

**Teacher Training Adaptation to Respond  
to the New 21st Century Requirements:  
English Teacher Case Study**

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**Abstract**

The issues relating to teacher training are at the heart of the current debates of the public authorities. The economic and social changes arising from globalization imply that the quality of education systems must be adapted to meet the new requirements. The expectations for educational institutions and teachers are more complex than before. The Ministry of National Education is committed to improving learning for all Algerian school-goers. The attainment of this ambitious goal cannot materialise unless all learners receive a quality education. Similar to all countries, Algeria seeks to improve the quality of teaching to better meet the economic and social expectations increasingly higher. Teacher body, the most important human resource in the education system, is at the core of the efforts aiming to enhance learners' achievements. However, this high quality of education requires an overhaul of the training courses from the viewpoints contents, devices and expectations. In reality, the present situation raises multifarious challenges to policy-makers, training institutes and trainers. This is what the present article tries to shed enough light on so as to highlight and identify the gaps that preclude effective changes in both teachers' teaching and learners' learning.

**Keywords:** IT, INSETT, competence, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, CBA, professionalism, interculturality

**الملخص**

القضايا المتعلقة بتدريب المعلمين هي في صميم المناقشات الحالية من السلطات العامة. التغيرات الاقتصادية والاجتماعية الناجمة عن العولمة تعني أن جودة نظم التعليم يجب تكييفها لتلبية المتطلبات الجديدة. أن توقعات للمؤسسات التعليمية والمعلمين هي أكثر تعقيدا من ذي قبل. وتلتزم وزارة التربية الوطنية لتحسين التعلم لجميع رواد المدرسة الجزائرية. هذا الهدف الطموح لا يمكن أن يتحقق ما لم يحصل جميع المتعلمين تعليما ذا نوعية جيدة. على غرار جميع البلدان، تسعى الجزائر جاهدة إلى تحسين نوعية التعليم لتلبية أفضل التوقعات الاقتصادية والاجتماعية أعلى على نحو متزايد. هيئة المعلمين، المورد البشري الأكثر أهمية في نظام التعليم، هو في صميم الجهود الرامية إلى

تعزير إنجازات المتعلمين. ومع ذلك، هذه النوعية العالية للتعليم تتطلب إجراء إصلاح شامل للدورات التدريبية من وجهة نظر المحتويات والأجهزة والتوقعات. في الواقع، فإن الوضع الراهن يشير تحديات متنوعة لصناع القرار السياسي، ومعاهد التدريب والمدربين. هذا ما تحاول هذه المقالة تسليط الضوء عليه والتعرف على الثغرات التي تحول دون إحداث تغييرات في كل من تدريس المعلمين وتعلم المتعلمين.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التكوين الأولي، التكوين أثناء الخدمة، الكفاءة

### **Introduction**

Nowadays objectives of the education system, as in all other areas of life, should change to meet much more specific requirements in order to be in perfect agreement with the socio-cultural changes that are imposed by the fallouts of the worldwide globalisation. Algeria has already undertaken large-scale education reforms to enable younger generations to be ready to enter the new workforce with the required competencies. In fact, it is a challenge which awaits all stakeholders. This reform can only lead to the prescribed expectations if priority is devoted to the training of the teachers. With the aging of the teaching body and the retirement of many of them, it is imperative to train and recruit large numbers of new teachers, which puts the Algerian education system to a serious test. For these new cohorts of young teachers, we should offer more flexible training pathways, improve research bases and knowledge, raise the teachers' qualifications status and bring them closer to the workplace, the school. The initial training improvement is important, but remains insufficient in itself. Actually, the guardianship should strive to ensure two dual different roles; first to better monitor and accompany the neophyte teachers, and second to allow the practising teachers to undertake professional development throughout their careers and encourage them. In most professions, it is important that the initial training provides a solid foundation for learning throughout life and professional development. This imperative is present to some extent in the initial teacher training, but it is rarely explicitly reflected in the structures and programmes. The initial training (IT), teachers' integration and professional development are steps that need to be better interconnected for the in-service training (INSET) experiences of teachers are more coherent. That said guardianship should improve not only the quality of the ITT, but also the quality of their integration and professional development.

#### **1. A Brief Retrospective on the Algerian Education System**

A brief retrospective on the education system in Algeria shows that it has been punctuated by a series of successive reforms. Indeed, the post independence years were marked by an extensive process of socio-economic transformation which was supposed to lead to the emergence of a modern society.

Any educational reform must obey to political aims that all stakeholders in the education sector are obliged to take into consideration. In this respect, some

critics denounce the fact that the modern school systematically depends on the economic requirements of the State. In the era of globalisation, an adjustment to economic, political and social demand for “competence” of a different kind has become compulsory. From this point of view, it is about developing the high profitability and performance-based competences expected by a society to cope with present day requirements. In several countries such as Canada and Switzerland, reforms are based on principles dictated by the world of industry (resource-based economy) and knowledge (knowledge-based economy). In the United States, for example, is called “*site-based management*” and “*out-based management*” (Glatthorn 1993) to define a management style focused on school of which we do expect neither more nor less than a performance recorded in the prize-lists drawn up annually by specialists of the quality measurement [1]. Thus, the competition is more than ever on the agenda. Education systems must imperatively implement training programmes that, firstly, focus on measurable and quantifiable outcomes, and, secondly, respect the pace of learning of the learners. To respond to this doctrine of efficacy, the “ideal” curricula are designed to cover essentially the core subjects such as mathematics, sciences and foreign languages, and provide only a very reduced room to cultural disciplines. Being regarded as an inevitable necessity, languages have proved to be a cherished commodity following the infestation/outbreak of the multinational firms to the world market. Undoubtedly, the ability to communicate with different people whose cultural backgrounds are quite different from ours is a reliable lynchpin to set up and promote economic relationship and reciprocal understanding.

*A priori*, the Algerian government has become aware of the importance of languages teaching and learning, thus the latter have been integrated in the new overhauled syllabi. In short, the mastery of foreign languages is no longer regarded as a choice but a perennial requirement.

### **1.1. The Objectives underlying the Educational Reform**

To better understand the scope of the project of education reform launched by Algeria since the beginning of 2003, we will begin by quickly recalling the ideological foundations of the former system of training whose obsolescence, in the light of the great challenges to which the 21st century prepares itself, justifies the urgency of the operated rearrangements.

The fact that a new world is in phase to be constructed according to unprecedented categories but whose summation has already given birth to a new term referred to as globalisation.

However, this new world order is called upon to function according to an unusual sense because it is based solely on the criteria of rationality and optimal profitability.

From there, it should be understood that the level of effectiveness of education and training systems is henceforth at the center of most of the social and economic challenges to which is preparing the 21st century.

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[1 ] In several states, teachers are submitted to evaluations based on skills assessment that employers use to assign a salary "merit". This approach is being implemented in some school boards in Quebec.

Conscious of the issue of operating a qualitative change in the education system, the Algerian government adopted in April 2002 an ambitious reform of the education system. This reform sets out four key objectives: (i) to improve the quality of education, especially for the instruction of languages; (ii) to renovate school curricula; (iii) to reorganize school systems; and (iv) to strengthen higher education [2]. The Algerian educational system is virtually required to align with international standards in terms of operation and performance while rapidly evolving as well on the learning quality as on learners' profiles to attain well-trained heads. The reform that puts an end to the basic school compensating for basic education sets itself objectives including the improvement of the success rate in school examinations in significant proportions of schooling between 70 and 80%, the generalisation of preparatory education kindergarten for not naming it, the parity of schooling to be observed between girls and boys, and finally, the improvement of the enrollment parameters so as to achieve, by 2015, 90% a cohort of first year of primary in 4th AM.

## **1.2. Difficulties in Implementing the Reform**

### **1.2.1. Innovation and Uncertainty**

Moreover, the reform undertaken will not have a significant impact on the education and training system unless the changes made affect in depth at the same time the content of curricula, methods as well as recruitment, and the TT. They are the strategic factors in any reformist/reforming approach aiming to set up a modern and efficient national education system. The latter could become a main lever of social, cultural and economic transformation of the Algerian society.

In addition to its adapting perspective, training should equip teachers with innovative aptitude (Cros 1997). This expected innovation is a development, with its steps, and its temporality, through which the teacher may experience difficulties and discoveries. This innovation should fit/fall within a certain continuity enabling an assessment of the existing practices. In the same breath, Rogers sustain that:

***“Old Ideas are the main mental tools that individual utilize to assess new ideas. One cannot deal with an innovation except on the basis of the familiar, with what is known. Previous practice provides a familiar standard against which an innovation can be interpreted, thus decreasing uncertainty”.***  
**(1995: 225- 226)**

According to this aim, it would only be possible to assess an innovation that in so far as the latter shares similarities with common practices. It is in relation to this narrowness between the “known” and the “new” that a change can take shape and the uncertainty and risk as for the impacts of innovation are reduced.

### **1.2.2. Constraints arising from the Innovation**

Innovation thus appears as a time during which the teacher acts according to his rapport to the new, the otherwise, the different and the unknown. Innovators are fond of this innovative process that strengthens their identity and give meaning to

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[2 ] Statement of the Minister of Education in April 2002, following the evaluation and research of the national commission in charge of the reforms

their lives, whereas refractors to innovation seek to avoid exposing themselves to the uncertainty, failure, doubt and questioning. Finally, innovation should, in the eyes of potential adherents, respond to practical and concrete concerns.

With regard to education, innovating change of approaches does not necessarily lead to success, effectiveness and progress in terms of practitioners' practices as highlighted by Perrenoud (1993) Gather Thurler (1992) & Schön (1987). Obviously, no reform, regardless of its nature, reaches the unanimity. The success of any educational reform should be based on the adherence, the conviction and the adoption of the principles it advocates by the men of the field. Indeed, we do not innovate without personal motivation, intention, and action project. In other words, innovation is not decreed; is not improvised, even if it is based on a spontaneous choice. It can be aroused by the results of research; research should accompany it by means of training to objectives assessment, observation and evaluation. It is at this price that innovation, followed and mastered, can be generalised: a theorised and evaluated approach allows others to appropriate it. It is an impetus that can also be the result of a desire for change than a need to address a difficulty. Without the latter, the availability of teaching materials, the increasing the hourly volume and reducing the number of learners per class do not ensure on their own the reforms success, although they certainly contribute. The changes in the programmes, aiming at developing competencies among the learners, undertaken by the Ministry of National Education (MNE) challenge the teachers' practice.

Therefore, teacher training programmes (TTP) should take into account the new directions to provide teachers with a training that focuses on the development of professional competencies and adapted teaching practices to meet the new training realities. Different from future teachers, who play a dual role that of students "*teacher training*" (Wallace, 1991: 3) and the one of teachers in the course of their training, those in active employment should adapt, revise, change and innovate their teaching practices "*teacher development*" (*ibid.*). It is not sufficient to formulate ideas, notions and new concepts so that the teachers' representations and practices follow. The fact is that those who refuse to adhere provide no effort to appropriate these new paradigms. In addition, those who show a disposition for the changes need time to integrate them into their practices. A challenge to take up, because understanding what is being played in the teacher-change rapport means entering his representations with respect to this new entity from the standpoint of content, process, competencies ... that the teacher risks of rejecting for lack of information and / or sufficient training.

### **1.2.3. Major Changes**

In addition, the current changes in education in Algeria result, on the one hand, of the convergence of research results and findings about the learners' learning, and on the other, of the situation characterised by an incredible universal human and cultural mobility, as well as impressive technological changes. With regard to the first factor, the available data firstly testify to a very high selectivity of the system, together with retention rates excessively low on the entire educational cycle. Out of 100 students entering the first year of Fundamental Education (FE), 97 reach 5th

grade of the FE, but only 67 continue until 9th grade of FE. Less than 50 move to secondary education, and 11 integrate University (MEN 2002). In addition, more than half of the learners leave secondary school without a qualifying diploma, the success rates in the general and technical baccalaureate respectively is being around 36% and 47% [3]. With regard the second factor, the global context is marked not only by a massive exploitation of technological means, but is also characterized by a fabulous speed. It is not unimportant to quote what Defarges said in his book about "Globalisation":

***"It is not just a matter of 'hard power' [4] where the 'smaller' are devoured by the 'greatest', but a new trend of 'soft power' [5] which is preparing at the horizon where the 'slowest' will be devoured by the 'fastest'. (1997: 46)***

In fact in nowadays society, it no longer a matter of the dearth of information and means, but their profusion and the way to adroitly exploit accessible data to conduct successfully one's everyday business, and ensuring a perpetual learning and updating to better adapt and catch up with the swiftly changing conditions of employability.

In the same perspective, which recognises the insufficiency, in a global context amply changing, the possession of material, the President of the Algerian Republic, during the installation of the National Commission on Educational Reform (NCER) alluded by asserting that:

***"The knowledge provided at the school henceforth occupies, as known, a place unmatched in the evolution of relations between nations. Growth and economic and social prosperity are not, it is obvious, subject to the possession of raw materials, even if they are strategic. The vertiginous explosion of knowledge, accelerating their renewal, the exponential increase in scientific discoveries and technological developments has imposed the establishment of a new knowledge society. At a time of globalization, where international competition is ruthless, these are the knowledge and the scientific and technological innovations that redistribute wealth and power cards."(May 2000)***

From this point of view, it is an irreversible process which we must quickly cope with. Nowadays, education must go beyond the national framework to provide learners with reliable, flexible and sustainable competencies in order to enter right away into a large-scale competition. To be ready for all appointments, the Algerian education system should prepare learners in all areas; economic, socio-cultural, intellectual and even political. That said, this preparation cannot be done outside the school, and without the collaboration of the men in the field. The teaching body (staff), the most significant and valuable resource in the education institution, is at the

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[3] Results of the national commission on education reforms (CNRE)

[4] Hard power: material means

[5] Soft power: the knows

center of the efforts aiming to improve education. The improvement of efficacy and equity of schooling depends to a large extent on the ability to make sure that competent individuals wish to teach, that their teaching be of high quality and that all students have access to high quality education. The issue of training then appears as a research for an exit of a dialectical conflict between forged knowledge, viable, and reassuring and uncertain prospects.

Referring to what has been argued above, teachers play a key role in the success or failure of this reform. They contribute to the shaping the future Algerian generations' minds and, as such, the society in general, and the MNE, in particular, are supposed to give them special recognition. They should regain the consideration without which they cannot worthily accomplish the lofty mission they are compelled to carry out. Undoubtedly, de-motivated and frustrated teachers are unable to lead their learners to optimal learning outcomes owing to the fact that they themselves cannot surmount their prejudices. Teachers' affects neglect may directly impact on both teachers' commitment and learners' achievements.

### **2. Reflection on the Context of the Reform of the Algerian Educational System**

The new political, economic, cultural, social, and demographic realities have obliged officials of National Education to review the missions and goals assigned to the Algerian school. Thus, a broad process of consultation and debate has been launched to come off to the creation of the NCER to evaluate and define the future prospects of education policy. Since then, the Algerian education sector has experienced in the course of the recent years the sustained pace of the reforms operated/introduced at all levels. Decried by the entire society, both civil and political, the Algerian school no longer offers learners the expected competencies, attitudes and values. A reform of the entire education system was therefore launched in 2003.

### **3. The Implementation of the New Approach**

This project has addressed several aspects and allowed the establishment of new programmes, the editing of new textbooks, and especially the introduction of a new teaching methodology based on competencies, namely CBA. The latter was designed in 2002 and implemented starting from the 2003/2004 school year, in order to break up with the old approach called 'objective-based approach' (OBA). This approach focused on teaching the linguistic code, relying on a conception of language as a means of communication, as a code would suffice to acquire communication skills. This view of things was rendered null and void in language teaching by the pioneering works of Hymes and his followers, for example Abbou (1980) who identifies five different components of communicative competency: viz linguistic, socio-cultural, logic, argumentary and semiotic.

Although the real purpose of the communicative approach (CA) is to teach how to communicate, its results were disappointing. The recorded limits of this approach have contributed to consider it as:

***“A pedagogy based on monologic type of communication and fitting mostly within the narrow framework of the sentence [which] leaves, thus, virtually no room to the game of social phenomena and interaction” (Verdelhan-Bourgade 1996).***

Therefore, a new reform seems necessary, even indispensable in order to meet the needs of a successful communication both at school and outside it.

#### 4. Initial Teacher Training (ITT): towards a '*Universitarisation*' of Initial Training

In an attempt to understand the impact of the evolutions experienced by the teachers' training, it is advisable to make a brief return to the various types of procedures so far implemented. Until the creation of training institutions such as the '*Ecole Nationale Supérieure*' (henceforth ENS) [6] and the "*Ecole Nationale Supérieure de l'Enseignement Technique*" (henceforth ENSET) [7], the training of primary and middle school teachers was insured within the framework of the technological institute of Education (henceforth TIE) by teachers chosen by the local directorate of education of each wilaya because of their professional expertise. It took place in the field and was based on the observation of teaching practices carried by '*le maître d'application*' [8]. Legitimated by the institution, pedagogical models, upon which depended training, were fully imitated and replicated by teacher-trainees. In fact, there was no link between research in language didactics and primary and middle school teachers' training. Two sealed spaces whose contact was not favoured and even less privileged. Whereby the disjunction between what was done as research work into didactics at universities and training in these institutes was twofold: their dissemination was very limited or non-existent, except for teachers interested in their own self-training, and the professional practice conducted at the level of the institutes was an unknown area for researchers. The design of the professional training fitted in a behaviourist perspective is particularly relying on a pure reproduction of the models of 'good practices' (Haramboure 2003: 95-108). Thus, the ITT structure, contents and implementation review needs heedful consideration to comply with the fast-paced changes.

After the transfer of the ITT to the universities, the objectives underpinning the ITT have changed to develop trainees' scientific, cultural and professional competencies. Differently couched, the basic aim is to educate 'competent' teachers and develop necessary professional qualities to ensure lifelong teaching careers for teachers. In doing so, much emphasis is put on enquiry-based paradigm so as to promote teachers' thinking process leading to reflection and research. Being regarded as places of transmission and creation of knowledge, *universitarisation* of the ITT can allow teacher-trainees to profit from such free and independent environments. Since then, all nominees for the teaching profession should imperatively undergo a university three- four or five-year training course [9]. Although the ITT course provides

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[6] ENS was created by the Executive Decree No. 84-206 of 18 August 1984

[7] ENSET was created by the Executive Decree No. 09-20 of 20 January 2009

[8] The "*maître d'application*" master application, chosen by the school inspectorate according to the criterion of seniority was associated with initial training (IT). He exercised a dual function: a function as a teacher in charge of a class, and a trainer's function. He played the role of guarantor of effective and proven interplay between theoretical knowledge and professional practice, able to analyze with sufficient recoil the diversity of situations and teaching approaches to perceive the effects.

[9] To be eligible for the enrolment as primary or middle school teachers, the candidates should undergo a three-year training course that is equivalent to BA and 180 Credits. For secondary school



the knowledge to teach, knowledge for teaching and knowledge about teaching, the gap between theoretical and practical knowledge still persists. It is widely acknowledged that no matter how strong the ITT preparation is, the real class situations, in view of their singular character, are of paramount challenge to almost all teacher-trainees, because the ITT has not yet succeeded to produce life-long efficient teachers, who are aware of updating their knowledge and developing suitable solutions for each and every classroom situation.

### **5. A New Teacher Training Design**

Since the mid-80s to mid-90s, the objective of improving the level of education has led to a wave of educational reforms, including the reform of the teacher training, whose aim was to correct the drifts of the 60s. The institutions responsible for the TT had at that time focused excessively their interest on the child, on egalitarianism, etc. at the detriment of a professional and technical teachers' training, and an effective care centered on the learner and his learning. The establishment of a renovated training system and coaching assessment were then required. Measures have been retained for the ITT. With regard to training, the major change initiated by the guardianship is the transfer of the ITT from ex-TIEs to university, more exactly to ENS and ENSET. This decision was partly justified by the need to raise teachers' general culture, in particular the disciplinary one, and to give them a basis of "scientific" knowledge. It was in 1997 that the MNE announced that: *"Initial teachers training, in our country, will align on the global trend whereby teachers of all levels should be equipped with university level knowledge and skills."* (1997: 24)

This decision concerns all primary, middle and secondary school education teachers and the Baccalaurate is a compulsory condition to be eligible for enrolment.

### **6. Corpus Construction Method**

In order to build a diversified corpus, we had to find a compromise between the necessity to contrast to the maximum topics and opinions to obtain sufficient material that can be representative. The subjects potentially concerned by our study are diverse. The intentional choice of the latter is due to two reasons. Firstly, these subjects are easily accessible in time, given our status as a university teacher, trainer and ex-inspector, and secondly, the contribution of diversity due to the complexity of the subject matter; training and didactical issues. The contributions of the appreciations/assessments of all these subjects directly concerned with the training allow us to put enough light on the various facets related to the subject of our investigation. Thus, we wanted to get a wider range of viewpoints on the ITT and INSET among future teachers and those already in service.

Moreover, in view of the analysis to our problematic and questions in connection with the context and ongoing reforms, we elaborated a research device which we describe briefly below.

#### **6.1. Population and Sampling**

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teachers, the candidates should undergo five-year training course that is equivalent to Master and 120 credits.

The sampling strategy underlying the present survey was informed by many cogent reasons. Firstly, we sought to generate a representative sample of teacher-trainees (n=200) so as to collect enough accounts on the ITTP being studied. Secondly, in the same vein, we viewed it necessary to address a contingent of newly recruited teachers (n=100) to check to what extent the ITTP is beneficial to cope with the classroom realities. Thirdly, to be exhaustive, the teacher-trainers (n=20), who represent the fulcrum of the training process, are solicited to reflect on the ITTP and the future teachers' exit profile. Fourthly, to get an outside viewpoint, a sample of supervisors (n=12) was approached to reflect on the same issue. Their accounts are of utmost importance for neophyte teachers' classroom effectiveness. Fifthly, to elucidate the decision-makers' perception of the matter, both those in charge of the ITT contents and outcomes formulation (MNE) and implementation (training institutes) (n=2) who are selected on a voluntary basis (the characteristics of this sample will be detailed below) are invited, via interviews, to reveal the intents and tenets of the ITTP as formulated and arranged in the official documents and the way they are carried out during the ITT course, respectively. Our goal is to engage in the study all the partners involved in training as decision-makers, performers/executors and supervisors so as to pinpoint the strengths, to maintain and the weaknesses, to try to remedy. In different wording, the underlying assumption of such a multifarious partner-source can supply inestimable insightful data which can enable us to be well-informed and sufficiently enlightened on the ITT issue, thus determining appropriate solutions to be undertaken subsequently.

## **6.2. A Few Demographic Characteristics**

### **6.2.1. Subject Actors**

A place is granted to PEM teacher-trainees (cohort 2014-15) graduated from Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem and ENS and in-service neophyte teachers (cohort 2013-14) in the provinces of Tiaret and Tissemsilt. This means paying attention to these subjects and their contexts because it is in these contexts that appear significations as well as elements associated with it.

This choice puts us on the sidelines of a research tradition rather prescriptive, which would rest mainly on theoretical conceptualisations made in connection with the practical issues which could often lead to face shortages and gaps. Thus, these teachers become, according to Blumer (1969) in Mucchielli (1996), creators and constitutive of the reality. In addition, for these actors, Schön (1994) recognizes daily reflexivity. These actors are situated in the field of practical knowledge. Their interpellation appears to us as a sure means to elucidate this issue of the TT.

It is worth recalling here that the underlying objective is to seek, among different training partners, answers to the following questions:

- Is the ITT really tailored to fit the requirements and developments which teachers are expected to face?
- Is there consistency and connection between the contents of the training and competencies underpinning the CBA?

- Is the INSET sufficient and effective to equip teachers with essential professional competences for constant adaptation to the changes stemming from globalisation fallouts?

#### **6.2.2. Questionnaires 1 & 2 administered to 200 teacher-trainees in the 2014-2015 cohorts**

The survey by questionnaire, distributed late in the academic year, seemed to us to be the most appropriate tool for understanding the trainee-teachers' perspectives on the ITT, its content and its pertinence. Besides, it enables them to assess and reflect on the outcomes of the ITTP. The questionnaires 1 (for BA holders) and 2 (ESN graduates) consist of 10 and 11 question items respectively, grouped into three sections; I. Trainees' biographical data and profile, II. Trainees' evaluation of the expected outcomes after three-four year training courses and III. Trainees' perspectives and expectations.

### **7. General Profile and Biographical Data of the Teacher-trainees**

The total number is 200 students; 100 copies for each training institution. The number of copies distributed is 200, by cons the collection was limited to 171 (100 for the university graduates and 71 for ENS ones), representing a return rate of 85.50%.

#### **7.1. A Young and Feminised Population**

Among the participants who have contributed to our research, there are 148 females (86.54%) and 23 males (13.54%). As for the distribution of respondents with respect to age ranges, we perceive that almost the majority of future teachers (91.81%) have an age which varies between 20 and 25 years. Only 13 of them (all of them males 02 ENS PEMs & 11 BA holders), a rate of 07.60%, are over than 25 years old. Among future teachers, women are by far the majority. In fact, they account for nearly 86.54% of future teachers of English.

The Algerian university population is very young. In fact, 91.81% of them become graduates maximum at the age of 25 years. It is worth mentioning that overall age average for females is around 25, whereas for males it is about 25.66. Access to university studies has increased significantly in recent years. If the democratisation of education, including university, decreed in mid-1970 has helped thousands of Algerian graduates to cross the threshold of the campus, much later wandered with their diplomas without being able to get a job.

#### **7.2. English Language Study Choices**

#### **7.3. Anchoring in the Linguistic Environment**

In the current global context, it should be emphasised that foreign language learning FLL is dictated by the importance and profitability parameters, i.e., that individuals and policies prospect languages that are the most useful, the most convenient and implement the means, methods and strategies to achieve and follow social and global evolution. The linguistic environment determines the practice of foreign language teaching.

Relying on perfectly founded findings, both of a pragmatic than theoretical viewpoints, virtually most of the Algerian universities require English language learning. At the tertiary level, English is introduced in different curricula at different departments nationwide, either as a main subject at the English Department and by which students are required to attend the following modules: Literature, Civilization, Linguistics, Phonetics, TEFL, the four skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) or simply as an additional but compulsory module dealing either with EGP or ESP. As it has been stated by Professor Miliani:

***“In a situation where the French language has lost much of its ground in the sociocultural and educational environments of the country; the introduction of English is being heralded as the magic solution to all possible ills including economic, technological and education ones” (qtd.in Abdellatif 2013: 433).***

In fact, it is quite visible that the English language, though assigned the status of a second foreign language, continues to sweep the Algerian linguistic arena.

#### **7.4. English Language for Mobility, Job and Communication Purposes**

The motive behind learning English is of utmost importance to explore. The question item 5 *‘Why have you chosen to study English language?’* is meant to shed light on trainees’ motivations and prospects arousing their choices. The answers reveal that all ENS trainees’ inducement for English language is teaching (71 = 100%). Yet, the university trainees, besides teaching the language, 80 of them (=80%) state different reasons such as travelling (30%), like the language (25%), for communication purpose (27%), only 7% of the respondents feel that they had no other choice.

With regard to external factors, human mobility that the worldwide society is witnessing requires several languages proficiency to communicate, work or study abroad. The main reason for young Algerians behind learning foreign languages, especially French and English, may essentially be a linguistic one. Assessment tests of linguistic knowledge such as DALF [10], DELF [11] TCF [12] ... for French and the IELTS [13] and TOEFL [14] for English imposed by foreign institutes and universities, engage and motivate young Algerians to strive to improve their linguistic proficiency. For many young people, linguistic constraints weigh much more than those financial. It is in this perspective that human sciences and foreign languages are virtually envied by young academics.

#### **8. The Future Teachers’ Competencies: Assessment and Self-Assessment**

Upon reading the data to question item 6 on the linguistic competence, formulated as follows *“After three/ four years, how would you assess your English linguistic competence?”* We notice that more than half of the respondents, representing a ratio of 61.40% (47/71 for ENS PEM 58/100 for BA graduates) assess

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[10] ADFL: Advanced Diploma in French Language

[11] DFLE: Diploma of French Language Studies

[12] TKF: Test of Knowledge of French

[13] IELTS : International English Language Testing System

[14] TOFEL : Test of English as a Foreign Language

their linguistic competence as being excellence. The university curriculum, spread over three/four years, should equip students with the necessary knows they need to better master both spoken and written English. Being convinced that achieving any progress in the study of a foreign language begins with awareness of the elements of the system that underlies it, the designers of university course devoted great importance to the rules governing the English language, be it grammar, phonetics, phonemic or spelling. Lastly, studying the various aspects of the spoken language namely stress, rhythm, reduced forms, intonation generates large cumstancies and should have endowed the student who will conscientiously review the real and final appropriation of the major difficulties of the English speech. By cons, forty-three (43) (13 for ENS PEM and 30 BA graduate) of the surveyed trainees, attest that the linguistic competence is good. For the rest, i.e., 23 (11 for ENS PEM and 12 BA holders), think that this competence is fair.

### **8.1. The Limitations of the Linguistic Competence**

Certainly, linguistic proficiency is not sufficient in itself to communicate effectively and appropriately with the other, but the acquisition of the lexical (word order), syntactic (word forms and rules) and phonological (sounds) knows and know-how-to-do is essential to facilitate this communication which requires an understanding of attitudes, systems of values, behaviours, and the whole cultural context of his interlocutor.

With reference to the figures collected from question item 6b, we note that less than thirty per cent of the respondents, i.e., 28.65% (23 ENS PEM & 26 BA holders), confirm that their sociolinguistic competence is excellent. Only 33 trainees out of the 171 respondents (19 ENS PEM & 14 BA holders) indicate that this competence is good. By cons, the majority of the respondents (64 trainees- 29 ENS PEM & 35 BA holders) think is fair. In fact, no trainee assesses his sociolinguistic competence as being poor or very poor.

In the light of the statistics generated from question item 6c in connection with the pragmatic competence self-assessment, we note that 41 trainees (23.97%) (14 ENS PEM and 27 BA graduates) confess that their pragmatic competence is excellent. Fifty-four of the surveyed trainees (17 ENS PEM & 37 BA holders) assert that it is good. Seventy-six trainees, i.e., 44.44% (40 ENS PEM & 36 BA holders) estimate that their pragmatic competence to be fair.

The communicative competence (CC) has been an overarching issue for foreign language teaching (FLT) as a cornerstone for language classrooms. The paramount constituents of the CC are the sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences, though acknowledged as being primordial for foreign language perfect mastery, are not taught and learned appropriately. Thus, the failure relative to the acquisition of the so-called sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences resides in the lack of direct or indirect contact of the students with native speakers of the FL. In addition, the absence of a methodology for teaching this pragmatic field makes the perception, interpretation and detection of the nuances that words, phrases and constructions convey impossible. Pragmatic competence, in fact, focuses much on the analysis of

the meanings conveyed by utterances rather than the literal meanings of words and phrases speakers use in their discourse.

### **8.2. Self-assessment: As a Formative Practice**

The participation of the teacher-trainees consciously and actively in their learning and its assessment fits in a pedagogical perspective contributing to the development of their autonomy. By giving future teachers the opportunity to assess themselves, we expected them to know their weaknesses and help them improve their competences. Thus, trainee teachers can pass and change from mere receivers to active participants in the process of the ITT. We have asked the trainee teachers to reflect on the progress relating to the three competences during the training period. The problem with this kind of evaluation (self-evaluation) cannot be void of subjectivity in judgment, especially in the absence of clearly defined criteria and the appropriate accompaniment by trainee-teachers to its use (*cf.* self-assessment grid CEFR). Continuous use of self-assessment allows trainee teachers to develop their metacognitive strategies, that is to say, to recognize and learn to identify their strengths and their weaknesses. Suffice to say that this evaluative posture is learned "*it is a work on oneself for a critical self-conscientisation*" (Donnadieu, Genthon & Vial 1998: 110). Self-assessment refers to the direct involvement of the trainee teachers in making judgments about their proper training, particularly about the outcomes of their training. Indeed, it is formative in that it contributes to the training process and assists the trainees to direct their energy to areas in need of improvement. Training teachers to self-assess is to accept to see backward to cast a critical eye on oneself. The establishment of such a process cannot be reducible to a simple external instrumentation in the hands of trainers who will ignore the trainees' involvement in their own training. Self-assessment learning is an essential tool enabling teachers to go beyond a simple cumulative, unreflected know-how-to-do, purely operational expertise, to access to reflected know-how-to-do through which they can intervene and act consciously (Jean Cardinet 1988).

### **9. The Impact of the Teaching Modules on Classroom Scenarios**

By browsing through the data resulting from question item 7 on the module that is the most suitable for classroom scenarios, we note that owing to the different canvases for ENS PEM and BA graduates, opinions differ with respect to modules contributing in the construction of classroom scenarios. For BA graduates, besides other answers, they unanimously believe that the modules of ESP and the internship (stage) helped them construct an idea about the classroom reality. Yet, the ENS PEM acknowledged that modules such as psychology, psychopedagogy, material design and development, internship prepared them for the classroom situation; the future profession.

Among other answers in connection with the above question, we note the following ones. Twenty-one per cent (21% n=21) of the BA respondents think that the module of civilisation and 06% (n=6) believe it is the module of literature. The highest percentages are attributed to the modules of grammar (22% =n22), linguistics (16% =n16), oral expression (11 % =n11) and phonetics (18% =n18). These data may reveal the trainees' ignorance of the modules aims, outcomes and scope.

It is quite visible that the ENS PEMs seem to be somewhat prepared for the classroom practice. Undoubtedly, the IT had an impact on trainees' styles, attitudes, self-esteem and confidence, being school-context outcomes, and have become well-established constructs within these teachers. Referring to the modular structure of the ENS PEM training course, we notice that the module of TEFL gains 90 hrs (dealing with theoretical knows= language teaching methodologies, methods and techniques) and Internship in host schools, though introduced only in the fourth year, is allotted 180 hours. This trainee-school and classroom contact, built upon a reality that is rooted in daily classroom practices, works indubitably in favour of these trainees' integration of the new profession with less difficulty than their colleagues BA holders.

#### 10. Analysis and Commentary Elements

The change that is taking place in the field of Didactics of Foreign Languages (TEFL) requires a methodological reflection in an optical *sensu lacto* to include the (inter) cultural dimension in different levels of education. No one, neither the teachers nor educationalists, can now ignore it. In fact, the knowledge acquired by the candidates to the learning of the English language is very superficial which explains the confusion and misunderstanding. To reiterate what Abdallah Pretceille meant by intercultural competence by claiming that: *"The effectiveness of the intercultural competence is not ensured by the familiarity with the other culture, but by a permanent investigation that involves a constant cultural standby."* (1996: 325).

It is principally the English language teachers' responsibility to raise awareness and sensitize students to the cultural dimension. According to Lipiansky, it is not a question *"Only to the linking of two objects, two independent and relatively fixed assemblies. It is a phenomenon of interaction where these objects constitute themselves just as they communicate."*(1995: 192).

It seems that the FLTs cannot take on this role and this is due to the deficiencies in their IT. Training should provide future teachers with capabilities to establish the link between the original culture and foreign culture, to play the intermediary between the two cultures, to manage cultural conflicts and misunderstandings, and learn how to go beyond superficial and stereotyped relationships. [15]

Undoubtedly, it is in FL classes that FLTs inculcate the awakening to the FL socio-pragmatic rules, but it is only outside the classroom (I mean the cultural context of the TL) that this competence can flourish and reach its integral development to become an effective competence. The sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences are rarely part of learning the language in a classroom context. In the absence of the socio-cultural environment in the Algerian context, the use of authentic audio-visual media can contribute to the acquisition of different variations. Linguistic exchanges with native speakers are the best way to make students aware of linguistic phenomena and thus develop this sociopragmatic competence. The training periods in the countries of the TL allow, beyond any shadow of doubt, future teachers to

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[15] Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The issue of culture and intercultural. Council of Europe. The Edition Didier. 2001. p.84

establish links between the morpho-lexical and operational semantic achievements and to produce appropriate speech from the socio-pragmatic standpoint [16].

The availability of online services via the Internet can substitute for immersion courses to make these contacts possible. The introduction of the ICTs in education and training is no longer a figment of the imagination. Indeed, new technologies have penetrated, and no one can deny it, significantly all sectors of national and tertiary education. They constitute a major challenge, a strategic issue. They offer new teaching/learning modalities, particularly in the field of the FL. Thanks to ICTs, in general, and multimedia, in particular, new teaching/ learning devices, allowing for effective management on the part of the learner of his own learning, are developed, in another way; they allow the liberation of the learners from their "masters". ICTs provide powerful tools to support the shift from teacher centred to learner centred paradigm and new roles of teacher, learner, curricula and new media. Shifting the emphasis from teaching to learning has created a more interactive and engaging learning environment for both the teachers and the learners. This new environment also involves a change in their roles. Learners have more responsibilities of their learning as they seek out, find, synthesise, and share their knowledge with others.

The data collected from question item 8 on the module which initial training should focus on (*cf.* Appendix 1 Table 15 p 385), reveal that teacher-trainees (BA) think that the emphasis should be placed on the module of grammar (54.97%), oral expression (45.61%), written expression (36.84%), phonetics (37.42%) to help them acquire professional competences.

By analyzing the data from this question 7, we can infer that the importance is both placed on the acquisition of linguistic proficiency (grammar, phonetics, and writing) and sociolinguistic competence (speaking) and professional competence (TEFL and psycho-pedagogy). Thus, we can say that the major importance is assigned to the acquisition of linguistic competence. It is necessary, perhaps, to ask the question on the type of evaluation at university level. Does not this type of assessment encourage this tendency toward its acquisition? A new avenue of research proves to be important to uncover the reasons behind this emphasis on the acquisition of this competency.

### **Conclusion**

All the teacher-trainees' accounts on the ITT, via various questions in the questionnaires, reveal the need for a revision of the training programme content and its implementation especially during the ITT. The curriculum as it is conceived does not meet the requirements of the new reforms, based on the communicative approach and the entry by competencies. The development of the communicative competence builds on the three prioritised competences (CEFR 2001) [17], namely

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[16] It is essential to point out that the pragmatic competence consists of pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics. The former refers to the mastery of linguistic components (syntactical, semantic, lexical...rules). Yet, the latter refers to what is considered as appropriate linguistic behaviour (social norms).

[17] CEFR Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The issue of culture and intercultural. Council of Europe. The Edition Didier. 2001. p.84



linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic. Obviously, the last two competences are not part of school and university learning. Thus, if the acquisition of lexical, syntactic and phonological rules is essential to master a language, they will be inadequate if they are not accompanied by adapted pragmatic and sociolinguistic knowledge. In addition, the training process should be involving to encourage prospective teachers to seek to acquire ideas and to forge useful beliefs for their future professional action. Between the formative context that should offer them meanings to appropriate (Barbier 2000), and potential know-how-to-be, they should invent their own system of thought and action. Thus, a reflective process installs and generates self-assessments of knowledge and professional competencies. Once on the workplace, the prospective teachers face a tension between their own representations already acquired and the changes of the latter should undergo in relation to the new environment, an inevitable imbalance that should enable the prospective teachers to project themselves in the future by thinking of themselves in a consistent manner. To function in such a way, the IT should prepare trainee teachers to enter the world of employment that is characterised by greater uncertainty, speed, risk, complexity and interdisciplinary working, equipping them with appropriate skills, knows, values and attributes to thrive in it.

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