

## ***The Educational Policy of Training and the Educational Reforms in Algeria***

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In any teaching-learning situation success depends on giving proper consideration to both human elements, such as the role of the teacher, the nature of the learners, and also to non-human elements like the textbook, the syllabus, the number of hours allotted to the subject study and the like.

With the education reform, teaching foreign languages is the core of many debates and the agenda of almost all discussions. Thus, many questions on the subject are posed: should we teach scientific subjects in French or in English? Should we introduce both of them in primary schools? At what level? But the true questions are hardly raised like the ones concerning the teacher, his qualifications and his training. Let us make no mistake about it, any tentative reform, and whatever its actions are, could not be achieved without prior action of teachers; they are the cornerstone and the secret of any successful educational system, for they contribute to a large extent in the achievement of all objectives. Therefore, priority should be given to teachers - how to prepare them to changes, innovations and reforms that are likely to happen-.

### ***Problem Identification***

The present communication aims at pointing at the educational policy of training. First, the suppression of « I.T.E » and « Ecoles Normales » has left a gap in the field of training ; second, the social peace requirements have imposed temporary solutions for real problems, such as heavy recruitment of graduate students which has shown its limits and that has led in one way or another to a deficit of a pedagogical character and later professional in addition to the reduction of the training practice duration and the insufficient mastery of needs planning.

### ***The Present Training context***

With the suppression of « I .T. E » and « Ecoles Normales» most universities, to some extent, have taken in charge the training of teachers. In the English Department in Djilali Liabes University, for instance, the training practice is meant for fourth year students. First, they are asked to fill in forms to choose lycées where they are supervised by so-called experienced teachers whom they have never met before. These students have never been taught what a teaching or a thematic unit is, what its different phases are: Listening, Reading, Language Manipulation and Writing. They do not even know what the final objective is and how to tackle a unit or/and prepare a lesson plan.

The present training practice lasts for almost a month. It is worth reminding that these student teachers are neither supervised nor assessed by their university teachers; most of them ignore totally what happens in practice and how things are going on with their students. The trainees are split into groups of 6 to 10 for a training

that usually starts in the last term, a period when most levels, particularly third year pupils have ended with the programmes and devote the last month for remedial work, revision ,doing former “Baccalaureate” papers and examinations.

The choice of the trainer is not based on any scientific or academic criteria; some student teachers are sometimes trained and supervised by novice teachers who themselves are in need of supervision and training. Last but not least, grading these students is hard, their evaluation often lacks validity and reliability. And because of the limited time devoted to practice, some trainees do not perform more than one or two lessons.

All the modules that are taught during the four years are supposed to offer programmes that provide perspectives on language learning -teaching, and to strengthen the teacher language skills. However, some teachers of English comment that there is no indication of increase; most of them agree that the present training practice offers little if not anything new because it is not well-thought and achieved in non-appropriate norms.

### ***The Teacher Training***

Teacher training should focus its attention on classroom practice, and should have as its primary goal the improvement of teacher’s practical efforts to bring about effective learning on the part of learners. Experiences have shown that teacher development should be fostered not only in in-service training but also in initial training. The teacher training involves giving novice and experienced teachers alike readymade

answers as opposed to allowing them to discover their own alternatives (Lucas, 1988:42).

Freeman (1989: 39) defines training as a strategy for direct intervention by the collaborator in the teacher's teaching. The intervention is focused on specific outcomes achieved through a sequence of steps within a specific period of time. It is based on the assumption that through mastery of discrete skills teachers will be effective in the classroom.

However, for Davis and Plumb (1988:40 ), training entails a "pre-planned" agenda set by the workplace or syllabus as opposed to an "impromptu flexible agenda set by groups", "needs of workplace" as opposed to "personal needs" "qualification" as opposed to career development and "standardization" as opposed to "innovation".

In the light of these training principles, and in addition to the theoretical lectures in "TEFL" and Psycho-pedagogy I believe that weekly sessions should be devoted for training practice not only to co-ordinate and associate theory with practice, but discover the classroom reality as well :some discipline problems, lack of basic equipments and audio-visual teaching aids and the like. As far as the time allotment is concerned, four hours a week could be sufficient, but right from the beginning of the academic year. The training practice could be planned as follows:

### **A –The Observation Stage**

In this stage trainees passively undergo a period of conditioning during which the "Do's" and "Don'ts" of classroom practice are inculcated, a stage that obviously

involves classroom visits. The student teachers are asked to produce elaborate step-by-step rigid plans –or a number of questions to answer. Special meetings between the trainees and the trainer are advisable to discuss the observed lessons. The observation stage lasts for about a month, duration sufficient enough for trainees to attend the different phases of a teaching unit–Listening, Reading, Language Manipulation and Writing.

### **B- The Demonstration Stage**

The trainees are rarely given a chance to perform and try out before the blocked training period. The demonstration stage is a vital element to imitate some ritual teaching behaviour. Discussion sessions are always necessary to assess trainees' performances; it is preferable to have such sessions right after the lesson practice for adjustments, additions and refinements.

### **C – The Blocked/Long practice Stage**

A stage that lasts for about four weeks, and in which student teachers do not study at the university but respect the trainer's time table. They are supposed to plan classroom tasks and/or activities appropriate to learners and with respect to the teaching programmes and objectives and apply them in a genuine learning context. This is the vital stage of the training process, the pivot on which all else hinges –without application there is no training.

### ***The Trainer***

There is no doubt that the role of the trainer in such an operation is of a paramount importance, therefore the

choice should be based on rigorous criteria .These teachers should be experienced, skilful and competent enough to ensure the training practice. The inspector general of English, for instance, may provide a list of trainers able to offer their experience and help for trainees .This is possible only if there is a true co-ordination between the university, particularly the department of English and the local Direction of Education.

The trainer should focus on the trainee as a person Like pupils, the trainee teachers have individual needs, strengths, weaknesses, varying degrees of knowledge and experience. His role as a facilitator is indispensable, he remains a full partner in the education process; he should co-ordinate with trainees in lesson planning. He has to demonstrate his patience and understanding to trainees, and encourage them by pointing out the good points, and suggesting other alternatives for less successful ones .He should also view their mistakes as a sign of learning and points to discuss in the post performance sessions, so that he can help improve or eliminate certain behaviour: lack of confidence, shyness, anxiety or an air of superiority which has negative effects of reducing rapport between the teacher and learners.

The trainer teacher needs to be put at the heart of the training process, he is the sole agent of effective behavioural improvement because he helps the trainees to be independent decision makers at all times.

## ***Conclusion***

The heart of any successful learning programme is the informed classroom teacher. The Human being is the instrument and the finality of any development. The educational system has to aim at developing mental operations that are: observation, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. We are in the twenty first century, our school should be, then, oriented towards the future. And if educating, instructing, socializing and preparing the child to acquire knowledge and a qualification constitute the essential duties of today's school, we wonder how we can achieve these goals without adequate training for teachers.

We have, then, to re-organize the training practice by establishing competitive examinations, extending the training duration, applying more strict criteria for trainers, and to motivate students the university may offer working contracts for the ten or twenty best of them.

All societies, nowadays, are entering the Internationalization Era that urges future teachers, who should have to guide our children and develop their learning desires, to have a high knowledge level and competence. Tomorrow's world relies on the real mastery and the good use of «learning»; the grey matter constitutes the plain and true richness of any country. It is up to these teachers to develop this grey matter, then.

The training practice should provide the future teacher with so many qualities that can be reflected in the teaching process, and the rapport with learners. It is said that the power of the teacher can change the world, and good teachers are not born, they are made.

### *References*

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