be able to do by the end of a lesson, or what they will have done during it. All the observed lessons were conducted with the teachers' possession of a clearly discernible lesson plan which reflected the teachers' preparedness for teaching.

- **Item Five: The teacher relied exclusively on the lesson plan.**

Item Five	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	37	57.82
No	27	42.18
Total	64	100

Table 5.7. Observation Checklist Item Five

This question sees if teachers relied exclusively on the lesson plans they prepared before or changed them. More importantly, it tries to enquire about the reasons that might change the course of an already planned lesson.

In **57.82%** of the observed lessons, teachers were satisfied with following their lesson plans step by step as this allowed them to work accordingly with the English syllabus as mandated by the Algerian educational authorities. In **42.18%** of the observed lessons, teachers deviated deliberately from the lessons they prepared. In the first case, the teacher started teaching the form and use of conditional clauses of types two and three but soon realised that learners did not recognise the tenses used in the clauses. She decided then to teach the form of the present and past conditionals for her students and then proceeded with the conditional clauses in the following session. It was concluded that she did so because of her students' background that would not be able to grasp the new forms of conditional as presented to them. Going through a language form which is not included in the syllabus was a matter of necessity in such cases, but it might put the teacher behind the schedule if this happens constantly.

One of the teachers asserted that he entered his classroom always with a well-prepared lesson, but it was not like he had to follow that plan step by step without checking other ways that in fact could be much better than he expected. He asserted that teachers need to be flexible enough to understand what to change, adapt or get rid of things, and it is always the learning situation that requires this flexibility.

Another case in point is that of a teacher who had to keep the same lesson but needed to improvise and use her skills and knowledge and come up with loads of good ideas to provide a good lesson. According to him, the students brought no English textbook or copybook because the administration had mistakenly informed them that the English teacher would be absent that day.

Teachers also must be prepared for all types of surprises and thus should possess in hand a contingency plan. In one session, the teacher prepared an interesting video for her students but found later that the data show was out of service and taken to reparation. Fortunately, she did not panic as she had a series of activities and tasks that she always kept with her as a contingency plan. It is true that the unexpected cannot be controled, but this act showed a sense of creativity, professionalism and instinct to manage such situations.

It is not a shame to admit that a given activity does not suit the learners' level or interest. Sometimes, teachers changed the content of a given activity. Unexpectedly, the teacher asked the learners to close books and copybooks and gave them a series of games and activities that allowed them to have fun and relax. The reason is that she found students feeling sad and unwilling to learn because they had been just given their catastrophic math exam marks.

5.2.4. Teaching Methodology

Item Six: The teacher shares the objectives of the lesson with his learners.

Item Six	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	6	9.38
No	58	90.62
Total	64	100

Table 5.8. Observation Checklist Item Six

CBA entails that objectives have to be well-defined for both the teacher and the learners. The teacher's role lies in specifying the knowledge, abilities, and attitudes would enable the learners to practice and apply their learning in the real world. The learners must know the outcome right at the beginning of the lesson to work to achieve it; this makes learning meaningful and allows the teacher to provide feedback where necessary and assess if the learners have mastered the competency at the end of the lesson. Unfortunately, this was not observed in **90.62%** of lessons where teachers did not announce, share or even inductively discuss the objectives of the lesson. In fact, teachers introduced their lesson by just referring to its content or asking their learners to remind them of what they did last time. An example of this practice was observed in the view of teachers who stood in front of the class and said, "Today, we are going to deal with reported speech".

Item Seven: The lesson is learner-centered.

Item Seven	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	20	31.25
No	44	68.75
Total	64	100

Table 5.9. Observation Checklist Item Seven

One of the major requirements for CBA instruction is learner-centeredness. Observation showed that **68.75%** of the observed lessons were not learner-centered while only **31.25%** were. During the post-observation discussion, teachers were asked about the reason for acting as lecturers and supervisors neglecting the characteristics of CBA. It was concluded that this practice did not stem from the teachers' ignorance of the CBA, but rather from time and syllabus constraints. Differently stated, teachers unwittingly stuck to their traditional roles while presenting lessons. In the same vein, it was impossible to engage all the students in learning, but during observation, it was noticed that instruction targeted mostly a limited and similar group of students, "the same faces". This category included very often students with a good level of the language and with a high motivation to learn it, which leaves the other students behind for not being able to keep pace with "the same faces" category. Teachers also found themselves driven by this category because they felt they made good progress in the lesson presentation and the achievement of its aims.

- **Item Eight: The teacher uses a variety of instructional strategies and group activities.**

Item Eight	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	24	37.5
No	40	62.5
Total	64	100

Table 5.10. Observation Checklist Item Eight

The results in the above table were not in the line with our expectations. **62.5%** of the observed lessons were conducted in the absence of effective instructional activities. Instead of helping students become independent and strategic learners, the lesson presentation was knowledge-focused; it was not built around the skills necessary to carry out specified tasks, and the observed teachers focused on course contents instead of improving critical thinking, communicative ability, and creativity. It was also observed that teachers made good starts by departing their lessons with real-life and problem-solving situations but soon shifted to lecturing and direct instruction.

In the same context, lessons were presented without careful consideration of the targeted competency but rather conducted with a focus on presenting a syllabus item or language content in a limited period of time. Teachers found themselves shifting from one approach to another depending on their learners' participation. One might say that this is good as they were applying an eclectic method, but in fact, they were just trying to find the easiest and the less time-consuming technique for presenting their lessons. Therefore, the observed teachers resorted to lecturing, direct instruction with the aim of just finishing the lesson, and

meanwhile deprived their learners from precious learning opportunities. In doing so, they failed in helping learners to use instructional models of cooperative learning and inquiry-based learning which puts more emphasis on the active learning competencies that allow obtaining necessary information from their surroundings, reorganising, and reprocessing it into useful forms of advanced knowledge rather than to simply accept given information. Instead of guiding their learners to find solutions to the problems they encounter, to share, exchange information and cooperate with others, the observed teachers took a shortcut to the targeted competency by presenting the language content to their learners, neglecting encouraging critical thinking and motivating the learners. Moreover, the type of questions raised to the learners neither provoke their critical thinking nor evoke their motivation to further express their ideas on given topics. Learners thus had no chance to learn various ways to express different thoughts and feelings. The questions were stereotyped phrases and repeatedly given to every student in the class. Unfortunately, sitting in the back, some sessions where teachers monotonously employed a particular teaching strategy in class which put the teacher at the centre of the whole process were seen, an act that is in opposite direction with the CBA.

For **37.5%** of the sessions where teachers used different instructional strategies, the classroom atmosphere was quite different and the results were impressive. Learners worked on reflective activities that stimulated critical thinking and motivation. They were also motivated and took the initiative to do tasks, asked questions, cooperated in solving problems that in fact reflected CBLT. They proceeded through tasks working in pairs or presenting assignments and discussing them among each other, with the whole class, and through interaction with the teacher. These sessions were characterised by active engagement of the

learners and the teachers' role was only minimised to guiding, helping and encouraging the learners.

To sum up, the choice of instructional strategy constitutes the fuel for guiding the class. Teachers should provide opportunities for their students to explore real-world problems and their solutions as well as develop cooperative learning skills.

5.2.5. Assessment

- **Item Nine: The teacher provides effective feedback where necessary.**

Item Nine	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	19	29.68
No	45	70.32
Total	64	100

Table 5.11. Observation Checklist Item Nine

In CBA contexts, formative assessment is used to assess learners' progress and provide information about their strengths and weaknesses in order to provide feedback, observation showed that **70.32%** of the observed lessons were conducted with no formative assessment and thus, without any feedback.

Although the CBA offers a plethora of formative assessment instruments and strategies teachers could choose from, namely, checking learners' understanding or providing feedback, teachers did not. For checking their learners' understanding, teachers often asked the students the following questions: "Did you understand?", "Is it clear, shall I repeat?";

what is even worse is that these questions became part of some teachers' routines as they carried the lesson and contended themselves with hearing a positive answer from some students. Feedback for the observed teachers meant directly providing their learners with ready-made answers without giving them opportunities to develop their capability to monitor, evaluate and regulate their own or peer learning, not to mention the marginalisation of shy and weak students. In fact, teachers spend a considerable amount of time on discipline and class management matters in an attempt of creating a peaceful atmosphere for studying. Teachers are not blamed when they are trying to cope with large classes of more than 30 students who do not write lessons or bring textbooks, not to mention their lack or absence of motivation.

For 29.68% of the observed sessions, feedback was provided. In fact, the type of tasks and activities provided by teachers allowed the use of formative assessment to check learners' understanding and then give them feedback when necessary. For example, when conducting a project about the learners' favourite music, learners worked in groups, were able to assess the work of the other groups, and provided constructive, timely and meaningful feedback when they co-operate with one another. The teachers' role was just to walk through lines and see the learners' performance without any interference as they did the entire task acting as partners and assessors.

- **Item Ten: Both formative and summative assessment to determine mastery of competency.**

Item Ten	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	34	53.12
No	30	46.88
Total	64	100

Table 5.12. Observation Checklist Item 10

Though most CBA assessment relies on formative means of assessment, summative assessment is equally important as it is designed to determine whether the student has achieved the objectives and mastered the targeted competency. In analysing the data obtained from the classroom observation, in **53.12%** of the observed sessions, teachers relied only on the regular tests and exams administered by the Ministry of Education. In addition to the term exam, the literary streams classes took two tests and the scientific streams classes took only one test in the term. What should be noted here is that tests and exams were built traditionally with slight modifications from one time to another concerning the number or type of activity. The test and exams started with comprehension questions to answer true-false questions, fill-in-the-blank, multiple-choice tests, grammar questions and finally written expression. The reliability of these tests and exams can be questioned because Richards and Rogers (2001) argued that tests and exams are tools of assessment that are forever banished from the CBLT classroom as final competency assessments. To assess the mastery of the targeted competencies, teachers contended themselves with the correct answers they got from some students, believing that a correct answer meant mastery of the targeted objectives and competencies. With no assessment of learners' performance in problem-solving situations or evoking their critical thinking, learners were graded according to what they scored in tests and exams -correct answers-, in addition to the mark of continuous evaluation and projects constituted the final marks that are noted on their grade books.

For **46.88 %** of the observed sessions, teachers relied on both formative and summative means to assess mastery of the targeted competencies. First, at the beginning of each unit, the teacher assigned learners to work in groups on a topic that relates to the unit. For projects, the teacher was able to assess both the product and the process as the learners worked on the assigned project proceeding throughout the unit and submitted it before its end. The teacher allowed learners to choose the topic they wanted to work on and even to choose the other members of the group which helped them to feel like decision-makers for their learning content and work in a more favourable social context. The teacher was also capable of making visible and assessable manifestations of the learners' competencies and putting an individualised mark for each learner which would be added to the marks of exams, tests and continuous evaluation. One of the observed teachers admitted that students often brought them copy-paste projects from the net: this situation urged the teacher to change the topic of the project that is recommended in the syllabus and make it related to their everyday life by creating new problem-solving situations which they cannot bring from somewhere else. She also mandated that the project should be written in hand rather than typed and asked their learners to present the project in front of their classmates and allow for asking questions, class discussion and feedback.

Teachers were continuously taking notes and observations of learners who participated in class, and making home works in due time so that they can allocate the mark of continuous evaluation. This assessment tool had been added by the Ministry of Education to calculate the final mark and grades of learners. Observation showed that this mark made learners constantly engaged, motivated and created competition between them, especially during the lesson presentation, but teachers admitted that it might be misused in certain situations when teachers allocate marks on other bases rather than class work and participation.

Teachers added that learners could be invited to fill in a self-evaluation table rubric and a process evaluation to share their opinions about the teaching/learning process, but this was not possible because of time constraints. It was disagreed with the teachers' over-emphasis on allocating marks rather than directing focus on deciding whether their learners have achieved the targeted competency. Moreover, teachers relied on the standardisation of assessments when using exams, tests and sometimes the same project as a means of assessment which is not compatible with the individualised philosophy of CBLT.

5.2.6. Learning styles

- **Item 11: The tasks and activities meet the learners' different learning styles**

Item 11	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	24	37.5
No	40	62.5
Total	64	100

Table 5.13. Observation Checklist Item 11

Although classes have similar learning needs and the teachers are not required to diversify the curriculum, some steps could, as always, be taken to adapt the syllabus to different kinds of learners. Unexpectedly, the results of the above table show that **62.5%** of the observed lessons were conducted without reference to the different learning styles of learners. Most lessons were carried through a teacher-based approach that inhibited the largest number of learners to take part. They were monotonously conducted through a teacher-centered approach characterised mainly by a strong reliance on activities suggested by the textbook. More importantly, teachers proceeded through lessons as soon as a learner provided

an answer and not contributed to the lesson by creating or adapting authentic tasks that meet the standards of the curriculum and cater to the learners' different learning styles. It was observed that the class was clearly divided into two categories: the first one is the learners who interacted with the teacher while the second category refers to the abandoned learners who did not feel concerned with the lesson. In such cases, it was concluded that teachers did not bother to devise assignments that match the different learning styles of their learners.

For **37.5%** of the observed sessions, teachers made efforts to create tasks, assignments and activities that met the learners' different learning styles, yet the learners' participation was somehow shy and limited as they participated for the sake of participation. Learners were not interested in a task as part of a competency but rather interested in just providing the correct answer to a given question: this would affect the targeted competency and put the teachers in a state of confusion when assessing their learners' achievement.

5.2.7. Learner's Background

- **Item 12: The tasks and activities meet the learners' different backgrounds.**

Item 12	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	35	54.68
No	29	45.32
Total	64	100

Table 5.14. Observation Checklist Item 12

The analysis of this item relied on the learners' answers and interactions within the class. The classroom observation results showed that in **54.68%** of the observed sessions

teachers managed to devise tasks and activities that meet the learners' different backgrounds in the language. Learners were motivated and were able to work in pairs and groups but due to time restrictions, not all of them were given the chance to participate.

In **45.32%** of the observed sessions, teachers were unable to customise the lesson content according to learners' backgrounds. Though teachers are quite aware that language content should go hand in hand with the learners' level of the language, it was difficult for them to do so because of time restrictions, large classes, lack of media and the like. On the one hand, some activities that targeted the good learners deprived the majority of the class of taking part and obliged the teachers to go with their flow leaving weaker learners behind. On the other hand, the activities designed for average and weak learners created a feeling of frustration or boredom for good learners who directly gave the answer. They confidently commented on this kind of activity "oh...this is so easy", "who wouldn't know this?" creating unconsciously a sense of fear and retrieval for average and weak learners who were motivated to learn the language.

To sum up, it is true that preparing lessons and integrating activities that are academically appropriate for classes with a wide range of learners with different backgrounds can be challenging, but it is without a doubt the teachers' task to set the pace of the class to keep up with the good and weak learners simultaneously.

5.2.8. Classroom Interaction

- **Item 13: Classroom interaction is monitored by the teacher**

Item 13	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	47	73.43
No	17	26.57
Total	64	100

Table 5.15. Observation Checklist Item 13

The results of the above table showed that **73.43%** of the lessons were presented with the teachers monitoring the classroom interaction. Though this goes in the opposite direction from the CBA principles, teachers argued that they were obliged to do so because their learners generally use their mother tongue as a means of communication with the teacher and their classmates as well.

A lively atmosphere for classroom interaction monitored by the learners was noticed in **26.57%** of the observed classes: this was noticed particularly in group or pair work and topics that ignited the learners' interests, such as music, sports and technology.

5.2.9. Information and Communication Technology

- **Item 14: ICTs are used to present the lesson**

Item 14	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	13	20.32
No	51	79.68
Total	64	100

Table 5.16. Observation Checklist Item 14

Observation showed that the use of ICT in class was occasional or rather limited. On the one hand, **79.68%** of the observed sessions had been presented without ICT: the whiteboard was the most dominant medium used by teachers. This was attributed to the scarcity of the different ICT devices with which the secondary school should have been equipped. Teachers were obliged to take turns on two data shows since English is not the only subject matter for secondary school students. On the other hand, in **20.32%** of the observed lessons teachers relied on slideshows and projectors to present their lessons. Learning environments in this case were more stimulating when compared to traditional settings. Similarly, instructors stated during the post-evaluation phase that there existed a number of factors impeding the whole utilisation of ICT tools, mainly knowledge of using them; they wished they were able to use ICTs more frequently.

5.2.10. Materials and Media

- **Item 15: The teacher uses interesting and appropriate materials.**

Material	<i>f</i>	%
Textbook	41	64.06
Handouts/ photocopied exercises	11	17.18
Dictionaries	5	7.81
Pictures	3	4.69
Videos	2	3.13
Food Packages	2	3.13
Total	64	100

Table 5.17. Observation Checklist Item 15

Authentic materials refer to the use of texts, photographs, video selections, and other teaching resources that are not specially prepared for pedagogical purposes. Throughout the observed sessions, **64.06%** of the lessons had been presented relying only on the textbook; **17.18%** on handouts and photocopied exercises; **7.81%** on dictionaries; **4.69%** on pictures; **3.13%** on videos; and finally **3.13%** on food packages which were brought by third-year students in the unit of Ethics and Business to distinguish healthy and unhealthy food ingredients. The results show that teachers relied chiefly on textbooks to deliver instruction.

5.2.11. Analysis of the Post-Observation Results

- **Item 16: The learners learned what you intended for them**

Item 14	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	44	68.75
No	8	12.50
I don't know	12	18.75
Total	64	100

Table 5.18. Observation Checklist Item 16

The aim of this question is to see how teachers perceive their lessons' success. By successful lesson, it is referred to the attainment of objectives by the end of the lesson. The discussion of the post-observation phase revealed that **68.75%** of the observed lessons were considered successful by the teachers. In **18.75%** of the observed sessions, teachers were unable to make judgments while in the rest of the observed sessions represented in **12.50%**, teachers did not achieve the objectives of the lesson.

- **Item 17: What evidence do you have of students' learning?**

This question is related to the previous one as it searches for instances of learning that enabled the teachers to gain evidence of the achievement of their instructional goals and objectives. If this question is not answered, all the teachers' efforts of careful planning, creating a positive learning environment, selecting authentic materials and making the curriculum relevant would be useless.

In response to this question, teachers referred generally to the learners' engagement, interaction and participation in the series of activities that made up the lesson. They also relied on the different forms of formative assessment which helped them decide whether or not the lesson's objectives were achieved. Evidence of students' learning was manifested-according to teachers- in the learners' ability to practice what they have learned and to solve tasks given to them individually, in pairs or in groups, during and at the end of the lesson. One of the teachers noted that he was quite aware of learners who attained the lessons' objectives and those who did not: he knew that not all the learners attained the lesson 'objectives because they did not have the same background or motivation to learn and thus, it would be ambitious to do so within syllabus and time constraints.

- **Item 18: If you had an opportunity to teach the lesson again to the same group of students, what would you do differently?**

Immediately following a lesson is the best time to think about it and to determine how it could have been improved. Teachers are required to run through the different elements of the lesson, including the instructional strategies, the activities, the manner in which students have been grouped and the like. When they answered this question, teachers were direct as

they started by describing what an ideal lesson is. An ideal lesson for them is simply a lesson that worked as planned and ultimately achieved its pre-stated objectives. However, teachers had reflected on their lessons and wished they were able to perform differently.

One of the teachers wished she were able to apply differentiated teaching. According to her, setting the same task for every learner had disadvantageous effects on learning; it provides little variation, assesses all students against a general criterion, applies differentiated teaching techniques only for gifted learners, and consistently establishes inflexible teaching groups. For instance, feedback which plays a crucial role in differentiation is occasionally given because of the large number of learners and the time restrictions of the syllabus, especially for third-year learners who focus on memorising chunks of grammar they might have in their BAC exam, discarding the use of language for communicative purposes. Timely and actionable feedback is also important for teachers themselves because it helps identify the next steps required to progress in the teaching-learning process.

Teachers wished they had more media and authentic materials. They stated that they were confined several times to teach using just the textbook because the data show for instance was not available that day as priority is given to scientific subject matters. A teacher believed that presenting pictures and posters to class would be much better than explaining new words to learners.

Teachers also stressed, in several answers, the importance of learners' involvement in any lesson. They asserted that if they had the opportunity to teach some lessons differently, they would have designed activities and tasks that allow their students to be active learners.

Teachers also reflected on the time they gave to some activities and tasks. This was evident in writing sessions where some students often failed in achieving the lesson's objectives: weaker learners were unable to keep pace with the good ones which created a sense of disequilibrium in class and a sense of confusion for the teacher too. A student, for instance, had finished writing an entire essay or paragraph while another one was struggling with how to start or even what to write. A teacher said, "It is very sad to see and know that you are obliged to move on in your syllabus".

Commenting on what would you do differently if you had the opportunity to teach the lesson again to the same group of students, a teacher said that he would not follow the lesson plan. He would rather give all students the opportunity to express their views and give arguments, even if it would be at the expense of his lesson's objectives. He believed that learners should be encouraged very often to speak and practice the language.

Teachers also said they would have omitted some activities that either were above or below their learners' level and thus considered useless. Other activities should have been modified. A pertinent example in this case related, according to a teacher, to a group activity where learners created chaos and management problems obliging the teacher to cancel it and move to another activity. Teachers would also have changed texts and some topics which did not ignite the learners' interest.

It should be mentioned that no matter how a teacher is experienced, he could be confronted with situations where he needs to improvise and make the best use of the situation in which he finds himself.

5.3. Discussion of the Classroom Observation Results

As mentioned earlier, the aim of classroom observation is to gain more insights into the CBA challenges and therefore to address the most effective pedagogical recommendations. Findings relate to the principal elements that make teaching and learning possible and realisable, these are the teachers, the learners and a conducive learning environment.

The first major finding relates to teachers, who, despite their awareness of the importance of following the CBA requirements in their teaching practices, failed to do so. First, the observed teachers took the shortest way to finish their lessons: this does not mean that they used less time but rather used instructional strategies, activities, and tasks that required the least amount of learners' participation and engagement in the learning process. Presenting lessons was not seen as a purposeful journey that leads to the attainment of objectives but rather as something they need to finish in due time. During observation, the strongest consideration was given to reaching the finish line of that given lesson so that it was considered done, with low consideration to how well was competency achieved. Reference to real-life situations which is primordial to CBA environments was quite absent in English classes where teachers lecture and learners do activities creating a cyclic syllabus that is in opposite direction from the CBA curriculum.

Additionally, objectives were not explicitly shared with the learners and teachers were slaved by the syllabus with no careful consideration of what their learners needed or wanted to learn. Teachers were far from adopting a transparent approach to teaching and learning in which the goals and purposes of learning; what will be learned; and what good performance looks like are clear and explicit to students, teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders.

Instead of focusing on learning, learners might be struggling with finding answers to questions about what they are learning or why they are learning the foreign language, all of which could have been spared if teachers took the delivery of explaining to them the objectives to be attained. Teachers thus failed in setting a suitable atmosphere that encourages learners to be gradually autonomous in English learning.

For assessment, teachers were still relying on the traditional ways for evaluating their learners' performance in the language. There was a discrepancy between the CBA principles and the way evaluation was handled by teachers who taught with competencies but evaluate using tests, exams that focused on assessing discrete skills or chunks of language with no reference to language usage in real-life situations. Similarly, teachers contended themselves with the answers of a given group of learners creating the marginalisation of a wider group of students who, with time, had low self-esteem and a lack of motivation to learn the foreign language. Despite their awareness of the importance of applying assessment standardisation within CBE, teachers became helpless when teaching in large classes.

Purposeful and transparent learning builds on learners' prior knowledge and experiences to construct new knowledge. It also means that they are to monitor and assess their own progress with the help of meta-cognitive strategies that help them to be mindful of what is being learned: the concept of meta-cognitive awareness is quite absent in Algerian secondary schools where learners put into practice the knowledge they received from their teachers instead of their experiential knowledge.

The teachers' own reflections on their teaching practices revealed that they are not satisfied with the teaching situation. They find themselves obliged to work face to face with

the CBA requirements; the learners' lack of motivation and autonomy; the unavailability of media and the unsuitability of materials with the learners' interests, needs and background.

Second, it was also noticed that learners on their part were not assuming their role in learning. Most of the time lectured by their teachers, learners had become accustomed to being taught language rather than being taught how to learn. Therefore, they had been accustomed to sitting and waiting for the lesson to take place or rather end: this developed the process of being spoon-fed by the teacher and makes the CBA catchphrase of "stop teaching let pupils learn" unreachable in the Algerian secondary school.

Thirdly, after more than a decade of implementing the CBA into Algerian secondary schools, teachers are still deprived from the least ICT equipment, such as projectors and the other facilities that should have accompanied the CBA reform.

Overall, unveiling the obstacles and barriers that inhibit teaching in real-classroom confines and identifying their sources represents half the way to generate the most effective solutions and present the most pertinent pedagogical recommendations to teaching with the CBA.

Conclusion

The classroom observation conducted on the premises of the Algerian secondary school revealed some facts about the genuine challenges that inhibit the proper implementation of the CBA in teaching English. Even though some promising aspects of the CBE were detected in some classes, teachers floundered to teach with competencies. One of the inhibitions that burdens teachers relates strongly to the requirements of the National

Ministry of Education which places a strong emphasis on syllabus achievement with no reference to the quality of learners' performance, objectives' achievement and competencies that relate to the real-life situations of learners. Therefore, you do not give the teacher a banana and then expect him to grow an apple. The quality of learners who lack motivation and autonomy makes the teachers' task of teaching with competencies even harder. Contextual challenges such as old facilities, large classes, busy schedules, challenging textbooks and the lack of audio-visuals affect negatively the teaching-learning situation.

Chapter Six

Analysis of Inspectors' Interview and Discussion of Findings

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Chapter Six

Inspectors ‘Interview: Exploring Opinions and Beliefs

Introduction

The aim of this study is to identify the obstacles that hinder the appropriate implementation of the CBA when teaching English in Algerian secondary schools. This was an attempt to shed light on the various inhibitions that challenge EFL teachers to work at ease and EFL learners to improve their achievements in the language.

6.1. The Interview as a Research Tool

“Needless to say, methods in social science research are an essential part of any research project as they determine its success, validity and reliability” (Alshenqeeti, 2014, p.39). In any descriptive research, the theoretical part needs a practical one in order to be satisfactory. Interviews constitute another form of data collection for this study. According to Kvale (1996, p. 174), an interview is “a conversation, whose purpose is to gather descriptions of the [life-world] of the interviewee” with respect to the interpretation of the meanings of the ‘described phenomena’. In a similar vein, Schostak, (2006, p. 54) added that “an interview is an extendable conversation between partners that aims at having an ‘in-depth information’ about a certain topic or subject, and through which a phenomenon could be interpreted in terms of the meanings interviewees bring to it”.

Furthermore, with the use of non-numerical data, this line of research seeks to explore and describe the ‘quality’ and ‘nature’ of how people behave experience and understand. Further to linking people’s actions to their beliefs, Brown (2004, p. 485) added, “One of the great strengths often cited for qualitative research is its potential for forming hypotheses”. As noted by Dörnyei (2007), qualitative data are most often collected by researchers through

interviews and questionnaires. Unlike the questionnaire, the interview falls under the realm of qualitative research. However, (Kvale, 1996) asserted that interviews are more powerful than questionnaires in eliciting narrative data that allows researchers to investigate people's views in greater depth. Cohen et al. (2007, p. 29) see that interviewing is "a valuable method for exploring the construction and negotiation of meanings in a natural setting".

Four types of interviews are generally acknowledged when it comes to the typology of interviews (Berg, 2007; Edwards and Holland, 2013).

The first is the structured interview whose key feature is that it is mostly organised around a set of predetermined direct questions that require immediate, mostly 'yes' or 'no' type, responses. Thus, in such an interview, the interviewer and interviewees would have very little freedom (Berg, 2007). Accordingly, it can be argued, that this type of interview is similar to the 'self-administered' quantitative questionnaire in both its form and underlying assumptions.

The second type of interview is the open-ended (unstructured) interview. Gubrium and Holstein (2002) pointed out that, unlike the structured interview, this kind of interviewing is an open situation through which greater flexibility and freedom are offered to both sides (i.e. interviewers and interviewees), in terms of planning, implementing and organising the interview content and questions.

The third type is the semi-structured interview, which is a more flexible version of the structured interview as "it allows depth to be achieved by providing the opportunity on the part of the interviewer to probe and expand the interviewee's responses" (Rubin and Rubin,

2005, p. 88). When undertaking such interviews, researchers recommend using a basic checklist that would help cover all relevant areas (i.e. research questions). This checklist allows for in-depth probing while permitting the interviewer to keep the interview within the parameters traced out by the aim of the study.

6.2. Rationale for Using Interviewing

Interviews purported at checking to what extent the teachers are implementing the CBA as a teaching methodology in Algerian English Language classrooms. Furthermore, they served the purpose of this study by offering insights into the CBA challenges from inspectors' perspectives.

Interviews were kept as the last utilised instrument. The data obtained through the teachers' questionnaire and classroom observation served as the basis to formulate the interview guides; a reason that observation results were checked via interviewing and that some interview questions intersect with the questionnaire items. This is of paramount importance to understand the reasons behind facts and responses reached through the two other instruments (classroom observation and the teachers' questionnaire).

6.3. Basic Information on Interviewees

In this study, the interviews were conducted with four secondary school general inspectors of English within the region of the East: two from Jijel, one from Bejaia, and another from Setif. Inspectors are former teachers of English who were promoted after at least ten years of experience in teaching. They often visit both novice and experienced teachers to either give them directions or give them promotions and grades. They are also in charge of supervising, training, and instructing teachers through organising regular meetings, during

which they set the agenda for the school year, introduce new teaching techniques, deliver instructions, and check the overall progress of teachers through scheduled and unscheduled visits to schools. Inspectors' expertise as observers, trainers and evaluators of teachers and learners' practices in the classroom helped gain insights into the inhibitions of the implementation of CBA in secondary school English classes. More importantly, generating a better understanding of these challenges in the classroom confines would allow addressing the most effective solutions that would help overcome the challenges, and ultimately improve the Algerian learners' performance in English at secondary schools.

6.4. Description of the Interview

Dörnyei (2007, p. 136) asserted that "in applied linguistic research most interviews conducted belong to the semi-structured interview' type" in which the interviewee is encouraged to develop the prepared questions in an exploratory manner. Semi-structured interviews offer a compromise between the two extremes: the interviewee can provide prepared questions from the structured type and elaboration of questions and additional information during the process. In this study, the semi-structured interview was designed for general inspectors of English starting with an introduction that explained the study, its objectives and the relevance of their contribution to the study, and then it was followed by eleven questions. Questions were mainly about EFL teachers, learners, the challenges and the pedagogical problems facing the teaching process within the framework of CBA, the inspectors' opinions and suggestions they believe appropriate for such difficulties, and finally, they were invited to share their future prospects about CBA.

6.5. Conducting the Interview

Four general inspectors of English were contacted for the interview and all agreed to participate in the interviews. Before the interview, a guideline of major questions was then sent via email. It was mentioned in the introductory emails that the questions were not fixed and were to serve only as a guideline for the discussion. On the day of the interview appointment, the intent of the interview was explained once again to the interviewees. The participants were informed again that the interview audio would be recorded, and the anonymity of the participants would be respected. In this respect, Brown et.al, (1998) asserted that the participants can be expected to give reasonably honest responses if the researcher openly and honestly communicates the purposes and uses of the research, promises to provide feedback about the results, and assures anonymity.

It is of significance to mention that the two interviews were conducted face-to-face while the two others were via video call.

6.5.1. Face-to-Face Interviews

Interviews were conducted according to participants' availability. Prior to each visit to the field, a schedule featuring the location, date, and hour of each interview was set through email to allow enough time for reflection between interviews (Seidman, 2013). We met each one in an agreed setting which they ensured would be good for interviewing: the first inspector was met in one of the secondary schools while he held a seminar for novice teachers and the second inspector at the University of Jijel. Brown et al. (1998) asserted that such in-person contact had fabulous gains, most noticeably that the interviewer could be a spring of motivation, assist the interviewee in understanding the questions, and even correct misunderstanding- an option furnished by face-to face interviews and missed in other data

collection instruments. Holbrook et al., (2003) added that in such interviews, as opposed to telephone interviews, the researcher plays a double role of interviewer and observer. Besides probing the answers of the participants, the interviewer can also observe their behaviour; hence capturing their emotions and non-verbal cues: such cues and reactions can direct the interviewer. Despite the previously mentioned advantages, one of the basic problems with face-to-face interviews is that they can be a source of bias. In the course of the conducted interviews, it was attempted to haul out spontaneous responses without any sort of bias using appropriate intonation and emphasis. Assessing the answers took no place building on Chartrand and Bargh's remark (1999) about the interviewer's nonverbal expressions which are likely to be infectious. Therefore, cues expressing agreement or disagreement, surprise or satisfaction were avoided.

6.5.2. Online Interviews

According to Cohen et al. (2018), online interviews in all the forms they can take are a good alternative to face-to-face interviews because of their flexibility. Due to the unavailability of some participants in the city of the researcher and time constraints, face-to-face interviews could not be conducted. Instead, online interviews as an alternative to which both inspectors from outside the city of Jijel agreed were suggested. Then, the timing and the most convenient option regarding the online tool that would be used were discussed; it was opted for Messenger.

The interviews lasted between 30 minutes to one hour. Face-to-face interviews went well and lasted more; this might be due to being familiar with both inspectors since the researcher had been under their supervision for almost a decade. Online interviews also went well, but lasted less; this might be related to the potential difference in power between the

interviewer and the interviewee being reduced (James and Busher, 2016) or to the absence of a face that encouraged both parties to feel at ease and address more sensitive topics (Cohen et al., 2018).

6.6. Analysis of the Inspectors' Interview

Q 1: How would you describe the status of English at Algerian secondary schools?

This is in fact an introductory question whose aim is to see whether or not inspectors are satisfied with the current status of English at Algerian secondary schools. This would help the interviewer to have an initial view of inspectors' optimism or pessimism regarding teaching English in Algerian secondary schools.

All of the informants agreed on the growing importance of English at an international scale as the language of development and globalisation; nevertheless, they were not satisfied with the status of English in Algeria. They directly pointed to the problems, challenges, or rather 'bad conditions' in which English is being taught or learned.

In this connection, inspector 1 stated:

In general, the status of English in Algerian secondary schools is not well considered; it is the second foreign language for which little importance is given and which is mainly seen in the insufficient coefficients attributed to the language itself and the number of hours devoted to each stream.

Inspector 2 related the dissatisfaction with the status of English to the Algerian learners who are not motivated and unwilling to learn and find English a difficult language to

learn. She claimed: “The subject “English” is still a difficult matter to teach in our schools as many learners still find it difficult to learn”

After stressing the growing importance of English in Algeria thanks to globalisation and technological developments, inspector 3 drew attention to the fact that English in Algeria failed to deliver competent learners as expected. He stated:

Today, English is becoming more and more important. Its position in the Algerian context is reinforced daily through the effects of globalisation and breakthroughs in information and communication technology. Although its position has not yet achieved the desired objectives, (due to many reasons and circumstances...) English remains a communicative tool which makes the entrance to the age of the globalisation possible...

Inspector 4 attributed the delicate situation of English to the improperly trained new cohort of novice teachers whom he called “textbook worshippers”. He said:

English as a second foreign language in Algeria is being taught by a new cohort of novice teachers without any real training. Therefore, it is taught under very bad conditions. Instead of teaching the programs from the textbooks, most teachers teach the textbooks (textbook worshippers)

Though they all agree on the growing importance of English, the informants expressed their concerns when it comes to the results of the Algerian learners in learning English. These inspectors see that we are far away from achieving the desired objectives of teaching English.

Q2: Who or what to blame when it comes to the learners' underachievement in the language?

As inspectors expressed previously their concerns about the status of English in the Algerian secondary school, they were asked to provide or identify the reasons that account for the Algerian learners' underachievement in English. The second question of the interview invited inspectors to point at the agents, factors, and even elements that are responsible for the learners' underachievement in learning English. It is no wonder that English teaching objectives are not met since learners do not master the language and score badly in both term and national exams.

Inspector 2 expressed concerns about the suitability of CBA to the Algerian schools whereas the answers of inspectors 1, 2, and 3 spared no one of the blame. Inspector 1 attributed the learners' underachievement to the whole educational system, including teachers, students, curriculum, institutions and stakeholders. Similarly, Inspector 3 pointed out that learners' underachievement in the language results from the interplay of some circumstances and reasons. These include, according to him: inappropriate context, syllabi content, teaching strategies, overcrowded classrooms, multi-level classes and lack of training. He also expressed worries about English status in Algerian secondary schools which is still considered a purely theoretical discipline that has a relationship to the real world of the learner. Inspector 4 asserted that:

We are to blame, from the Ministry of education which is responsible for the approach, the syllabi, the textbooks, the recruitment of teachers, supervisors and their training, the time allotment for each level and stream, to the supervisors and teachers who implement the Ministry's policy

According to inspectors, each agent of the educational unity bears a portion of the blame, starting with the Ministry of Education whose stakeholders have failed in constructing a learning environment that optimises the ability of learners to learn English as a foreign language to the learner himself who fails to score well in English. Indeed, the top-down education reform adopted by Algeria has in no way improved the level of its learners. The hastily planned reforms, the poorly written textbooks and syllabi, the inappropriate teachers' training and development, chaotic time allotment, the low English coefficient as well as the unavailability of media are all elements to be considered.

Did not we get any potential lessons from the previous improvement efforts? More importantly, is the CBA reform the magic ring that would untie the Gordian knot of learning English in Algerian schools?

Q3: Do you think the Algerian educational context is appropriate for the implementation of the CBA? Why?

This question is of prominent importance as it required inspectors to explicitly express their opinion with regard to the suitability of the Algerian educational system to the CBA which was implemented as part of the last educational reform. The suitability of the Algerian educational system to the CBA has been a controversial issue since its very first implementation. The debate started when views were divided between opponents and proponents. The results of the interview showed that inspectors 1, 2 and 4 believe that the Algerian educational system is not compatible with the CBA tenets. The inspectors' view was justified by the difficulties faced by teachers in their teaching. The problem of large classes stands out as one of the major challenges that teachers are required to tackle. In this regard, inspector 1 explained the impact of this problem as follows:

The Algerian educational system is not appropriate for the CBA-or at least for the time being- because of the difficulties faced on the ground. Large classes can be one of the points that hinder considerably the application of the approach whose tenet is learner-centeredness, where students take an active role in the process of learning. Besides, it is an action-oriented approach, i.e., learning by doing. This philosophy requires small classes so that every student must take part in the learning process

Inspector 3, however, strongly believes that the Algerian educational context is appropriate for the CBA as it provides opportunities to make the learners' future citizens capable of finding solutions to possible problems. He said:

The competency-based approach stands out in support of learning centered on linking knowledge, know-how and attitudes/behaviour to the reality of the learner. Thus, it provides opportunities to make of the learners future citizens capable of finding solutions to possible problems. So, I do believe that the Algerian educational context is appropriate

To sum up this controversy, it can be pointed out that though the CBA has been built upon strong and valid theories, the gap between theory and practice in education reform is a perennial issue.

Q4: Do you think that all teachers are qualified to implement the CBA?

As an effort to improve the national education quality, the CBA was adopted at all levels and subjects matters in the Algerian educational system. Inspectors were invited to share their views on the extent of implementing the CBA in Algerian secondary schools.

Unexpectedly, all the informants overtly stated that secondary school teachers are not implementing the general principles, pedagogy and management strategies of the CBA in classroom instruction. The teacher is still the knowledge provider who fills in empty vessels with his or her knowledge despite the inspectors' encouragement to apply the CBA. Due to some factors (such as lack of training, or inappropriateness of the approach in some cases) some teachers refrain from using the CBA principles as their methodology in teaching. Inspector 1 justified his point of view as follows:

Teachers have always been encouraged to use and apply the CBA; however, only a small number attempt to do so because of some hiccups. Teachers have not been trained enough to cope with such a pedagogy which, de facto, brought about other problems like the teachers' inability -and sometimes failure- to adopt the new approach appropriately, thus, leading to the students' misunderstanding, irresponsiveness and insensitivity to the language

The inspector's pessimism was clearly expressed through their answers. They expressed deep concerns about the lack of training and its possible negative impacts on teaching practices. Still, the teachers' decision of how and what to teach in the classroom has already been taken by higher levels of the educational system.

Q5: How do EFL secondary school teachers perceive the main changes involved in the implementation of the CBA in class?

There is an abundant knowledge base to inform us that -in L2 learning- teachers play a critical role in student learning and achievement. Equally important, teachers need to be well equipped, trained, and more importantly acquainted with the purposes of various instructional methods. This question tries to see if teachers are aware of the changes implied by the implementation of the CBA. Differently, stated, how do Algerian EFL teachers react to the last CBA educational reforms? Are they “active participants” or “passive bystanders”? Inspectors visit teachers regularly and evaluate their teaching practices as well as their learners’ engagement in learning; thus, they are able to make reliable judgments about whether or not teachers have embraced the changes advanced by the Ministry of Education as part of the last educational reforms.

The results of the interview showed that the majority of the teachers are floundering in implementing the CBA tenets in their everyday teaching practices. Inspectors indicated that teachers who did not receive any training were still using the traditional product-based methods of teaching which were in the opposite epistemological direction from the principles of the CBA which is more process-oriented. A number of contextual challenges harden the teachers’ task when it comes to teaching.

Inspector 1 said

At the very beginning, when the CBA was introduced in Algeria in 2003, teachers faced great difficulties in its application; nevertheless, much is still to be done when it comes to handling large classes and mixed abilities classes which require special skills and knowledge

from the teachers like differentiation, group and pair work, classroom management and the like

Inspector 2 drew attention to the category of teachers who have nurtured negative attitudes towards this approach and resisted any kind of change. He suggested that the avoidance of implementing the CBA reforms might be due to a lack of confidence in their ability to do so successfully.

Inspector 3 commented on this:” those (teachers) who master the notion of this approach are certainly working at ease. But the issue becomes complicated with those who stick to classical methodologies where the learners are passive recipients of knowledge ...”

Inspector 4 referred to the efforts made by both teachers and inspectors in implementing the CBA appropriately, yet little impact was made. He asserted, “We cannot bring any change, we are also applicators. We try our best to give tips about methodology, pedagogy and didactics without really having an efficient impact”

The data collected regarding this question indicated that the inspectors agreed that not all the teachers work with the CBA at ease. Although teaching methods are very important and can enhance or prevent teaching effectiveness, no method can be recommended for every context. Different methods are appropriate for different contexts.

Q6: What impedes teaching with the CBA appropriately?

An educational reform is a rewarding yet a challenging process. In the Algerian educational context, EFL teachers are required to rely on the CBA as a means of instruction;

however, informants pointed out in their answers that this is not the case. Therefore, it is high time to enquire about what inhibits the implementation of this approach within the confines of the Algerian secondary school. Commenting on this question, the interviewed inspectors referred to several challenges and hindrances that confront teachers.

Inspector 1 stated, “Some of the greatest challenges that face the application of the CBA are large classes, students’ low involvement and achievement, classroom management, and the choice of materials”

Inspector 2 referred to:” Large classes, absence of necessary material, the will to accept the change, and the use of new strategies related to active learning and responding to the 21st-century teaching and learning process”

Inspector 3 listed the following challenges:

- “Lack of preparation and training (at the university level first, and second in the field of teaching as a profession)
- Syllabi content: some suggested topics do not comply with the interests/needs of both teachers and learners alike.
- Absence of language labs.
- Insufficient materials (ICTs)
- Multi-level classes
- Learners’ socio-cultural background...”

Inspector 4, believed that teachers need to be provided with “good objectives, good and simple curricula, good textbooks and an efficient training”.

Expectedly, the interviewed inspectors referred to several problems inherent in English classes; such problems have turned into challenges facing the teachers. In fact, these problems are all interrelated and affect both the teacher and the learners. Some of the problems relate to the teaching context, these include the large classes with mixed abilities which lead to the learners' passivity, lack of motivation and the development of negative attitudes to learning the language. To make things worse, all these unfavourable teaching circumstances add to the burden of the teacher when he finds himself dealing with large groups of students with socio-cultural backgrounds, not to mention the classroom management problems that might arise during any given moment in his class.

Other problems relate to the teachers themselves, their fear of change and their reluctance to apply the guidelines of the reforms. There is a given category of teachers who protect themselves against the winds of change and prefer going back to old teaching practices or fluctuating and adjusting their teaching methodologies to their own beliefs and convictions. This reluctance can also be attributed to the top-down reforms in which teachers felt they were no longer important agents of change. Hence, teacher resistance is a perennial phenomenon that all school reforms have had to deal with.

Inspectors did relate a set of challenges to the educational policy of the country as a whole. These include mainly the syllabus, its objectives, textbook design and the absence of the necessary materials. More important is the absence of adequate teacher training in what constitutes the CBA principles, which has unfortunately resulted in a kind of teaching that was solely based on language content than on communicative activities.

To sum up, it is believed that all these challenges are no surprise for teachers and inspectors as well since they had been part of the Algerian educational system before the CBA reform. Embarking on new reforms without dealing with the already existing problems of a given country will simply end badly, no matter how good are the guidelines of the planned reform, the chosen approach and no matter how good or talented are the teachers.

Q7: Teachers often do complain about large classes, inappropriate syllabi, the lack of sample CBA lesson plan and other inhibitions. Do you think that the teachers' complaints are legitimate?

In the previous question, inspectors shared the major challenges that, according to them, stand between the EFL teacher and the successful implementation of the CBA. This follow-up question invites inspectors to reflect upon the teachers' complaints about the CBA obstacles and inhibitions. These include mainly large classes, inappropriate syllabi, and the lack of sample CBA lesson plans and others. Two of the interviewed inspectors considered the complaints advanced by teachers legitimate while the other two inspectors did not.

Inspectors who believe that teachers have the right to complain about some CBA hindrances advanced some specific reasons. Inspector 1 asserted

It goes without saying that some of the teachers' complaints about some inhibitions are legitimate when trying to apply the CBA: large classes have always been a real burden to any teacher; inappropriate syllabi imposed by the Ministry of Education; and the inability of teachers to recourse, sometimes, to extracurricular activities

Inspector 4 added,” Unfortunately, they are. The major complaint and hindrance is the inexistence of a clear policy to cater for the teachers’ needs as far as training is concerned”

Conversely, the two other interviewed inspectors see that the teachers’ complaints about the contextual inhibitions of the CBA are not based on strong grounds. Their opinions were supported by the following arguments. First, large classes are not an inhibition for teaching with competencies. Second, teachers are regularly supported with necessary documents related to CBA: these include sample lessons and unit plans. In this respect, inspector 3 pointed out: “the number of students in one class has considerably decreased compared to the number of students, let’s say, 15 years ago. Nowadays, the average number does not exceed 25/30 which is quite acceptable”.

In the same vein, inspector 4 added, “I sincerely think that large classes are just a lame excuse. There is evidence that CBA is being successfully implemented in China or India where classes are much larger than the Algerian”

Though inspectors explicitly gave their opinions concerning the legitimacy of the teachers’ complaints, some concessions were made. For instance, inspector 1 asserted that teachers are, more often than not, de-motivated and reluctant to take the initiative in order to overcome some of their problems. In addition to relying on “ready-made” lesson plans, inspector 1 asserted that no class exceeds 25 to 30 students. He adds that teachers are often supplied with lesson plans and documents related to the CBA.

Q8: In light of what has been discussed earlier, I would like to invite you to reflect upon the effect of these challenges on both teachers and learners.

With the aim of uplifting the status of English as the international language of globalisation, Algerian educational authorities embarked on the CBA reform with enthusiasm providing all the necessary financial and human resources to ensure the success of this reform. Views were divided into pessimistic and optimistic towards the implementation of this approach. On the one hand, the pessimistic views argued that this approach does not differ from the previously applied approaches in that it is just a change for the sake of change. They added that the Algerian educational context is not a favourable one for the implementation of this approach. On the other hand, the optimistic views asserted that the CBA will certainly improve English learning and teaching in Algeria as it is drawn from strong and valid learning theories responding to the requirements of education of the twenty-first century. They went further in considering the CBA as the panacea to the failure of Algerian students in learning English. Now after more than a decade of teaching and learning under the CBA, it is high time to see what inspectors have to say about the CBA challenges.

One area of agreement for all the interviewed inspectors in this question is that the challenges and hindrances that confront teachers are exercising negative effects on both teachers and learners. The data collected from this question showed that inspectors are deeply worried about English language teaching in general and the effects of the “CBA hasty implementation” in particular, as inspector 2 stated. They also referred to the new roles assumed by both teachers and learners which are not being respected, especially on the part of learners who are weak, passive and more often lack motivation to learn English. Teachers find themselves in a dilemma: when they focus their efforts on finishing the syllabus, the purpose of learning and teaching English is lost and learners will ultimately fail to communicate in the language. Additionally, the burden of coping with de-motivated and mixed-abilities classes

refrains the teachers from implementing the CBA since the latter is not suitable for similar teaching contexts.

Inspector 4 reported that efforts now should be directed to finding solutions to remedy the situation because, in spite of all the efforts made so far, both the teaching practice that complies with the CBA and the Algerian learners' performance in English have not improved yet.

Q9: Do teachers need to be trained? If yes, how?

The quality of education is directly linked to how well teachers are prepared for teaching (UNESCO, 2005). Teacher training and professional development are seen as central mechanisms for the improvement of teachers' content knowledge and their teaching skills and practices in order to meet high educational standards (Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin, 1995). Believing in the importance of the teachers' training, inspectors are invited in this question to reflect upon the current teacher training and professional development situation in Algeria and to suggest how teachers should be trained. It is true that some teachers have already received training on how to teach with competencies while all teachers without exception are regularly being trained through in-service training seminars but inspectors are asked about the necessity of providing more training for teachers in how to implement the CBA appropriately.

In this context, inspector 1 stated

Teachers should be trained to be able to teach with the CBA. This can be done through in-service training sessions, seminars with the inspector, webinars, peer observation, coaching and mentoring, and

teachers' self-formative periods mainly by reading specialised pedagogical books. Inspectors should give more priority and time to teachers. Peer observation should be encouraged among teachers so that they can enhance their proficiency level in the subject matter. They should be intrinsically motivated to look for appropriate solutions to their problems by reading pedagogical books and articles and consulting specialists

Inspector 2 said, "Yes, they do need continuing training through half days training sessions, seminars, peer teaching, observations and coordinating sessions with schools"

Inspector 3 added, "Teachers need to be trained regularly and intensively before and during service...in addition to self/continuous professional development: a concept that teachers are always encouraged embracing"

Inspector 4 asserted, "Of course they do, mainly the freshly appointed ones. Teachers supervisors need good training in order to update their knowledge and get acquainted with the latest techniques of training, supervising and mentoring"

As expected, the interviewed inspectors agreed on the necessity of providing teachers with more training in the CBA. Inspectors' answers to this question indicated that not all the teachers are well qualified and prepared to implement the CBA: the need for an urgent and efficient training programme was stressed. This need might be justified by the fact that not all teachers were trained in teaching with competencies. More importantly, for those who

received the training, it was theoretical more than practical because of constraints of time and resources.

Inspectors insisted on the importance of developing the right teaching skills, techniques and practices that relate to teaching by competencies. They also believed in the importance of the responsibility assigned to them in training teachers. In fact, the interviewed inspectors assumed their prominent role in training teachers as they referred to the different means and techniques they used to train both novice and experienced teachers. These include training sessions organised by inspectors, seminars, webinars, coaching and mentoring.

Inspectors asserted that the implementation of peer observation was receiving much attention in other countries. They suggested that this notion should be encouraged among teachers so that they could enhance their proficiency level in the subject matter.

Two informants referred to the concept of self-professional development: a concept that he found quite absent or rather neglected by the Algerian EFL teacher. Teachers- according to inspectors- should be intrinsically motivated to look for appropriate solutions to their problems by reading pedagogical books and articles and consulting specialists.

Q10: What needs to be done to overcome the aforementioned challenges?

This question targets the core of this study which is addressing the most effective solutions that would overcome the challenges of the CBA and allow Algerian secondary school learners to achieve proficiency in English. Going through the inspectors' answers regarding the inhibitions faced by EFL teachers proves that teaching English in Algeria does not feel good and that the CBA reform is not working as it was planned.

In this respect, inspector 1 asserted, “We need to amend the Algerian school”. This answer has a lot of meaning as the inspector believes in the total amendment of the educational system and not in its partial constituents: this awareness is attributed to the cause-effect relation that bonds the components of the Algerian educational system. For instance, asking a teacher to rely on ICT in instructing his learners without training him or at least providing him with the necessary equipment to do so is irrelevant. The reason why this inspector called for a global reform for the Algerian school is that he knows that solving only one problem does not necessarily result in any improvement since the other related problems will persist. Therefore, suggesting the amendment of the Algerian school as a whole reflects a holistic approach towards the problem-solving situation of the CBA reform.

Inspector 2 stated, “First, continuous professional development should be implemented. Second, teachers should employ appropriate interactive strategies that are well planned and help learners make good academic progress according to Education guidelines”

In an attempt to provide solutions that would remedy the current situation of teaching English in Algerian secondary schools, inspector 3 pointed

Appropriate/efficient training (by experts in the domain), providing adequate materials (equip teachers, students and schools with necessary tools...), fostering the importance of the language in modern life..., reconsidering the number of sessions per week, elaborating syllabi regarding needs and socio-cultural and economic background...

Inspector 4 advocated:

More freedom and autonomy should be granted to teachers to cater to their learner's needs. I cannot conceive of the idea of having ONE syllabus and ONE textbook for all the learners in a very large country with diverse cultural and social backgrounds

Inspectors attempted to provide solutions for the current challenges that face teachers while implementing the CBA; some solutions were partial while others were global. On the one hand, three of the interviewed inspectors stressed that some aspects of the Algerian educational system needed to be amended in order to allow the CBA reform to yield its previously stated goals. Inspectors suggested that both training and continuous professional development should be enhanced, and more importantly, they must be put in the hands of experts in the domain. Teachers should not confine themselves to only the theoretical knowledge of the CBA but they rather need to be able to implement appropriate interactive strategies that are well planned and help learners make good academic progress.

Teachers should feel free when it comes to catering to their learners' needs as these needs vary from one socio-cultural context to another. Then, the importance of English as a foreign language should also be fostered among Algerian learners; this can be done by motivating learners and reconsidering the time allocation and coefficient of English as well.

Providing adequate material for both teachers and learners is an important aspect that requires special and urgent attention on the part of the Algerian educational authorities. In addition to materials development, elaborating syllabi that account for the socio-cultural background and economic needs of the country was strongly recommended as one of the

inspectors was unable to conceive of the idea of having a unified syllabus and textbook for all the learners in a large country that is well-known for its cultural and social diversity.

Q11: Can you share with us your convictions about the future of the CBA in Algeria?

After suggesting some solutions that might overcome challenges faced by EFL teachers while implementing CBA, one might wonder about the future of CBA in Algerian secondary schools. How can the responsible authorities solve these problems? How can policymakers design solutions thanks to which the learners would become motivated to learn EFL in an integrative way? What makes learners autonomous and responsible for their learning? How should teachers be trained? Which solution can be provided to design syllabi that go hand in hand with the learners' needs, different backgrounds and interests? What can motivate teachers to keep up with world development using technologies and teaching methods?

The last question of the interview seeks to explore the prospects of the CBA as a teaching approach in Algerian secondary schools. Views varied between opponents and proponents of the continuity of the CBA as a teaching approach in the Algerian school. Two of the interviewed inspectors believe in the success of the CBA but only if some changes are brought to the Algerian educational system. These changes concern mainly changing the paradigm towards teaching for teachers and towards learning for learners. They include also changing the teachers' attitudes towards the reforms implemented by the Algerian educational authorities. In this connection, inspector 1 stated:

As far as I am concerned, I believe that we need to reform our schools and change the paradigm. Teaching is no longer viewed as dead facts which we provide our students with. The universal tendency is now

learning by doing, as John Dewey put it so well. It is also the constructivism theory. This pedagogy cannot be implemented and will not prove efficient if learners are not solicited by being the real actors and by being responsible for their own learning. The CBA is the approach that can respond to such a need if we bring some changes to our educational system

In the same context, inspector 2 added:

CBA has been adopted by the Algerian Ministry of National Education as part of the national educational reform, a way to focus on knowledge and assessment of this knowledge. It will be successful provided one believes in and is convinced by the changes that are happening in our educational system

Conversely, an inspector's pessimism was clearly expressed as he strongly disagreed with the success of the CBA in Algeria for both the time being and for the future. What he believes in was summarised by using the word "failure". He said, "It is and will remain a nice failure"

One of the inspectors preferred to leave an open answer to this question as he simply left it to time saying, "Wait and see".

6.7. Interpretation of the Main Results of the Inspectors' Interview

The aim of interviewing inspectors was to get insights into the obstacles, problems and challenges that face EFL teachers while working with the CBA. It also tried to identify the

inspectors' attitudes towards those challenges and their impacts on teachers' practices within the confines of the classroom. More importantly, the interview attempted to collect the most effective solutions and suggestions the inspectors believe would remedy the current teaching situation with respect to the recently adopted teaching methodology.

Despite the tremendous efforts exerted by the Algerian Ministry of Education to improve the teaching-learning process of English, the last educational reform introducing the CBA as the sole method of instruction fails to deliver as expected. At the outset, there is a need to admit the bitter fact that a problem in teaching English as a foreign language in Algeria is faced. This problem is manifest in the acrimonious fact that the outcomes of the teaching-learning process are still below expectations in both regular term and official national exams.

Results showed that the inspectors were not satisfied with the current status of English because of the current conditions under which English is being taught and learned. These conditions have the deepest impact on learners who fail in achieving proficiency in the foreign language. Though inspectors expressed deep concerns about the status of English in Algerian schools, they did not point fingers at teachers for this. Instead, they pointed to other aspects and circumstances: these include the hastily planned reforms, the poorly written textbooks and syllabi, the inappropriate teachers' training and development, chaotic time allotment, the low English coefficient as well as the unavailability of media. The accumulation of these hindrances is affecting the teachers' practices within the classroom and the learners' performance in the foreign language as well.

The top-down education system reform adopted by Algeria has in no way improved the level of its learners. Speaking about the reforms led to questioning the conditions under which it should be implemented because the CBA has its own merits and proved very fruitful when applied in other countries such as China, France and Canada. A huge gap emerged between the theoretical tenets of the CBA and its actual application on the ground. The general atmosphere of the CBA reform was somehow questionable: teachers, inspectors, pedagogues and researchers were skeptical about the success of the reform. Once applied, teachers found themselves in a critical situation; therefore, most reacted negatively. Some were unable to embrace the change while others simply did not want to be part of it.

Algerian EFL teachers possess the knowledge of the CBA as a teaching approach: they are quite aware and qualified to assume their new roles. They had to draw on their professional skills in subject matter, methodology, decision-making and in social skills to enable the learners to be competent achievers in the foreign language; still, this does not mean that they work confidently with the new approach. In addition to being put aside when applying the last reform and the limited training they received, teachers are very often obliged to cope with large classes of mixed abilities and different socio-cultural backgrounds. The results of the interview showed that there exist a number of contextual and non-contextual inhibitions to CBA implementation: these are in line with hypothesis 2 which states that teachers find working with the CBA difficult because learners have a weak background in the language and do not assume their roles in the learning process. Therefore, no matter how competent is any teacher; accomplishing his work will become indeed a challenging task in such circumstances. This opens the discussion to the form and quality of the teachers' training which tends to focus on the development of theoretical disciplinary knowledge revolving around fundamental teaching methodology, educational psychology and school legislation

and without any practical or rather effective practical reference to the specific teaching skills of the CBA tenets.

Conclusion

Teachers and students represent the most crucial parts of any educational system. The answers to the interviews on the difficulties that inhibit the CBA implementation and affect learners' performance would lead us to conclude that inspectors are not satisfied with the current situation of teaching English in Algerian secondary schools. The interviewed inspectors are aware of the importance of the teachers' attitudes to the reform and the specifications of the Algerian educational system which are, for the moment, not compatible with the CBA principles. The inspectors also believe that it is the teachers' task to create learning environments that target the real-life situations learners might encounter in their daily life and problem-solving situations that allow learners to construct knowledge and manifest it in measurable and observable competencies. Though the ministry neither carried out an evaluation of the current education system nor shared with the public any research showing that the proposed reforms will result in the improvement of the education system, teachers and inspectors need to be held responsible for the learners' performance. The primary concern recognised by the interviewed inspectors sets in addressing solutions that would remedy the current EFL situation and hence enhance learners' performance in the language, and not in finding an entity to throw blame at. According to the inspectors, confronting these challenges entails diagnosing them at the beginning in order to address them properly and propose feasible and evidence-based solutions. They also stressed the importance of the quality of the teachers' training and development programme and raising the awareness of stakeholders of maintaining transparency in applying new reforms. Finally, they believed that engaging teachers as important agents of any planned change have become primordial for undertaking

any educational change. Though all the promising indicators of teaching English with competencies are scarce and sometimes absent from the Algerian educational context, inspectors are optimistic but they warned against the reform's failure in establishing a good and favourable teaching context for English. The next chapter will provide some pedagogical implications for successfully implementing CBE in Algerian secondary schools.

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Chapter Seven

Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

Introduction

Education reforms have been around ever since schools began. Nevertheless, when these reforms become a change for the sake of change, all the efforts would be in vain and the main goals of reforms would be soon lost. Based on the findings derived from this study and supported by previous research studies, focus on the following pedagogical implications is recommended to make TEFL in Algerian secondary schools competency-oriented. Suggestions and recommendations will not target the CBA as an approach because no matter how good or bad is a teaching approach, weaknesses and strengths are to be noticed in different parts of the world. The focus will be on how to improve TEFL in Algerian secondary schools in the aftermath of the last educational reform. In other words, the solutions of this study are to be used for enhancing students' learning outcomes as well as teachers' performance in teaching English.

7.1. For the Present Reform

In order to better implement the CBA and create an appropriate environment for the teaching/learning process, the following is suggested:

7.1.1. Implications for Policy Makers

- An efficient funding scheme to assist schools in meeting the CBA demands: schools need special financial assistance for a better implementation of the new approach. Schools must be provided with the necessary materials and new information and communication technologies so that the teachers can get through the new approach appropriately. Classrooms should be provided with teaching aids and tools. It is

important for Algerian policymakers to allocate sufficient budgets for schools periodically so they can reach the ambitious vision of the CBA reform that they set in 2003.

- Problems need be dealt with swiftly once located by relying on experts in the field and recent studies and the recommendations and solutions they offer. The Algerian educational authorities can choose from a plethora of curriculum studies, teaching strategies, textbook evaluations, materials adaptation studies, critical competencies development, and teachers' training evaluation those experts offer.
- Opening transparent and current channels of communication between stakeholders and teachers which will possibly minimise the effects of teachers' resistance and negative attitudes towards the reform.
- Planning regular and proper evaluation of policy reforms to measure the actual implementation of the change through strategies such as action research.
- Curriculum should be reviewed and adapted according to the learners' needs and interests.
- Developing authentic teaching materials having linguistic, cultural and pedagogic relevance, on both a national and an international scale, and more importantly that expose learners to real-life problems.

- More extra resources and incentives need to be made available for teachers as well to inspire them to take ownership of the desired innovations.
- The Algerian administrative system should embrace a democratic approach as regards reform implementations: encouraging teacher autonomy and individual initiatives could be a good starting point.
- To free teachers from imposed methods and give them freedom of how and what to teach.

7.1.2. Implications for Teachers

- Using authentic materials that are appropriate to their level of language development, respond to the learners' needs and interests, and finally connect them to their reality outside the classroom.
- Creating an adequate classroom environment to promote the students' attitude towards learning EFL.
- Refraining from using traditional forms of assessment and heading to competency-based forms of assessment.
- Teachers are invited to make the best use of the available audio and visual aids and modern methods of teaching during the teaching of English.

- Teachers are invited to make a reasonable effort to encourage students to use English as a medium of communication not only in the classroom but also at home as well.
- It is true that the Algerian Ministry of Education has been engaged in training teachers, but it is high time teachers felt the obligation of developing themselves as teachers. Instead of lamenting, they can start making efforts to read and search since the internet is the source of an infinite of research and the latest developments in the educational field.

7.1.3. Implications for Methodology

- Since the major aim of language learning is enabling students to be communicatively competent in the language, the possibility of using a communicative or an eclectic approach should be considered.
- Courses and syllabi can be modified to meet students' needs, interests, level, and more importantly their language profile.
- Efforts should be made to promote speaking, listening, reading and writing of the English language in the classroom.
- Standards of assessment must be reconsidered. Assessment should be more objective and concerned with forming qualified students of high caliber.

- To promote English as a language not as a subject by making learners aware of the objectives and importance of studying English as the language of technology, scientific research, and globalisation. The importance of learning EFL to the future career of the students should be highlighted with different successful examples.
- It is important to adapt the syllabus, either by slimming it down which is too long for third year classes who study English to sit for the Baccalaureate Exam or by adding some lessons for first and second years which the teacher may judge relevant to them.
- Enabling learners to be active and autonomous through teaching them learning skills explicitly to enable them to participate effectively in knowledge construction and production. For instance, they should be taught stages of knowledge construction which include observation, asking pertinent questions, emission and testing of hypotheses, problem-solving and restructuring old knowledge.
- In order to motivate learners and encourage them to be responsible for their learning, they need to know the objectives and the competencies of each lesson in task-based terms.

7.1.4. Implications for Training and Professional Development

- There is an urgent need for efficient professional training. Continuous seminars will be very helpful for teachers to understand and apply the CBA appropriately. In addition, inspectors should go to schools and attend lessons to see if this approach is applied adequately.

- The benefits of providing effective feedback for teachers on what is happening in their classrooms cannot be underestimated. It may prove useful for inspectors to collect feedback from everyone involved in the implementation of the curriculum, namely teachers and learners. The feedback could measure whether the curriculum and materials are suitably challenging or not and whether all valid comments and suggestions are implemented.
- Regular monitoring and evaluation of teachers: teachers need regular feedback on their classroom practices as they learn to adapt to the changes required by the new approach.
- Teachers' curriculum knowledge and skills need to be frequently developed and updated to keep up with the latest teaching trends.
- Training inspectors by giving them more access to foreign training courses, who in turn would train teachers nation-wide and ensure continuous training and inform them about any other changes in the curriculum.
- There should be regular language professional development seminars for teachers to help them pinpoint their shortcomings and offer plenty of opportunities to meet other teachers and exchange personal experiences about the application of CBA in their classes.
- Inspectors are invited to consider the importance of improving their teachers' knowledge of English language methodology and using computers as well because this knowledge has become indispensable for any teacher.

- Ensure occasional in-service training workshops for the teachers who are ready to devote some of their free time to learn more about the evolution of their subject as well as CBA.
- The pre-and in-service training programmes should train teachers to promote their autonomy in order to act responsibly to the needs of their learners. Teachers also need to possess digital competencies and online skills; they or their learners will possibly meet in online environments.

7.1.5. Implications for Parents and Community Members

- Parents are invited to encourage their children to use English at home and in class. They should also try to buy their children different English books and magazines, especially English newspapers and make sure that children read them on a regular basis.
- Parents are invited to have close and regular contact with the teachers so they can inquire about the study, class performance and even the behaviour of their children.
- School administrators are advised to organise periodic seminars and workshops for students and their parents, to promote positive attitudes toward the English language.

7.2. For Future Reforms

A treasure trove of good advice on examples to follow and pitfalls to avoid for embarking on future reforms is brought together.

7.2.1. Learning from Previous Mistakes

First, Algerian authorities need to learn lessons from their previous reforms, and more precisely from their previous mistakes. Flaws, inadequacies and shortcomings of a previous reform should work as a reference to departing from if a new reform is planned. An example within this context relates to the CBA reform which proves that a good teaching method is not good for every educational system. Reform projects need to give change agents the opportunity to investigate and reflect on what they have achieved by taking part in the project evaluation and of course by allowing experts to introduce the latest theories and updates in the field of education in general and school change in particular.

7.2.2. Avoiding Inconsiderate Top-down Decision-Making

Despite the continuous education reform efforts made by Algeria since the eve of independence, their impact on overall levels of student academic achievement has not been as successful as anticipated. After the eve of independence, Algeria was in a critical situation that needed urgent measures to be taken in all life spheres: Arabization was one of the educational measures taken at that time. Later on, it was proved that education should not be tied to identity and soon Arabization was condemned to failure because such a decision had been made for purely political purposes. It is true that education should be aligned with the general policy of a given country, but this becomes harmful when education is used for political purposes. Instead of supporting the visions they have in mind, Algerian stakeholders should focus their efforts on providing conditions and support to sustain successful implementation. Decisions in education matters are usually not constrained by research evidence, but rather by media and general public opinion and in the worst cases by political parties or a particularly powerful interest group. For any planned reform, tensions between

political drivers need to be resolved early on so that reforms are inspired by pedagogic principles informed by the latest theories in research and best educational practices.

7.2.3. Recognising Teachers as Major Agents of Change

The prevailing current model for understanding school change is one that sees the teacher as a recipient of school change. Hence, teachers' participation in reforms should not be restricted only to recipients and implementers; it is high time they were put at the center of school change. Meanwhile, teachers' initiatives, creativity, and feelings of security would flourish if they were given an opportunity to assimilate or reject elements of innovation. I believe that teachers are the most important participant in school change. If they reject change for any reason, the reform would never be translated into patterns of behaviour and belief, and would ultimately remain ink on paper.

7.2.4. Building Trust and Engagement

Building trust is not easily achieved and takes time, especially when change is planned. Building trust between the different participants of school change can be likened to a cyclic process of a chain, if a part is broken, all the other parts will be affected. Therefore, it is important to work on ensuring the acceptance of people such as head teachers and others who are in a position to obstruct changes in curriculum, methods, and teacher training, get involved with the same people over the lifespan of the project, getting to know them well and building trust. On the one hand, authorities need to open the game in such a way that teachers do not feel the imposition of a reform alien to them. This alienation results in either poor instrumentation of large curricula and waste of public funds or wide gaps between official curricula and observed curricula in classrooms. On the other hand, educational changes do not happen overnight; therefore, whether we face a top-down or bottom-up approach to

educational reform, educational authorities, teachers and even parents are responsible: if a sense of trust and engagement is built and thus the opposition and negative attitudes towards the reform will be extremely reduced. It is believed that mutual trust and active reciprocal of all change agents is therefore an important ingredient of the success of the change.

One might wonder how trust is built: trust is built by transparency and the creation of a space for dialogue between decision-makers and language policy experts before key policy decisions are taken. If this does not happen, the chain of trust might be broken, a gap may be created, misunderstandings and conflicts may arise and result in nurturing negative attitudes, low self-esteem, and change resistance.

7.2.5. Allowing Adequate Time for Change

Educational reforms are not implemented overnight: careful planning, efforts, time, patience, and careful consideration of the different components of the educational scene of the country are all interplaying elements. It is advisable to allow time for reflective collaboration on experience and newly acquired skills and knowledge, and provide in-school follow-up to in-service training. This can involve ensuring that educational authorities do not underestimate the length of time which will be needed to design or redesign a course if a new approach is to be implemented. A year can be seen as a long time, but successful education reform often takes years.

The causes and effects of the different elements of school change can be seen and evaluated this is why time is needed. Allowing adequate time for planning, design and implementation provides a window of opportunity that would help educational authorities, syllabus designers and implementers become aware of what an educational change means in

practice and allow them to take steps, measures and continuous evaluation that would solve issues arising in the process of educational change.

7.2.6. Introducing Pilot Projects and Continuous Evaluation

The discomfort and mistrust that characterised the CBA reform could have been avoided if the Algerian stakeholder thought earlier of conducting pilot studies and then shared them with the different change agents. Pilot projects can help build consensus, allay fears, and overcome resistance by evaluating proposed reforms before they are fully introduced. Besides, the need for baseline evaluation in the opening stages of a project is crucial because the early problems are identified, the early they are solved. It is equally important to review and evaluate reform processes periodically after full implementation to know how well the reform working is and what needs to be done, added, or altered.

Teachers and school leaders are more likely to accept school change if they know that they will be able to express their concerns and provide advice on making adjustments: they will develop a sense of responsibility and even be fully devoted to it in case of challenges. In the same context, it is not a shame to admit that a given method is not appropriate, or that the new textbook does not respond to the learners' needs, or even call for a moratorium of the reform in the worst cases: more damage will be caused if failure has not recognised or admitted.

7.2.7. Supporting the Reform Financially

Does money really matter for carrying change? Personally, I believe it does matter in improving school and students' performance and it is a form of investing for students' success. The Algerian CBA educational reform proved that changing the teaching method is

not the magical ring that would improve learners' performance: reform is a project that requires considerable human as well as financial support to be carried out successfully. A pertinent example, in this case, could be the teachers' ability to afford to develop appropriate resources to reflect on their practice, carry out classroom research projects, network, and attend training courses, meetings, and conferences.

7.2.8. Creating a Suitable Environment for Change

Reform is a process that requires creating a collaborative and professional environment for change implementers who are people in the first place and then comes policies. The emotional and physical comfort of trainers and trainees should not be underestimated. For instance, regular interactions help build trust and raise awareness of the concerns of others, creating a climate of compromise and comfort.

Supporting infrastructure with enough skilled people to provide ongoing support to all schools can be a good starting point for the Algerian government.

7.2.9. Respecting the Context

They are the country's properties that decide which, why, when, and how to apply reforms. Identifying contextual drivers for change is vital before undertaking any design process because the success of a pedagogically solid approach in one country does not guarantee its success in another one. Algeria's peculiarities of its rich linguistic, cultural and social context should be taken into consideration when planning reforms. Additionally, it is important for stakeholders to take into consideration the local peculiarities and specifications of such a large country like Algeria by having, for instance, a regional strategy for curriculum design in light of the factors existing in Algeria and how these factors change, such as culture,

religion, and the ideology before embarking on new educational reforms. This is advisable and less stressful than trying to impose alien procedures which may not be acceptable or appropriate to the local-rich context.

7.2.10. Assigning Clear Roles and Responsibilities

Reforms need to take into account the respective responsibilities of different players. Some reforms may only be possible if responsibilities are well aligned or allocated. Educational reform is a project that requires the right person in the right place at the right at each stage; thus, the choice of trainers, textbook writers, syllabus designers, leadership and, management constitute an important ingredient for their success. It is also important for educational entities and individuals who are concerned with change to understand that reform in the school system is a process that is better dealt with by experts in their fields: it is better not to mix roles, monopolise them or worse give them to the wrong people. For change to take place effectively, the responsibilities and roles of all those involved need to be set out and communicated so that if an action is demanded, it will be done quickly and effectively.

7.2.11. Being Transparent and Objective

When speaking of educational reform, one speaks of changes and transformations in the school system, including educational philosophy, student policies, curriculum, pedagogy, didactics, organisation, and management, not to mention human and financial resources. All these factors and elements of this change should be identified in a transparent and clear way so the way is paved toward success. It is important to understand the object, intention, the model of the educational reform, the complexity of implementation, the barriers that can prevent the attainment of goals, and more importantly to consider sharing them with the ones

concerned. I believe the more we are transparent with ourselves than with the other agents of change, the more we can work together to achieve success.

7.2.12. Keeping Materials Practical and Useful

The choice of materials should not be taken for granted: practical and useful materials are no less important than the methodology adopted in teaching as they are directed at learners and thus, have to respond genuinely to their needs and interests. Equally important is the knowledge to use this material in accordance with the learners' needs and backgrounds.

7.2.13. Using Appropriate Technology

Although Algeria has placed considerable emphasis on the importance of developing a national ICT strategy for education and training, it is still behind. It is high time for the Algerian Ministry of Education to start working seriously and equally- on building the infrastructure for enabling the ICT environment: the initiatives which had been adopted in an attempt to improve the quality of teaching and learning have been characterised either by scarcity or by regionalism. Algeria needs to invest in its youth who will be able to lead the way in this never-stopping technologised world.

7.2.14. Ensuring Continuing Access to Decision Making

It is not possible to generate improvement in schools against the wishes of educators who are considered the primary implementers and agents of change. This can be done through informal and informal networking. Our country should take into consideration the strategy of setting up a joint steering committee to ensure continuing access to decision-making. This helps to build confidence in teachers, gain their trust and thus eliminate the negative attitudes the teachers nurtured in reforms implementation. There are different ways to do this. First,

teachers may appoint delegates or project managers who will work as a direct channel of communication between the highest educational authorities in the country and the teachers who represent the main actors and drivers of change too. Second, the link between teachers and higher education authorities in the country can be made through inspectors. Strong engagement, mutual trust, respect, extensive dialogue, sharing ideas and accepting criticism are expected from both parties to ensure quality education and lead ultimately to a successful and purposeful educational change.

7.2.15. Encouraging Collaboration and Working Constructively with Partners

Building educational partnerships is equally important as building economic ones. Working constructively with partners on both a national and international scale helps to share experiences and gain insights into reforms. Working constructively both nationally and internationally means that the partnerships are serving the needs and utilising the most valuable strengths of each partner. In other words, our country can wisely choose what to take and what to put aside from educational partnerships: our culture can be preserved and educational strategies will be adapted according to the specifications of the Algerian educational system.

I think that the role of educational partnerships should not be underestimated: schools, families, partnership communities, and even countries all over the world should work collaboratively to make educational change a successful and fruitful journey.

7.2.16. Relying on Experts in the Field

Training programmes should be devised with the collaboration of inspectors, experienced teachers and university EFL lecturers. Encompassing both the theoretical and

practical knowledge for an educational change process means that all its aspects had been carefully studied so that success is ultimately guaranteed. It is true that practical advice is gained from experienced teachers and inspectors who were in turn teachers, but the guidance of experts in the field who are able of providing the findings of the latest research in the field is always needed. The participation of experts and university lecturers in teaching programmes, conferences, seminars, and short courses on teaching helps keep the system updated and informed about activities of the latest research, controversies, and the latest published materials, all of which will have a significant contribution to educational change.

7.2.17. Empowering Learners

The human factor is no less important than the pedagogical and financial factors in reform projects. The vitality of the teachers' roles in reforms as major agents of change is often stressed, but learners who represent the core of educational unity are often underestimated. Students must be recognised as also implementers of change as they represent active participants in the process and not just passive recipients, therefore, change needs to be implemented at a level and pace that will build their confidence, respond to their needs and motivate them to learn.

I would like to highlight that the above recommendations and implications are only proposed to provide an initial platform for both the present and future reforms. It is not my intention to be judgmental or to prescribe an approach for solving CBA problems; rather it is assumed that members of the educational unity are better placed to find their own approaches according to the realities of their context.

Conclusion

Educational change is a sociopolitical process in which individuals, classes, schools, and local, regional, and national interests interact. Though Algerian's national education system developed from the struggle for independence and later on for the reconstruction of the nation, it possesses now all the human and financial resources to build a strong successful educational system, but it is still incapable of establishing a solid educational system that responds to the demands of its population. For the CBA reform, efforts need to be strengthened to make the reform walk in its pre-designed path. As a starting point, policymakers should equip their schools with the necessary financial and human resources of teaching with the CBA appropriately. Second, the traditional approach adopted towards professional development and training needs to be radically changed and directed to recent changes in teaching and learning foreign languages. Though teachers do not have a magical ring that turns bad things into good ones, they need to assume their responsibilities and make the initiatives to improve their students' performance based on what is available for them. Obstacles that hinder the appropriate implementation of reform need to be dealt with appropriately, or otherwise, the reform remains good only on paper.

Before opting for a new educational reform, a careful consideration of the properties of the Algerian context in general, its educational system properties, and a thorough revision of the previous change attempts should be taken into consideration. For any future action to be taken, all the possible factors that contribute together to designing a successful one should be considered: clearly planned, protected from political dictates, owned by stakeholders, involved learners, adequately financed, subjected to periodic technical consultations and experts recommendations, and harmonically change the environment. Last and not least, no element or agent in education should be dealt with individually, it should be considered

globally. If change is to produce a positive effect, then it must not simply be a step towards a hoped-for modernisation, with no clear direction - or worse still, with ever-changing directions - while innovation remains neglected.

General Conclusion

This study aims at investigating the challenges that confront secondary school EFL teachers while implementing the CBA with the intent of providing possible solutions and recommendations for a better implementation of the CBA. At the beginning of this thesis, it has been stated that teachers are not working at ease with the CBA, and it is high time the reform was re-oriented or adjusted before the situation becomes more serious. The first interpretation was either that the CBA did not suit the Algerian members of the educational unity, namely, the teacher, learner, and school, or that the CBA reform had been poorly designed and inappropriately implemented. In order to develop insights about this issue, the research has relied on a number of theoretical foundations to provide insights into the obstacles that hinder the appropriate implementation of the CBA when it comes to teaching methodology, working conditions, the type of learners, and other factors.

It is by means of a questionnaire addressed to EFL secondary school teachers that the attitudes, the knowledge, and the difficulties they face are explored. The questionnaire helped to gain more insights into the difficulties teachers face in TEFL. The results revealed the teachers' awareness of the basic claims of the CBA but relied on traditional methods of teaching and evaluation which are not compatible with the CBA. They are faced with a variety of obstacles and difficulties that inhibit successful learning from taking place. As a starting point, the general atmosphere of the CBA implementation reforms nurtured negative attitudes as teachers were excluded from being a contributing part of the school reforms, curriculum development, syllabus design, textbook writing and programme evaluation. In addition to the unwise training programme adopted by the Algerian Ministry of Education and the weak teachers' development, the existence of some other contextual inhibitions refrain teachers from CBA instruction. These are the lack of quality human, material, and financial

resources; the large size of classes which does not facilitate differentiation of instruction and assessment; the lack of ICT; long syllabi, and the time allotted to finish them: poor attitudes and motivation of learners towards learning English. Second, classroom observation revealed some promising aspects of the CBA as learners become active learners and assume responsibility for their learning only if the topics respond to their needs and interests. Teachers floundered to teach with competencies as they strongly focused on syllabus achievement with no reference to the quality of learners' performance, objectives' achievement, and competencies that relate to the real-life situations of their learners. Contextual challenges such as old facilities, large classes, busy schedules, and challenging textbooks affect negatively the teaching-learning situation. Thirdly, though the interview revealed that inspectors are aware of situations and the specifications of the Algerian educational system which, are for the moment, not compatible with the CBA principles, they see all the educational entities should be held responsible for improving the Algerian learners' performance. The primary concern recognised by the interviewed inspectors sets in addressing solutions that would remedy the current EFL situation and hence enhance learners' performance in the language and not finding an entity to throw blame at. Confronting these challenges entails diagnosing them at the beginning in order to; however, the interviewed inspectors stressed the importance of the quality of the teachers' training and development programme, raising the awareness of stakeholders of maintaining transparency in applying new reforms and finally engaging teachers as important agents of any planned change have become primordial for undertaking any educational change. Though all the promising indicators of teaching English with competencies are scarce and sometimes absent from the Algerian educational context, inspectors are optimistic but they warned against the reform's failure in establishing a good and favourable teaching context for English. The next chapter

will provide some pedagogical implications for successfully implementing CBE in Algerian secondary schools.

In light of these results, the conclusion that the teaching of English in Algerian secondary schools is faced with two options for improvement has been drawn. The first lies in the revision of the CBA reform by providing the necessary conditions for its enhancement or a new reform only if it is carefully planned and implemented. The first option entails addressing the most feasible and evidence-based solutions to the challenges of the implementation of CBLT in the Algerian context. There is a need to mitigate the negative effects of these challenges on the implementation of CBA by taking new measures and strategies in order to equip all stakeholders with the competencies needed to function effectively within the new paradigm. Among these measures and strategies, there is a need for an effective funding scheme to support schools, listening to teachers' voices, continuous effective training and development programmes for teachers nationwide, and supervision by school administrators. Before opting for a new educational reform, all the possible factors that contribute together to designing a successful one should be considered: clearly planned, protected from political dictates, owned by stakeholders, involved learners, adequately financed, subjected to periodic technical consultations and experts recommendations, and harmonically change the environment. Last and not least, no element or agent in education should be dealt with individually, it should be considered globally.

This research study raised a number of issues and questions that may provide a basis for future research. This is partly due to some limitations identified in this study and partly because of issues and concerns that arose in the analysis and could not be pursued as part of this inquiry. Thus, a brief reference to the limitations will be presented. The first limitation to

this research is the constraints the researcher faced in order to be allowed to attend EFL classes in secondary schools, for two reasons; the first is the difficulty of being allowed into other secondary schools as a researcher and the second one lied in receiving approval from some teachers for classroom observation. Since the classroom observation was confined to only one secondary school located in the city centre in the region of Jijel, so the findings of the study may not be generalised to represent all the Algerian secondary schools in rural areas. Nonetheless, they can be regarded as an illuminative one, applicable to other similar areas. Secondly, this is a short-term study conducted over a space of one semester. As it was not a longitudinal study and did not allow the researcher to deal with a larger population of teachers and students, and conclusions established do not provide a full picture of the challenges of the CBA.

As CBA is the presently implemented approach in Algerian secondary schools, the findings constitute an attempt to raise awareness about the current status of teaching English at Algerian secondary schools: new measures and strategies must be taken in order to improve the implementation of the CBA paradigm. Fifteen years of CBA is quite enough to draw definite conclusions; much can change over the next years if we start now.

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Appendices

**Appendix A: The difference of Instructional Process between CBA and Traditional
Content-based Teaching**

Appendix B: Factors Influencing ICT Adoption

Appendix C: The Teachers' Questionnaire

Appendix D: The Classroom Observation Checklist

Appendix E: The Inspector' Interview

Appendix A

The difference of Instructional Process between CBA and Traditional Content-based Teaching

	Traditional Approach	Competency-based Approach
Pre-Instructional Period	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Experience and knowledge is external to learner</div> <div style="text-align: center;">↓</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Curriculum designer distills and arranges this experience and knowledge</div> <div style="text-align: center;">↓</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Learners acquire experience and knowledge in their lives</div> <div style="text-align: center;">↓</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Curriculum designer provides an experience that will tap learners' values and ideas</div> <div style="text-align: center;">↓</div>
Instructional Period	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Instructor presents experience and knowledge to learner</div> <div style="text-align: center;">↓</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Learners hear and see presentation</div> <div style="text-align: center;">↓</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Learners experience new situations; match new experience with previous learning</div> <div style="text-align: center;">↓</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Learners distill new values and new</div> <div style="text-align: center;">↓</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Learners try out new behaviors and acquire new experiences and knowledge in both simulated and 'real world' environments</div> <div style="text-align: center;">↓</div>

Post- Instructional Period	Learners try out new behaviours in 'real world' the experience comes after instruction	Learners continue to process experience and knowledge as basis of original knowledge and experience
		⇓
		Learners apply new behaviours in 'real world' environment

Instruction in the Traditional Approach and the CBA (Laird, 1985)

Appendix B

Appendix B: Enabling and Constraining Features of ICT Adoption in Algeria

Factors	Enabling Features	Constraining Features
Policy framework	A national ICT policy for educational development was set forth in 2002. The government has adopted ICT in all domains, particularly the education sector, as an integral part of the development process.	The policy for ICT exists, but to be successfully implemented it needs strong infrastructure and resources. Vast areas of Algeria are still lagging behind in basic needs.
Infrastructure and access		Algeria faces problems of poor infrastructure and connectivity issues.
Availability of appropriate learning materials	The development and provision of tools and learning material are at the heart of the policy of ICT for educational development.	There are not enough appropriate learning materials.
Rural/urban divisions	A major concern of the national ICT policy is provision of access and connectivity to all areas of the country.	Few schools and even fewer universities and higher institutions are available in rural communities.
Gender equity	A number of development projects, especially non-formal education	In general, the level of illiteracy is higher among females and this is reflected in their access to ICT as

	programmes, are directed towards females being part of the underserved population.	well as training and skills.
Human resource Development		The multilingual base in Algeria poses a major hurdle to unifying or implementing programmes at a large scale. Professional development programmes and teacher training is still limited to basic ICT training with no connection or relevance to integration into the educational process. Professional development and ICT programmes lack connection with content and curriculum development in a manner that allows for proper implementation of reform. The disconnection among the different development programmes impedes proper impact and progress.
Sustainability	The political arena has stabilized somewhat in Algeria, thus setting the grounds for proper implementation of the	Several projects and initiatives have been underway, but due to the obstacles posed by the political unrest, many of them have been

	development programmes and allowing for a more sustained reform effort. The political stability leading into economic reform allows for attracting investment and support locally and internationally.	discontinued.
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Factors Influencing ICT Adoption (Hamdy, 2007, pp. 7-8)

Appendix C
Teachers Questionnaire

Dear fellow teachers,

This questionnaire is constructed with the expectation that it may collect reliable data to identify the challenges that confront the teaching of English in the Algerian secondary schools under the “the competency-based approach”.

You are kindly asked to fill in the present questionnaire, as your contribution will lay bases for the success of this piece of research. Answer by ticking the box you believe is most appropriate; justify and explain where needed.

May I thank you for your cooperation and for the time devoted to answer the questionnaire.

Background and Profile

1. Gender Male Teacher ☐ Female Teacher ☐

2. The degree held

B.A. (Licence Classique) ☐

M.A. (Master) ☐

Ecole Normale Supérieure Degree ☐

3. How long have you been teaching at the secondary school?

.....year(s)

Section One; Challenges Related to Teachers

Division A; Teachers' Attitudes towards the Competency-based Approach Reforms

4. How far do you agree or disagree with the statement below:

"The implementation of the CBA in teaching English is successful"

a. Strongly agree ☐

b. Agree ☐

c. Disagree ☐

d. Strongly disagree ☐

5. According to you, what are the reasons of introducing the CBA for teaching English?

a. Political reasons

b. Economic reasons ☐

c. Cultural reasons ☐

d. Pedagogical reasons ☐

e. Other, please specify ☐

6. If you had been consulted before implementing the CBA, what would your reaction have been?

Approve ☐

Disapprove ☐

7. Whatever your answer is, would you please justify it.

.....

Division B: Teachers' Training and Education

8. Did you receive any kind of training which is based on how to teach with the CBA?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If your answer is "yes", would you please proceed with the following two questions.

9. What aspect did this training focus on?

a. Theory ☐

b. Practice ☐

c. Both ☐

10. Was the training useful to your teaching practices?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Not really ☐

11. How far do you agree or disagree with the following statement.

"I believe that I need more training in teaching with the CBA."

a. Strongly Agree ☐

b. Agree ☐

c. Disagree ☐

d. Strongly disagree ☐

12. Relying on your background knowledge, would you please define the following:

A competency:

The competency-based approach:

Division C: Teaching Methodology

13. What is the common approach or method that you follow to teach English?

- a. The Communicative Approach ☐
- b. The Competency-based Approach ☐
- c. The Eclectic Method ☐
- d. Other, please specify.....

14. How often do you use the CBA in teaching English?

- a. Always ☐
- b. Frequently ☐
- c. Occasionally ☐
- d. Never ☐

15. Whatever your answer is, would you please explain why?

.....

16. Due to the shift to teaching with competencies, what do you think the purpose of teaching is?

- a. To enable an individual to acquire the desired behaviour through shaping his behaviour with various stimuli and responses. ☐
- b. To help the individual acquire various cognitive skills through pre-specific activities designed in a particular sequence. ☐
- c. To create a learning environment which helps the individual to build his own knowledge and work collaboratively with other learners. ☐

17. Does teaching English with the CBA motivate you?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Not really ☐

18. Does teaching with the CBA improve your students' proficiency?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Not really ☐

19. The assessment of a competence must be:

a. Transparent ☐

b. Observable ☐

c. Measurable ☐

d. I do not know ☐

20. How do you evaluate your learners?

a. Formal evaluation at the end of a lesson or unit ☐

b. Evaluation during the learning process (journal assessment, peer-assessment, self-assessment) ☐

c. Other (please, specify).....

21. According to you, the largest impact on students' achievement comes from:

a. Small class size

b. Students' abilities

c. Teacher quality

d. The teaching methodology

22. What roles do you often assign to your learners?

a. Followers of your instructions and lectures. ☐

b. Active participants in the learning process. ☐

23. Do you think Algerian EFL learners are ready to handle their learning process (i.e. to be autonomous)?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Not really ☐

24. Are your learners motivated to learn English under the CBA?

Yes ☐

No ☐

25. How far do you agree or disagree with the following statement.

"Thanks to the competency-based approach, learners have become capable of solving problems and constructing their own learning path."

Strongly Agree ☐

Agree ☐

Disagree ☐

Strongly disagree ☐

Section Three: Contextual Challenges

26. All the working conditions suit teaching within the CBA.

Yes ☐

No ☐

Not really ☐

27. Is your school equipped with ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies?)

Yes ☐

No ☐

If yes, which one(s)

28. Do you occasionally feel inhibited by your teaching environment because of:

- a. Long files and the limited time allowed ☐
- b. The requirements of the school's administration ☐
- c. the inspectors' demands ☐
- d. Other, please specify.....

29. What is the average students' number per class?

- a. Less than 25 student ☐
- b. Between 25 and 35 student ☐
- c. More than 35 student ☐

Section Four: Prospects and Perspectives on Teaching with the CBA in Algeria

30. Now, after almost a decade of teaching with competencies, if you were given the opportunity to decide about the future of this approach in TEFL, what would your reaction be?

- a. Keep the C.B.A. ☐
- b. Go back to a previous approach ☐
- c. Implement a new approach ☐

Whatever your answer is, would you please justify.

.....

31. Whatever your answer is, would you please justify.

.....

32. If you are not satisfied with the present situation of English teaching in the Algerian secondary school, what do you suggest to improve the system and face all the challenges mentioned above?

.....

Thank you

Appendix D

Classroom Observation

Class:
Instructor:
Lycée:
Number of students:
Date:
Time:
Materials/ Media used:

➤ **Pre-observation Phase**

ITEM	YES	NO
1. The teacher is aware the targeted competencies of today's lesson		
2. The teacher is aware of the objectives of today's lesson		
3. The teacher can establish the relation between the objectives of today's lesson and the goals of the syllabus		

➤ **While -observation Phase**

ITEM	YES	NO
4. The teacher had a clearly discernible lesson plan		
5. The teacher relied exclusively on the lesson plan		
6. The teacher shares the objectives of the lesson with his learners		

7. The lesson is learner-centered		
8. The teacher uses a variety of instructional strategies and group activities		
9. The teacher provides effective feedback where necessary		
10. Both formative and summative assessment to determine mastery of competency		
11. The tasks and activities meet the learners' different learning styles		
12. The tasks and activities meet the learners' different backgrounds		
13. Classroom interaction is monitored by the teacher		
14. ICT's are used to present the lesson		
15. The teacher uses interesting and appropriate materials		

➤ **Post-observation Phase**

ITEM	YES	NO
16. The learners learned what you intended for them		

- **Item 17:** What evidence do you have of students' learning?
- **Item 18:** If you had an opportunity to teach the lesson again to the same group of students, what would you do differently?

Appendix E

Inspector' Interview

Introduction

I am presently conducting a research to uncover the challenges and the pedagogical problems facing the teaching process and restraining the improvement of EFL teaching within the framework of the Competency-based Approach. Ultimately, another concern of this research work is to help overcome these challenges. You are kindly requested to answer these questions as your contribution will contribute to the success of this piece of research.

1. How would you describe the status of English at the Algerian secondary school?
2. Who or what to blame when it comes to the learners' underachievement in the language?
3. Do you think the Algerian educational context is appropriate for the implementation of the Competency-based Approach? Why?
4. Do you think that all teachers are qualified to implement the CBA?
5. How do EFL secondary school teachers perceive the main changes involved in the implementation of the CBA in class?
6. What impedes teaching with the CBA appropriately?
7. Teachers often do complain about large classes, inappropriate syllabi, the lack of sample CBA lesson plan and other inhibitions. Do you think that the teachers' complaints are legitimate?
8. In light of what has been discussed earlier, I would like to invite you to reflect upon the effect of these challenges on both teachers and learners.
9. Do teachers need to be trained? If yes, how?

10. What needs to be done to overcome the aforementioned challenges?

11. Can you share with us your convictions about the future of the CBA in Algeria?

Thank you

Appendix F

The Inspector' Interview Transcripts

Inspector One:

1. Today, English is becoming more and more important. Its position in the Algerian context is reinforced daily through the effects of globalisation and breakthroughs in information and communication technology. Although its position has not yet achieved the desired objectives-due o many reasons and circumstances- English remains a communicative tool which makes the entrance to the age of globalisation possible.
2. Unfortunately, English is still considered a purely theoretical discipline with no relationship to the reality of the learner-inappropriate context, syllabi content, teaching strategies, overcrowded classrooms, multi-level classes, lack of training... are among the reasons that lead to the learners' underachievement in the language.
3. The competency-based approach stands out in support of learning centered on linking knowledge, know-how, attitudes and behaviours to the reality of the learner. Thus, it provides opportunities to make of the learners future citizens capable of finding solutions to possible problems. So, I do believe that the Algerian educational context is appropriate.
4. To some extent, at varied levels.
5. CBA aims at making the teaching process easier and efficient. For those (teachers) who master the notion of this approach; they are certainly working at ease. But the issue becomes complicated with those who stick to classical methodologies where the learners are passive recipients of knowledge
6. Reluctance and fear of change; lack of preparation and training at the university level first, and second in the teachers' training as a profession; syllabi content as some

suggested subjects do not comply with the learners' interests, needs and socio-cultural backgrounds.

7. For me the teachers' complaints are not legitimate. In fact, the number of students in one class has considerably decreased compared with the past. Let's say, 15 years ago, nowadays, the average number does not exceed 25 or 30 maximum which is my opinion quite acceptable. In addition to this, through the in-service training seminars, most teachers are regularly supplied with sample lessons, unit plans and supported with necessary documents that relate to the CBA.
8. Lack of training, absence of language laboratories, insufficient materials and ICTs, multilevel classes are all obstacles that hinder the implementation of the CBA.
9. Regularly and intensively before and during service...in addition to self-continuous professional development.
10. Providing appropriate and efficient training by experts in the domain; providing adequate materials; equipping teachers as well as students with necessary tools; fostering the importance of foreign languages in modern life; reconsidering the number of sessions per week for each stream; and finally elaborating syllabi regarding learners' needs, economic and socio-cultural backgrounds.
11. Wait and see.

Inspector Two:

1. In general, the status of English in the Algerian secondary school is not well-considered. It is the second foreign language for which little importance is given; this can be seen in the low coefficients attributed to English and the number of hours devoted for each stream.

2. When it comes to the students' underachievement in the language, we have to blame the whole educational system (teachers, students, curriculum, institutions and stakeholders).
3. The Algerian educational context is not appropriate for the CBA, or at least for the time being, because of the difficulties we face on the ground. Large classes can be one of the points that hinder considerably the application of the approach which relies on learner centeredness, i.e., students take an active role in the learning process. Besides, it is an action-oriented approach where learners learn by doing and this philosophy requires small classes so that every student takes part in the learning process.
4. Teachers have always been encouraged to use and apply the CBA. However, only a small number attempt to do it because of some hiccups, some of which have been the aforementioned previously. Additionally, teachers have not been trained enough to cope with such a pedagogy, which, de facto, brought about other problems like the teachers' inability, and sometimes failure, to adopt the new approach appropriately, thus, leading to the students' misunderstanding, irresponsiveness and insensitivity to the language.
5. At the very beginning, when the CBA was introduced in Algeria in 2003, teachers faced great difficulties in its application. Since then, things have changed and teachers are now more prepared to teach using the approach. Nevertheless, much is still to be done when it comes to handling large and mixed abilities classes which requires special skills and knowledge from the teachers like differentiation, group and pair work, classroom management and the like.
6. Some of the greatest challenges that face the application of the CBA are large classes, students' low involvement and achievement, classroom management and the choice of material.
7. Needless to mention that some of the teachers' complaints about some inhibitions are legitimate when trying to apply the CBA. Large classes have always been a real burden to

any teacher, inappropriate syllabi imposed by the ministry of education and the inability of teachers to recourse, sometimes to extracurricular activities. However, some alternatives to these issues exist. Yet, one has to mention that some teachers are, more often than not, de-motivated and reluctant to take the initiative in order to overcome some of their problems. They tend to rely on “ready-made” lesson plans, which should be their own creation. They should be more knowledgeable about pedagogy in general and didactics in particular.

8. Teachers should be trained to be able to teach with the CBA. This can be done through in-service training sessions, seminars with the inspectors, webinars, coaching and mentoring, and teachers’ self-formative periods mainly by reading specialised pedagogical books.
9. We need to amend the Algerian school. Teachers have also to be trained. Inspectors should give more priority and time to teachers. Peer observation should be encouraged among teachers so that they can enhance their proficiency level in the subject matter. They should also be intrinsically motivated to look for appropriate solutions to their problems by reading pedagogical books and articles and consulting specialists.
10. As far as I am concerned, I believe that we need to reform our school and change the paradigm. Teaching is no longer viewed as dead facts which we provide our students with. The universal tendency now is learning by doing, as John Dewey put it so well. It is also the constructivism theory. This pedagogy cannot be implemented and will not prove efficient if learners are not solicited by being the real actors and by being responsible for their own learning. The CBA is the approach that can respond to such a need provided that we bring some changes to our educational system.

Résumé

Cette thèse examine les principaux défis auxquels sont confrontés les enseignants d'anglais du secondaire algériens à la suite de la mise en œuvre de nouvelles réformes scolaires qui ont introduit une nouvelle approche interdisciplinaire, à savoir l'approche par compétences (APC) comme moyen d'enseignement. En d'autres termes, il tente d'identifier les difficultés auxquelles sont confrontés les enseignants du secondaire lorsqu'ils enseignent l'anglais dans le cadre de l'APC. Cette étude tente d'aborder les solutions les plus efficaces qui permettraient à la réforme de l'APC de fonctionner de la manière la plus appropriée. Lorsque l'APC a été adopté dans l'enseignement de l'anglais comme langue étrangère, on pensait que cette nouvelle approche éliminerait le problème de l'échec scolaire chez les élèves algériens, mais après plus d'une décennie de sa mise en œuvre, les voix des enseignants appelaient déjà à l'aide. Utilisant un paradigme de recherche mixte, cette enquête a d'abord été réalisée par l'administration d'un questionnaire aux enseignants d'anglais du secondaire pour avoir un compte rendu des réalités de l'APC dans les classes d'anglais et mieux comprendre les difficultés auxquelles ils sont confrontés dans l'enseignement de l'anglais. Deuxièmement, les données ont été recueillies au cours d'une observation en classe de huit semaines dans le but de définir dans quelle mesure l'APC convient aux apprenants algériens et au contexte d'enseignement. Enfin, un entretien semi-directif a été mené auprès de quelques inspecteurs de l'enseignement secondaire général anglais. Les résultats obtenus ont révélé que la mise en œuvre de l'APC dans l'enseignement de l'anglais en Algérie est freinée par trois défis majeurs : les défis liés au contexte, les défis liés aux enseignants et les défis liés aux apprenants. Les systèmes éducatifs sont extrêmement complexes et les réformes aussi. Des recommandations et des implications pédagogiques ont été faites en explorant les propriétés et les particularités du contexte algérien, de l'enseignant et de l'apprenant.

ملخص

تتناول هذه الأطروحة التحديات الرئيسية التي تواجه معلمي المدارس الثانوية الجزائرية في اللغة الإنجليزية في أعقاب تنفيذ الإصلاحات المدرسية الجديدة التي أدخلت نهجًا جديدًا متعدد التخصصات، ألا وهو النهج القائم على الكفاءات. تحاول أيضا تحديد الصعوبات التي تواجه معلمي المدارس الثانوية أثناء تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية بموجب المقاربة بالكفاءات. تحاول هذه الدراسة معالجة الحلول الأكثر فاعلية التي من شأنها أن تجعل هذا الإصلاح يعمل بشكل ملائم. عندما تم اعتماد المقاربة بالكفاءات في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، كان يعتقد أن هذا النهج الجديد سوف يقضي على مشكلة ضعف التحصيل بين التلاميذ الجزائريين، ولكن بعد أكثر من عقد من تنفيذه، كانت أصوات المعلمين تطالب بالفعل بالمساعدة. باستخدام نموذج بحثي مختلط، تم إجراء هذا التحقيق. أولاً، عن طريق إدارة استبيان لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية في المدارس الثانوية للحصول على حساب لواقع المقاربة بالكفاءات في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية واكتساب المزيد من الأفكار حول الصعوبات التي يواجهونها في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية. ثانياً، تم جمع البيانات خلال ثمانية أسابيع من الملاحظة الصفية بهدف تحديد مدى ملاءمة هذه المقاربة للمتعلمين الجزائريين وسياق التدريس. أخيراً، تم إجراء مقابلة مع بعض مفتشي التعليم الثانوي العام باللغة الإنجليزية. كشفت النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها أن تطبيق المقاربة بالكفاءات في تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية في الجزائر تعوقه ثلاثة تحديات رئيسية: التحديات المتعلقة بالسياق، والتحديات المتعلقة بالمعلم، والتحديات المتعلقة بالمتعلم. أنظمة التعليم معقدة للغاية وكذلك هي الإصلاحات. تم تقديم التوصيات والآثار التربوية من خلال استكشاف خصائص المنظومة التربوية الجزائرية والمعلم والمتعلم.