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A Narrative Enquiry of Good English Learners' Identities

The case of English Teachers at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, Jijel

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Master Degree in Language Sciences

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DEDICATION**This work is dedicated to**

My north star, my compass, my voice of reason...

The strongest person I know: My mother, Fatima

The man who has always been by my side no matter what...

My loving father: Kamel

The souls who brightened my childhood by making indelible memories...

My dear brothers: Fouad & Zakaria

My special cousins: Soumia, Mouna, & Asma

The beautiful creatures who showed me how life can have infinite moments...

My partner, roommate, and best friend: Abir

And my amazing Friends and Loved ones: Selwa, Wissam, Loubna, Rokia, Farida, Wafa,

Aicha, Sajiya, Saida, Sara, and Keltoum;

To everyone who made me the person I am today, and the better person I will be tomorrow.

Selma

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My dear brother Hani and his lovely wife Samra

My only sweet sister Chirine

*My very close cousins Nadia and Bouchra, who were always by my side whenever I needed
them*

My new lovely baby born nephew Yahia

*My dear friends: Wissam, Loupita, Meriem, Farida, Aicha, Sadjia, Khouloud, Amina, Roukia,
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Abstract

Considering both the fact that identity has become a widespread issue in the field of second language acquisition, and Block's (2007) hypothesis which states that the reconstruction of identity in a foreign language context is nonexistent, the current study aims at investigating the process of identity reconstruction among teachers as, once, successful English language learners. This research followed a Narrative Inquiry methodology in the exploration of similarities among narratives of successful language learners of English, as well as investigating the striking differences. The data, in this piece of work, are collected by means of an interview which is presented in English solely, and addressed to six teachers of English at the university of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia in Jijel. The analysis of the obtained data showed the existence of multiple similarities among the teachers' narratives, and therefore disconfirmed Block's hypothesis. Based on the findings obtained, pedagogical implications are suggested.

List of Abbreviations and Symbols

?: Percentage

Big “C”: Big Culture

CIA: Central Intelligence Agency

CNRSE: Commander Navy Region South East

E.N.S: École Normal Supérieure

Etc: Et cetera

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FL: Foreign Language

i.e.: That is to say

LMD: License Master Doctorate

Q: Question

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

Small “c”: Small culture

Vs: Versus

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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

The study of the interrelationship between second language learning and identity has recently attracted the attention of an ever-growing number of SLA (Second Language Acquisition) researchers. Due, at least partly, to empirically supported skepticism towards the adequacy of motivation as a valid explanatory construct for individual differences in target language learning; these researchers have opted for a poststructuralist identity approach to account for these differences (for example, Bayley & Schechter, 2003; Block, 2006; Day, 2002; Kanno, 2003; Kramsch, 2003, 2007; Miller, 2003; Norton, 2000; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). This poststructuralist approach differs from the traditional structuralist theories of motivation, which usually classify students to binary categories (for example, motivated Vs. unmotivated) in that, it considers identity to be a site of struggle, negotiation of difference, ambivalence, structure and agency, communities of practice, symbolic capital, or any other constructs associated with poststructuralist identity (Block, 2007, p.867). The proponents of the identity approach consider the study of learners' life stories as being the best methodology for the study of the relationship between the different aspects of identity and language learning.

While taking note of the scarcity of the studies that deal with the issue of the relationship between identity and language learning in EFL (English as a foreign language context), Block (2002) claims that in such setting, learners' identities do not usually undergo any significant change due to the lack of sufficient intensity in the exposure to the target culture. Given that the basic claim of the identity approach to

second language learning is that identity changes are a necessary condition for the attainment of higher levels of proficiency in the target language, the present study will explore the common features of English language learning narratives of Algerian university teachers as successful target language learners with regard to the relationship between English learning and different aspects of their identities (for example, imagined community, agency, positioning... etc.) so as to seek some useful insights about improving the effectiveness of the current English curriculum.

2. Aim of the Study

The study aims to explore the similarities among the narratives of successful learners of EFL in the Algerian context, university English language teachers in our case, with regard to the relationship between the different aspects of identity (Such as the target language as an imagined community, agency... etc.) and these teachers' development of target language proficiency in target culture and poor language input environment so as to gain useful insights about the way to improve the effectiveness of the cultural component of the English university curriculum currently in use.

3. Research Question

The major question that the present study will attempt to answer is the following:
Are there any common aspects concerning the relationship between identity and target language proficiency in the autobiographic narratives of English as foreign language Algerian university teachers?

4. Hypothesis

Algerian university teachers of English, being successful language learners in a target cultural and linguistic poor environment, will demonstrate a great deal of similarity in their autobiographic narratives with regard to the correlation between all the aspects of their personal identities and their individual proficiency achievements in English.

5. Means of Research

In order to achieve the objectives of the present study, a long semi-directed autobiographic interview has been designed and administered to a sample of six university teachers of English at the department of English at university of M.S. Benyahia, Jijel, randomly chosen based on convenience. These interviews have been then transcribed and analyzed.

6. Structure of the Thesis

The present work is composed of three chapters. The first and second chapters are a review of the related literature. The first chapter is concerned with the English teaching in Algeria while the second chapter discusses identity in relation to SLA research. Finally, the last chapter represents the field work; it first touches upon the methodology used in aim of obtaining the data, then it focuses on the analysis and discussion of the results.

Chapter One: The linguistic Situation in Algeria

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Chapter One: The Linguistic Situation in Algeria

Introduction

This chapter represents an overview on the linguistic situation in Algeria. It gives a historical background of the Algerian educational system before the French colonization, during the colonization, and after the independence. Therefore, it shed lights on the national language and identity of the post-colonial Algeria. This chapter will, also, deal with the status of English in Algeria. It, then, emphasizes the English use in the Algerian communities. Finally, it will give some insights about the teaching of English at the department of Letters and Languages.

1. An overview of the Educational System in Algeria

1.1. Background on Algeria

1.1.1. The country

Algeria (Arabic: Al Jaza'ir; Berber: Dzyer; French: Algérie), officially, the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, is a sovereign state in North Africa on the Mediterranean coast. Algiers is its capital. Algeria is the tenth largest country in the world and the largest in Africa and the Arab world with a total area of 2, 381, 741 square kilometers. It is bordered to the northeast by Tunisia, to the east by Libya, to the west by Morocco, to the southwest by the Western Sahara territory, Mauritania and Mali, to the southeast by Nigeria, and to the north by the Mediterranean Sea. The country is a semi-presidential republic consisting of 48 provinces and 1,541 communes (counties). Abdelaziz Bouteflika has been President since 1999 (CIA World Factbook, 2015).

1.1.2. The people

On a statistical basis in 2017, the population of Algeria is 41, 022, 614 million inhabitants (Worldometers, 2017). Islam is the dominant religion of 99 percent of the total population.

Customarily, the Algerian population has been divided into two ethnic groups: Arabs and Berbers. However, these groups are not used in a racial sense, rather, they refer to groups of people who are raised in an Arabic or Berber language, respectively, and who grow up in an environment where Arabic or Berber traditional customs prevail (Haddadou, 1997, p.81).

1.1.3. The language profile of Algeria

The main spoken languages in Algeria are: Arabic, Berber, and French.

1.1.3.1. Classical Arabic

Arabic is the official national language of 22 countries. More than 200 million people speak Arabic in one form or another (Comrie et al., 1997, p.76; Elkhafaifi, 2002, p.254). It is the written language of the Holy Quran (Koran). Standard Arabic is basically a modernized form of Classical Arabic known as 'Al'arabiyya Alfusha' (The 'pure' or 'clean' language); in other words, there is little distinction between Classical and Standard Arabic; they both share the same grammatical rules (Bentahila, 1983, p.3; Grandguillaume, 1990, p.159). Since 1962, Arabic has been the official language of the Algerian government, education, and other sectors (Chemami, 2011, p. 228).

1.1.3.2. Algerian Arabic

Dialectical, colloquial, or Algerian Arabic is a local language that is spoken in ordinary everyday conversation, within families, friends... etc. It refers to the colloquial language known as 'amma, darija or lahja ('dialects'). Being spoken and not written, they are distinguishable from Classical Arabic as a result of a general grammatical simplification in structure with fewer grammatical categories (Kaye, 1987, p. 667). Algerian Arabic is a part of the Maghrebi Arabic continuum. It descends from a variety of languages including: Arabic, French, and Berber. Spoken Arabic in Algeria covers 80-85% of the total population, it is spread over four major geographic areas, and each is distinguished with its own linguistic features (Benrabah, 2005, p.402).

- 1- Western Algerian Arabic used in an area which extends from the Moroccan border to Tenes.
- 2- Central Algerian Arabic spoken in the central zone which extends to Bejaia and includes Algiers and its surroundings.
- 3- Eastern Algerian Arabic spoken in the High Plateaus around Setif, Constantine, Annaba and extends to the Tunisian border.
- 4- Saharan Algerian Arabic spoken by around 100,000 inhabitants in the Sahara Desert (Ethnologue, 2004; Queffelec et al., 2002, p.35; Taleb ,1995, p.31).

1.1.3.3. Berber

Berber or the Berber language or the Amazigh language (Benrabah, 2005). Berber name: Tamazi t, Tamazight, pronounced [tæmæ z t] or [θæmæ z θ]) are a family of similar and closely related languages and dialects indigenous to North Africa.

Berber descends from the Afro-Asiatic language family. According to 'Language Magazine' Berber dates back to the 17th century, when Berbers were the original inhabitants of the area. Despite the Arab invasions, Berber maintained its language status. Tamazight language is used in different parts of Algeria with various dialects as follows:

- 1- Kabyle, spoken in Kabylie, east Algiers, Tizi Ouzou and Bejaia.
- 2- Chaouia, spoken in Aures
- 3- Mozabit, spoken in Ghardaia
- 4- Chenoua, spoken around Mount Chenoua, near Cherchel, and Tipaza
- 5- Tamashek', spoken by Tuaregs of the Sahara

In early January 2016, The Algerian government declared Berber as a constitutional, official, and national language that can formally be used in administrative documents, educational systems... etc. (Aidi, 2016).

1.1.3.4. French

According to the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) World Factbook, French is a lingua franca of Algeria. The latter is ranked as the second largest Francophone country in the world in terms of the speakers. Rebai Mammri, author of "The Syndrome of the French Language in Algeria," said "French continues to be the dominant language in business and professional circles" and that "certain aspects of formal education and research are still carried in the French language and a great part of the economic and industrial sectors and press still use French extensively." (Maamri, 2009).

Accordingly, French is widely used not only in mundane life communication, but also in formal sectors of government, administration, and education. Different varieties of French are spoken among different social classes (Chebchoub, 1985). The first variety is Standard French; it is identical to native French speakers, and it is described for being prestigious. The second one is Standard Algerian French; it is formally used by educated people, and mainly used for educational instructions, or administrative documents. The third and last variety is Colloquial Algerian French; it is locally spoken by people who received poor education in French.

1.2. Education in Algeria before the French Colonization in 1830

It is historically proven that education, as well as culture, were highly respectable in the Algerian society. The educational System in Algeria was fairly independent, and built upon the Islamic teachings that are taken from the Algerians themselves. Statistically speaking, a percentage of 40% of the total population were literate. Accordingly, the French general Daumas stated:

The primary education was spread enough in the whole of the country, in a way which exceeded our imagination, and our relations with the local people in the three provinces (Constantine, Algiers, and Oran) gave us evidence that the percentage of the males who have the knowledge of reading and writing - were at least equal to those in our countryside.

(Turin, Y., 1971, p. 127)

The education at that time sought religious purposes. There were three phases through which Algerian students went in their studies. Pupils were first required to enroll in the primary school

or what was called "Msid"; its main role was to teach them the whole Quran. Pupils had to learn Koran in order to be granted the acceptance to move to the preceding level. In the secondary level, the pupils studied alongside Quran new other subjects such as; Geography, Mathematics, Astronomy, History and Medicine. Moving to the third phase which is Higher education, the students used to travel to the neighboring countries to continue their studies; they enrolled in famous universities such as: Cairo, Zitouna and Karaouiyine in Egypt, Tunisia and Marocco respectively (Benrabah, 1999).

As seen, the Algerian education was flourishing before the French conquest as the General Valzè had witnessed and reported: "The status of education in Algeria was good before the French presence and all the Algerian Arabs knew how to read and write" (The Algerian schools through the stages of its development", 2011)

1.3. The Algerian Educational System during the Colonization

During their existence in Algeria, the French have known that the Arabic language is a crucial pillar in the Algerian identity, and the linkage between the past and present as a means of communication. Consequently, the French conqueror practiced certain strategies to acculturate and/or assimilate the Algerians into the French society, which has radically frozen the use of both Arabic and Berber. The French, then, controlled all Algerian schools and turned them into administrations, military offices, and bars for the French troops. So, as the Algerian students were taken away from their schools, and deprived of their rights to learn. The number of enrolments decreased to the lowest levels after 1830. (Benrabah, 2005)

The French concluded that to spread their language, it had to be taught to the children, so that they could have them under their supervision. In doing so, French established centers and offices

for teaching children the French language; they used French as a cudgel because they realized how important a language could be, as Duke Dunal stated that "The opening of a school amongst people is better than a military corps to calm down a country". Therefore, The France's colonial subjugation aimed at erasing the peculiarities of the Algerian personality, and replacing Arabic and Islam with the French teachings.

Consequently, Algerians felt the threat when sending their children to learn in the colonial schools, which would eradicate their own religion and culture, so they refused sending their children to the French school.

After the First World War, Algerians' resistance was no longer strong. As stated in Benrabah (2005), Algerians started altering their attitudes towards the French education. This alteration has rapidly turned into acceptance by 1920-1922, and Algerians enrolled in the French educational system; though this acceptance was partial, Algerians resisted to colonization. It consequently led to the foundation of some nationalist movements which have significantly agonized and argued about the country's future.

Nationalism appeared right after the First World War with the emergence of three main nationalists' groups. The first group was the Star of North Africa under the leadership of Mssali El Hadj in 1926, which called for Algeria's independence, confiscation of large estate, and institution of Arabic schools. The second one was the Association of Elected Muslims in 1934, which was founded by Ferhat Abbas, and had an assimilation agenda with France; it called for equal rights for Muslims without renouncing their own identity (McDougall, J, 2006, p.25). The third, and most important group, was the Association of Reformist Ulama founded by Sheikh Abdelhamid Ben Badis in 1931; its ultimate purpose is felt in the famous saying: "Islam is our religion, Algeria is our country, Arabic is our language". In 1936, Ben Badis declared:

Algeria has its own religion and linguistic unity, its culture, its traditions and characteristics, both good and bad like any other nation. We then say that this Algerian nation is not France, it cannot be France, and it will not be France. It is impossible to become France even if desired so. On the contrary, it is a nation that is completely different from France, by its language, its customs, its ethnic origins, and its religions. It rejects assimilation.

In his declaration, Ben Badis empowered the importance of Islam and Arabic inseparable parts of the Algerian identity. In clear opposition to the French assimilation, the Association of Reformist Ulama opened clandestine Quranic schools in order to teaching Arabic.

1.4. The Algerian Educational System after independence

After independence in 1962, Algeria was left with a completely French Educational System. The French knew that school happened to be the most effective tool they could use to transform a society through teaching French language to the indigenous Algerians. “Transform the young indigenous into faithful and obedient subjects by teaching them our language, history and geography to give an idea of the extent of the civilization of our country” (Magali Morsy, 1984). This had led to a whole new re-structuration of the Algerian school under French instructions, which resulted in eradicating the Arabic and Islamic identities of the conquered land in order to erase citizens' old selves and frame new ones which are easy to assimilate to the French identity (Rebai Maamri, 2009).

The Educational System appears to have been called into question. So, the Algerian Government found it necessary to formulate a new system which goes hand in hand with the Algerian peculiarities as Muslims and Arabs.

1.4.1. Democratization

Algeria founded a democratic system which maintains the right of free education for all children who have reached the school age. Accordingly, Benrabah (2005) claimed that an urgent need is felt to open a great deal of schools, and hire new more teachers. As a consequence of the former policy, there was a numerous increase in enrolments on one hand, and a lack of teachers and instructors on the other. This lack was mainly caused by the departure of most of the French teachers. From a total 27, 000 educators, almost 25, 000 departed from the country. In 1964, the president Ben Bella ordered to hiring 18, 000 Arabic and French teachers to fill the needs; 3200 of the total number were Syrians and Egyptians.

Needless to mention the enormous expansion of pupils, which was doubled in merely four years. In 1962-1963, the number was nearly 777,336; though, in 1965-1966, the number rose to 1,332, 203. Dealing with such trouble, pupils had to attend classes once a day, so that teachers would be able to teach mainly two groups.

1.4.2. Algerianization

After the French departure, the government had to gain back everything that once belonged to Algeria through the process of Algerianization. In 1952, almost all French children (colons) enrolled in schools, whereas only 14 percent of Algerian children did. Also, it estimated that 1 million Algerians spoke French, while a fewer number of 300,000 could read Arabic. By 1974, a great deal of procedures was at play in order to algerianize the Algerian school. In doing so, almost all children of six years old enrolled the schools, the first two years of the primary phase were purely in Arabic. While French was taught only as a second language to third year pupils,

and all teachers were Algerians, even if the subjects being taught were in French. (Beer, W., & Jacob, J., 1985, p. 137)

1.4.3. Arabization

The most severe problem Algeria has encountered since independence lies in language. It is the only Arabic country that was conquered by the French for 132 years. A period which is basically sufficient to erase a whole culture, and eradicate the essential pillars of a society (language, religion etc...), henceforth, the Algerians identity was radically suppressed. To remedy such problem, the Algerian government hastened to found a policy embodied in Arabization. "Starting from 1962 the Algerian government that inherited the remnants of an education system focused on European content and conducted in a foreign language by foreign teachers, sought to gradually increase Arabic sessions in all levels and all subjects were taught in Arabic and there was a decrease in the amount of time for teaching French. This policy, of course favored the national integrity a unity and religion" (Benrabah 2005).

Therefore, Arabization has become a watertight system in education. It has been explained clearly through various definitions. In one sense, Arabization is the extensive use of Arabic in all domains of life: political, social, and cultural i.e., it refers to the promotion of Arabic as a medium of interaction in public and private sectors (Grandguillaume et al., 2004), while in another sense, Sayadi (1982) defines Arabization as lexical expansion which includes the coinage of new terms, either from existing words, or through translation of foreign terms. Benrabah (2005), in turn, defines Arabization as follows: "The Arabic term ta'rib is sometimes translated interchangeably as 'Arabicisation' or 'Arabisation', although the difference between these terms is not insignificant (Benabdi, 1980; Elkhafaifi, 2002; Ennaji, 1999; Ibrahim, 1989; Suleiman, 1999). The first sense applies mostly in the Arab Middle East and two countries of

North Africa (Libya and Egypt) referring to both status acquisition and corpus planning activities- planners replace some other (usually colonial) language by Arabic as the medium of instruction in all cycles of the educational system, and they enrich the language by incorporating into it newly borrowed or derived I revived words. In North African countries (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia), which were former French colonies, ta'rib means the replacement of French by Arabic in all walks of life (education, administration, milieu, media, etc.) as well as the use of the latter language as an instrument for national unity and the affirmation of an identity that is exclusively Arab. Hence, while 'Arabicisation' is a linguistic process, 'Arabisation', is both cultural and linguistic" (p.410).

After the departure of the assimilationist French colonial, Algerian Governors devoted their efforts in attempt to regain the cultural peculiarities Algeria has lost over the years, including Arabic and Islamic values since they are deeply linked. Rouadjia (1991) asserted that "The Arabic language and Islam are inseparable. Arabic has a privileged position as it is the language of Quran and the prophet, and the shared language of all Muslims in the world, language of science and language of culture" (Benrabah, 2007a, p.67). The government and public together rebelled against French existence to bring back their heritage they were deprived of, for the safeguard of Arabic and Islam.

1.5. Language and National Identity of Algeria

Smith (2004) defined national identity as a modern phenomenon of a fluid and dynamic nature, one by means of which a community sharing a particular set of characteristics is led to the subjective belief that its members are ancestrally related. Belief in a shared culture, history, traditions, symbols, kinship, language, religion, territory, founding moment, and destiny have been invoked, with varying intensity at different times and places, by peoples claiming to share a

particular national identity (p.134). In Gilroy's idea, national identity is structured through a notion of citizenship and patriotism that subordinates ethnic, racial, and cultural differences to the assimilating logic of a common culture, or, more brutally, the 'melting pot' (Gilroy, 1993, p.72) (cited in the construction of national identity in modern times: theoretical perspective). National identity may refer to the subjective feeling one shares with a group of people about a nation, regardless of one's legal citizenship status (Guibernau, 2004). And in Psychology, it is defined as "an awareness of difference", a "feeling and recognition of 'we' and 'they'" (Lee, Yoonmi, 2012).

The conflict in Algeria has been about peoples' efforts to gain back their identities, have control over their lives and reconstruct a society free from any French constraints. Language policies including Arabic and French are a very significant part in the national identity construction process. Since independence, two main elitist divisions happened to relate to two culturally and socially different groups: Francophones, who emphasize economic development to address social issues like illiteracy, unemployment, population growth ...etc. and Arabophones who are more concerned with empowering the Arabic and Islamic identity. According to Arabophones, French is the language of the enemy, the language of the colonialism, the expression of Western culture, and the negation of Algerian national identity. Arabic is the language of the Algerian nation, the recuperation of Algerian identity, the expression of the Algerian soul (the language of the Koran and Islam), and the crucible of the Arab-Muslim community to which Algeria belongs (Algeria in others'). On the contrary, Francophones consider Arabic as a backward and archaic language that is unable to operate in the modern world, that cannot serve as the instrument of science and technology and that is incapable of communicating progressive values such as democracy and modernity. Although, Francophones

and Arabophones are two contradictory elites which both share and oppose particulars in the country.

1.6. The language Reform Policy in Algeria

The status of language policy in the Algerian Educational System was largely controversial. During his presidential campaign in April 1999, Abd El Aziz Bouteflika issued the "doomed educational system" and called for an urgent move to reform the schooling system in Algeria. In July 1999, in a public meeting, he declared:

Standards have reached an intolerable level to the point that Algerian degree, which used to be accepted by La Sorbonne, Harvard and Oxford up to the 1980s, is no longer recognized even by Maghreban universities, Tunisians and Moroccans used to come to Algeria to study medicine and pharmacy. Today the opposite is true (...). I have a solemn duty towards the Algerian people to let them know about problems facing the educational system, from basic and secondary levels to higher education. The situation is dangerous, very dangerous. If we keep on this track, we will go from one type of illiteracy to another, worse than the previous one.

(Benrabah, 2004a, p. 99).

On 13 May 2000, the current president founded the National Commission for the Reform of the Educational System CNRSE (Commander Navy Region South East). Its main principle is that by September 2002, pupils will be introduced to French starting from the second grade of primary school (instead of the third grade), also, French was decided to be taught to students in

rural areas. Additionally, scientific subjects were declared to be taught in French rather than Standard Arabic (Sebti, 2001).

1.7. Educational Reform Policies

The Algerian educational system consists of three cycles which have been redesigned over the last decade from a “6+3+3” architecture to an alternative model of “5+4+3”: Five years of primary school, four years of middle school, and three years of secondary school, which was instituted in 2003. Together, primary, middle, and secondary schools represent the compulsory basic education which is supervised by the Ministry of National Education. Then comes the higher education, or the so-called "Tertiary education", under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

In the first five years of schooling, pupils attend class 27 hours a week. They primarily have eight subjects presented in: Arabic, Mathematics, Physics, Environmental Studies, Islamic Studies, Civics, History, Geography, and Science Technology. In the third grade, they are introduced to French as a foreign language. Shifting to middle school, pupils are introduced to new subjects in addition to former ones such as: Standard Arabic, Drawing/ Music, and English. By the end of this phase, pupils take a national basic education examination, and if succeeded, they are awarded the BEM which allows them to move to the secondary phase. The latter begins with a foundation year, known as the Tronc Commun. Here, pupils are required to choose to study either letters or science and technology. By reaching the final year, the students pass the so-called Baccalaureate examination, if they are granted the former certificate, they will have the opportunity to go through higher education.

Since its independence, Algeria's higher education has undergone two major reforms. In 2004, it progressively adopted the LMD (License Master Doctorate) system under Bologna Process. LMD stands for "License", "Master", and "Doctorate": the first phase is composed of three years, the Master's degree is two years, and the Doctorate is composed of three years. Applying this new reform will promote inward and outward mobility of the students during their academic studies.

1.8. The status of the English language

1.8.1. The status of the English language as a Globalized Language

For the past few decades, English has grown into the primarily used language for international communication. English is, now, a worldwide language, with a hugely geographic spread among world languages. English has become a "lingua franca", or common language all over the world as a result of the increasing number of its speakers. Almost 350 million people use English as their native language, 400 million use English as their second language and an equivalent number of other speakers use English as their foreign language (Morrison, 2002). Nowadays, English is a part of lives of millions of people for the roles it plays at mostly all levels. English happens to appear in several fields or domains mainly scientific, medical, industrial and/or technological. "From 80 to 85% of the scientific and technical information is available either written or abstracted in English" (Kaplan, 1987, p.139). Internet has had the lion's share in spreading the English language "Nine out of ten computers connected to the Internet are located in English-speaking countries and more than 80% of all homepages on the web are written in English," (BBC News 2001, para. 1). Today, teaching English is a source of a multibillion industry, as Graddol (1997) stated, nearly one-third of the world's population will soon be studying English.

English is spoken in an enormous way as it has never happened with other languages as Crystal stated that “there has never been a language so widely spread or spoken by so many people as English”. (Crystal, 1997, p.127). English is spoken three times by foreigners than it is by natives. The language, therefore, has a dominant position; it fulfils a critical role as a working language in the League of Nations, INTERPOL, and others.

Socially speaking, most of the movies and music records are released in English, as well as for publications such as literature works, are all published in English. (Crystal, 1997)

1.8.2. The status of English in the Algerian Educational System

English has become a global language because of the power that its speakers hold. A power that can be seen in several domains: Industrial, scientific, medical, economic, political, and sociocultural. Historically speaking, English can be traced back to the British Industrial Revolution in the 19th century when all the innovations that were launched were in English, so to use them, a great need was felt to learn the English language.

In Algeria, the English language use is widely spread and the power of this language is obvious. In terms of ‘rank’, it is the second foreign language that is taught after French. From the end of the 70s and the early 90s, the Algerian government declared to implement EFL in the Educational System, so the students are taught the English language starting from the first year in the middle school reaching the final year in the secondary school (4+ 3 years of studying the English language). In 1993, the ministry of Primary and Secondary Education made English as a separate choice; students had the ability to pick up either French or EFL in the primary phase.

1.9. Teaching English at the Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages at Mohammed Ben Yahia University of Jijel

English has taken an ever-growing interest in the Algerian Educational System. Consequently, the following table attempts to investigate the teaching of the English language the faculty of letters and foreign languages in Jijel, taking into consideration the given modules and the timing.

Table1: Syllabus of First and Third year English Classes at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University of Jijel

First Year		Third Year	
Modules	Hours Per Week	Modules	Hours Per Week
Oral Expression	1:30	Oral Expression	1:30
Written Expression	4:30	Written Expression	1:30
Linguistics	1:30	Linguistics	1:30
Civilization	1:30	Civilization	3:00
Literature	1:30	Literature	3:00
Research	3:30	Research	1:30
Methodology		Methodology	
Phonetics	1:30	English for Specific Purposes	1:30
Foreign Language (Italian Language)	1:30	Theme and Version	1:30
Social Sciences and Humanities	1:30	TEFL	3:30
		Psychology	1:30

As illustrated in the above table, the English syllabus has given more prominence to teaching the language rather than culture; only Civilization and literary texts are related to cultural aspects. The former module is devoted to teaching American and British literature, and the latter is concerned with the American and British civilization. Two years ago, there has been a change in the load of time devoted to teaching both modules concerning third year syllabus; it has been

doubled from 1:30 to 3:00 hours per week which indicates the necessity to studying these two modules, yet, the students are required to study only aspects of the big "C" culture such as historical achievements and events, landmarks, rather than small "c" culture including people's lives, customs, behavior as well as beliefs.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, the Algerian Educational System has undergone successive alterations since independence in 1962. Although English is widely spread all over the world, Algeria still lacks the constant use of that language in the local society, as seen, the dominance which French has over English is clearly sensed. Additionally, there is a significant emphasis on teaching English as a language rather than a culture; there is a smaller portion of the Algerian learners who are involved in the target language culture.

Chapter Two: An identity Approach to Language Teaching

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Chapter Two: An Identity Approach to Language Teaching

Introduction

This chapter's main focus is the relationship between identity, culture and second/foreign language acquisition. It starts with providing a general overview of SLA. It, then, offers definitions of identity, before discussing this latter's emergence in the field of SLA. Subsequently, it touches upon the theoretical foundations of this approach and its key-constructs. In addition, it exposes the issue of teaching language in a foreign language context. Finally, the chapter deals with identity and culture in relation to foreign language teaching.

2.1. Identity and SLA

2.1.1. Historical overview of SLA

Gass and Selinker (2008) stated that "SLA refers to the process of learning another language after the native language has been learned". Accordingly, the term does not always refer to the acquisition of a second language. It could be a third, fourth, or fifth language (p.7). In addition, despite the distinction Krashen has made between language acquisition and language learning, by claiming that "acquisition", unlike "learning", is an unconscious process which only requires input (Sole, 1994, p.100), subsequent work, such as the interaction hypothesis and the comprehensible output hypothesis, has suggested that output and interaction might be necessary to achieve a better learning experience. Consequently, both terms "acquisition" and "learning" could be used interchangeably in this matter. Succinctly, SLA is the scientific discipline which is devoted to study the process by which people learn a second language.

The academic discipline of SLA is a sub-branch of Applied Linguistics. According to Ellis (1994), setting a specific date of the establishment of SLA as a field of enquiry is not possible.

However, there's "general agreement" that it started around the late 1960s, when certain studies of L2 were published (p.1). Furthermore, VanPatten and Benati (2010) stated that two papers had a significant role in the development of the modern study of SLA: Pit Corder's 1967 essay, *The Significance of Learners' Errors*, and Larry Selinker's 1972 article, *Interlanguage*. As stated in Ellis (1994), since then, the SLA research "developed rapidly and continues to do so" (p.1).

The study of SLA has been historically dominated by one approach, namely "Cognitivism". According to Davis (1995), SLA is usually viewed as a mental process by theorists and researchers, and that it occurs "mostly, if not solely," in the human mind. For Ellis (1997), "SLA has been essentially a psycholinguistic enterprise, dominated by the computational metaphor of acquisition" (p.87), while Long (1997) argued that "SLA takes place in a social setting, of course, but then so do most internal processes" (p.319). The latter, along with Doughy (2003), once again supported his first argument by stating that "Much current SLA research and theorizing shares a strongly cognitive orientation" (p.3). In other words, SLA has been viewed as a gradual individual process of internalizing the set of rules, structures, and vocabulary of a standard language, i.e. a Cognitive process.

Wallas (2007), defined 'Cognitivism' as "the information processing view of human cognition." (p.18); while Haugeland (1998, p. 9) stated that it is "roughly the position that intelligent behavior can be explained (only) by appeal to internal 'cognitive processes'—that is, rational thought in a broad sense". To further explain, cognitive research is concerned with the mental processes that are associated with language acquisition and how these processes can explain the nature of learners' language knowledge.

Although the cognitivist approach has been a dominant orientation for SLA research, this latter started to shift to social and cultural dimensions in the 1990s; as a persistent and growing

body of scholars started working outside of its confines (Larsen Freeman, 2007; Long, 2007, chap. 6). The social approach soon led to the emergence of other approaches, called “the alternative approaches”, namely: The sociocultural approach, the complexity theory approach, the language socialization approaches, the conversation-analytic approach, the sociocognitive approach, and the identity approach to SLA. This latter will be the focus of this chapter.

2.1.2. Definition of Identity

In his book, *Second Language Identities*, David Block (2007) started the introduction by presenting three quotes which, according to him, represent three distinctive perspectives on identity:

“It is surprisingly easy for someone to steal your identity – all it takes is a discarded bank statement or utility to get into the wrong hands. Criminals can use your personal details to open bank accounts and get credit cards, loans, passports or driving licences in your name” (Letter from Block’s bank, December 2005)

“I’m imbibed

I’m infatuated

It’s all too much passion

She’s all that I can take

What position should I wear?

Cop an attitude? (fake her)

How can I convince her? (fake her)

That I’m invented too, yeah

I am smitten

I'm the real thing (I'm the real thing)

We all invent ourselves

And you know me”

(Berry, Buck, Mills and Stipe, 1994)

(As cited in Block, 2007)

According to Norton (1995), “SLA theorists have not developed a comprehensive theory of social identity that integrates the language learner and the language learning context.” (p. 12).

The author explained the first identity by being about “how individuals are defined, contained and enabled by documents as opposed to the actions they take”. While the latter is considered to be a fixed and permanent type of identity, the second type, as stated by Block, is an open-ended or unstable form. He added that “the song captures common themes in current discussions of identity, such as authenticity and the extent to which identity is a self-conscious and ongoing project”. The third and last type of identity, according to Block, is “invoked as an academic concept.” (2007, pp.1-2)

Norton (2000), used the term ‘identity’ to “to reference how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (p.5). In this sense, recognizing that language is a social practice, each time learners use language to interact, they are negotiating and renegotiating a sense of self in the larger social world. Moreover, they are recognizing that relationship in multiple dimensions of their lives.

2.1.3. Emergence of Identity in the Field of SLA

Before 1990s, the cognitive perspective was dominant in the field of SLA. However, in the previous quote of Norton (1995), the researcher proposed a challenge for SLA researchers. She suggested a more social perspective in the study, which integrates identity as an approach to SLA to work as complementary to the already well established cognitive theory. Norton's call has made a significant impact on the course of SLA research, and more interest in identity and language learning has been manifested over the past few years through the works of Norton and other researchers (see, for example, volumes by Blackledge & Creese, 2010; Block, 2003, 2007b; Clarke, 2008; Day, 2002; Heller, 2007; Higgins, 2009; Kanno, 2003, 2008; Kubota & Lin, 2009; Lin, 2007; Miller, 2003; Nelson, 2009; Norton, 2000; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Potowski, 2007; Toohey, 2000; Tsui & Tollefson, 2007) (as cited in Norton & McKinney, 2011)

The identity approach to SLA is based on one major argument presented in two folds. First: A comprehensive theory which integrates the individual language learner and the social world is necessary. This theory aims to focus on the multiple and different positions from which learners can speak, and how sometimes marginalized learners can develop more desirable identities to adapt in the target communities. Secondly: the way relations of power in the social setting can affect learner's access to the target language community need to be addressed. (Norton, 1997; Norton Peirce, 1995).

According to Norton, each time learners speak, they are negotiating and renegotiating a sense of self in relation to the larger social world, and reorganizing that relationship in multiple dimensions of their lives. In other words, the learners are affected by context. They will continuously change their identities in accordance with the context; as they will reframe their relationship with their interlocutor, and reclaim other identities which are more powerful and

appropriate to the setting. Consequently, Identity, according to Norton, is multiple, a site of struggle, and changing over time.

Much of research has been developed in order to study SLA using the identity approach. For instance, relations of power have been problematized within the field of study, through the investigation of the ways in which relations of race, gender, class, and sexual orientation may impact the process of SLA. Simply put, these identity categories are regarded as sets of relationships that are socially and historically constructed within particular relations of power (cf. Davis & Skilton-Sylvester, 2004; Ibrahim, 1999; King, 2008; Kubota & Lin, 2006; Nelson, 2009) (as cited in Norton & McKinney, 2011) and that power is analyzed through the study of these categories.

In order to broaden our understanding of the process of SLA, certain key concepts have been developed in relation to identity. The key concepts of the learner's investment in the language, for instance, (Norton, 2000; Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton & Gao, 2008) and imagined communities (Anderson, 1991; Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton, 2001; Pavlenko & Norton, 2007) (as cited in Norton & McKinney 2011) have been used significantly in the field of identity in SLA.

2.1.4. Theoretical framework

The theoretical assumptions of identity approach to second language learning are not only poststructural theories of language but also subjectivity and positioning. Sociocultural theory also offers perspectives on learning that are often used in recent works of identity in SLA.

2.1.4.1. *Post-structural Theories of Language*

According to Block (2007), a post structuralist approach to identity ‘has become the approach of choice among those who seek to explore links between identity and L2 learning’. However, post-structuralist theories are drawn, but distinct from structuralist theories of language. The latter are mainly associated with the works of swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1966), who proposed a set of dichotomies such as (signified/ signifier), (langue/parole). For him, studying the linguistic competence (langue) should be emphasized at the expense of language performance (parole). His theories suggested that language usage was not worthy of being studied as it is affected by memory lapses, fatigue, slips, errors, and so on.

The major criticism of Structuralism theories, proposed by post-structuralists, is that the former fails to account for the social aspects of the language, and that language is context-dependent rather than fixed. Structuralism cannot account for struggles over the social meanings that can be attributed to signs within a given language.

Post structuralists, on the other hand, believe that language is not a set of idealized forms which are independent of their speakers or speaking, but rather as situated utterances in which speakers, in dialogue with others, struggle to create meaning (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984, 1986). Furthermore, while structural theories saw language learning as a gradual individual process of internalizing a set of rules, structures, and vocabulary of a specific language, Bakhtin saw language as a learning process of struggling in order to use language to participate in speech communities. In other words, language for post structural theories, is a social process.

2.1.4.2. *Post-structuralist Theory of Subjectivity*

Christine Weedon, one of the best-known scholars working in the feminist poststructuralist tradition, argued that language does not only define institutional practices, but also helps

individuals construct their sense of self; in other words: their ‘subjectivity’. She (1997) defined subjectivity as ‘the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself, and her ways of understanding her relation to the world’ (p.28).

While humanist conceptions of the individual presuppose that every person has an essential, unique, fixed, and coherent core, Weedon views, like other post-structuralists, that the individual (i.e. subject) is diverse, contradictory, dynamic, and changing over historical time and social space. Furthermore, drawing on the Foucauldian notions of discourse and historical specificity, post-structuralists, view subjectivity as discursively constructed and as always socially and historically embedded.

2.1.4.3. *Post-structuralist Theories of Positioning*

Davies & Harré (1990), explicitly used ‘position’ as ‘the central organizing concept for analyzing how it is that people do being a person’ (p.7). They explained that while identities are given by social structures, or ascribed by others, they can, as well, be negotiated by agents who wish to position themselves, when they stated that ‘discursive practices constitute the speakers and hearers in certain ways and yet at the same time are a resource through which speakers and hearers can negotiate new positions’ (p.7).

In her research (2007), Menard-Warwick observed that while teachers often aim at empowering their students, customary classroom materials and activities, as well as powerful societal discourses, often constrain the students’ possibilities from claiming their desirable identities. Therefore, she suggested that teachers should be alert to how students position themselves in the classroom discourse in order to enable students to recognize, and struggle

against, some of the disempowering tendencies of the linguistic practices of the target language culture.

2.1.4.4. *Sociocultural Theories of Language Learning*

As previously mentioned, sociocultural Theories have been considered to be the turning point from structuralism to poststructuralism. It has been developed and adopted by many researchers in the field of SLA. As a result, sociocultural theories have inspired many subfields to emerge as alternative approaches to structuralism. These alternative approaches include the identity approach.

During the years of 1878- 1987, the Russian psychologist, L.S. Vygotsky, provided insights about the social nature of learning. He, along with other theorists who modified his ideas (e.g. Wertsch 1998; Rogoff 2003), argued that learning is not a predominantly mental and individual process, as seen by Davis (1995), but rather as a social process in which culturally and historically situated participants engage in culturally valued activities, using cultural tools.

The significant shift from seeing learners as individual language producers, to seeing them as members of historical and social groups, has made many authorities in the field of SLA strive to investigate the conditions of learning, or the appropriation of practices in the field. This idea was informed by Lave and Wenger (1991), who used the term ‘Legitimate Peripheral Participation’ to represent their view that communities are composed of participants who engaged with the community’s practices in different ways, and that engagement or participation is ‘learning’.

2.1.5. Motivation and Investment

In her research with immigrant women in Canada, Norton (2000) observed that the existing theories of motivation were not compatible with her findings. Those theories ascribed the process

of motivation to the individual's learning of the target language, and claimed that any failure in learning would be related to the insufficient commitment to learn the language. Norton (2013) stated: "My research found that high levels of motivation did not necessarily translate into good language learning, and that unequal relations of power between language learners and target language speakers was a common theme in the data"(p. 6). Consequently, Norton felt an urgent need to develop the construct of 'investment' to complement constructs of motivation in the field of language learning and teaching. The construct of investment helps the learners to engage in the social and communicative practices.

Norton argued that there is an integral relationship between investment and identity. Further, she stated that while motivation is psychologically related (Dörnyei, 2001; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009) (as cited in Norton, 2000), the construct of investment must be seen within a “sociological framework”, and “seeks to link between the learners' desire to learn and the instability and complexity of identity.” (p.6).

Before introducing the construct of ‘investment’, one question used to be asked: “To what extent is the learner motivated to learn the language?” however, now, researchers inquire, instead, about the learner's investment in the language practices of the classroom or community. A learner could be highly motivated to learn a language; nevertheless, s/he could have little investment in a classroom due to a case of racism, sexism... etc. As a result, the learner will be excluded from the classroom practices, and in time positioned as ‘poor’, or unmotivated (Norton & Toohey, 2001). Alternatively, the learner’s expectations of good language teaching may not be consistent with the language practices promoted by the teacher in the classroom. The learner may therefore resist participating in the language practices of the classroom, with equally dire results (Talmy, 2008).

2.1.6. Identity in Foreign Language Contexts

In addition to learning a language in a naturalistic setting such as in a native country, language learning can also take place in a FL (Foreign Language) context. According to Block (2007), “The FL context is the context of millions of primary school, secondary school, university and further education students around the world who rely on their time in classrooms to learn a language that is not the typical language of communication outside the classroom”. (p.112)

For Block, conditions in these contexts vary in accordance with certain factors such as the age of students, teacher preparation, intensity, accommodation, technological backup, availability of teaching materials, and the relative importance of learning the foreign language.

After examining four cases, namely Anthony Liddicoat and Chantalle Crozet’s (2001) study of the teaching of interlanguage pragmatics to French FL learners in Australia, Claire Kramsch’s work on ‘textual identities’, Julie Belz’s (2002) study of German FL learners in the US, James Lantolf and Patricia Genung’s (2003) study of a Mandarin FL learner in the US, Block (2007), came to the conclusion that learners acquiring a language in a foreign context only have limited chances of an identity reconstruction in a FL context. He stated that “Having examined in detail these four classroom-based FL studies, I conclude that the FL context provides few opportunities for the emergence of significant new subject positions mediated by the TL.” (p. 113). This is because identity is not directly linked to the TL being studied, and has to do more with communities of practice emergent inside of the classroom.

However, according to Block (2007), there are still some opportunities for the emergence of new subject positions in FL context. There are at least two variations on the FL context that at

least show potential for the construction of TL-mediated subject positions. The first is about student's engagement with international communities of practice; while the second is associated with the provision of opportunities to communicate with regular users of TL via the internet. (p.137)

2.1.6.1. Engagement with English as an International Language and Identity

Engagement with English as an internationally spoken language has a significant relationship with the language learner's sense of self; or in other words, his/her reconstruction of identity. English is now considered to be the first language in our globalized world. Modelski (1972), defined globalization as "The process by which a number of historical societies were brought together into one global system" (as cited in Block & Cameron, 2002, p.1). Giddens (1990), however, defined globalization from a sociologist's perspective as "the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa" (as cited in Block & Cameron, 2002, p.3). Furthermore, James (2006), offered a definition for 'cultural globalization' as "the transmission of ideas, meanings and values around the world in such a way as to extend and intensify social relations".

According to Crystal (1997), more people use English today than have used any other language in the history of the world. English is the international language 'par excellence'. Around 380 million have English as a first language, but more than a billion people use it as a second (or additional language), largely to communicate with other second language users with whom they do not share a cultural and linguistic background. 'Native speakers' are now considered to be the minority of English speakers across the globe; furthermore, they no longer determine how the language is being used internationally. Consequently, the English language

can now be taught as an international language and not only as a ‘patrimony of native speakers’, as Block (2007) put it (p.113).

2.1.6.2. Internet-mediated FL learning and identity

The availability of internet communication tools nowadays has made access to foreign language speakers and cultures very facile. This engagement has made the learning process very obtainable for students, as it transformed the learning environment from a ‘decontextualized exercise into an engagement with authentic real-world contexts of language use’ (Block & Cameron, 2002, p.83).

For Block (2007), internet-mediated communication is the second variation on the FL class which offers the prospect of TL mediated identity work. After having revisited Thorne’s case (2003), namely Kristen’s case, Block concluded that ‘Internet communication allows for the transcendence of great distances... and to forge TL-mediated identities’ (p.144). This is a result of the conversations practiced by the participants. When ‘chatting’ using internet, learners go further than only discussing language as a linguistic system; they often find themselves talking about their daily life, which in turn, exhibits a great deal of their culture. Learners thus, tend to reveal numerous aspects of the target culture, and help each other to understand a great deal of the language as a whole. This process, consequently, helps learners feel a sense of self; in other words, reconstruct their identities in relation to the target language.

2.1.7. Imagined Communities and Imagined Identities

Another significant factor contributing to the formation of language learners’ identities in FL context is the one of imagined communities and imagined identities. The term of ‘imagined communities’ was originally coined by Benedict Anderson (1991). He observed that nations are

imagined communities, “because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (p.6).

An extension of interest in identity and investment also concerns the ‘imagined communities’ which learners aspire to join when they learn a language (Anderson, 1991; Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton, 2001; Pavlenko & Norton, 2007). Kanno and Norton (2003) defined imagined communities as “groups of people, not immediately tangible and accessible, with whom we connect through the power of the imagination” (p.241). In other words, our sense of belonging to a certain community, is mainly led by our imagination. For Wenger (1998), in addition to direct involvement in community practices and concrete relationships we also belong to certain communities through our imagination. For him, imagination is another important source of community.

2.2. Culture, Identity, and Foreign Language Teaching

In their book, Nunan and Choi provided three definitions of ‘culture’. This latter is defined according to Judd (2002) as ‘the system of shared objects, activities and beliefs of a given group of people’ (as cited in Nunan & Choi, 2010.p.3). While Kramsch (1998) saw it as “the membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and a common system of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and acting” (p.20). Finally, Pennycook (1995) defined it as “the process by which people make sense of their lives, a process always involved in struggles over meaning and representation”

Culture can be divided into two distinct types: big ‘C’ and small ‘c’ culture. Tomalin and Stempleski (1993) explained that big ‘C’ culture or ‘achievement culture’ comprises history,

geography, institutions, literature, art, and music; while small ‘c’ culture or ‘behaviour culture’ has been broadened to include “culturally-influenced beliefs and perceptions, especially expressed through language, but also through cultural behaviours that affect acceptability in the host community” (p.6)

Focusing more on culture in relation to identity, Ennaji (2005), provided an intelligible definition for ‘cultural identity’ stating that:

“Cultural identity is the identity or feeling of belonging to a group. It is part of a person's self-conception and self-perception and is related to nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, locality or any kind of social group that has its own distinct culture. In this way, cultural identity is both characteristic of the individual but also of the culturally identical group of members sharing the same cultural identity.”

To further explain, cultural identity is the sense of belonging to a certain group of people, with whom one shares collective knowledge such as traditions, heritage, language, aesthetics, norms and customs.

According to Wei (2005), language has a dual character: both as a means of communication and a carrier of culture. Language without culture is unthinkable, so is human culture without language (p.56). A particular language is a mirror of its own culture. Brown (1994) describes the relation between language and culture stating that “A language is a part of a culture and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture” (p.171). From this sense, we understand that language and culture are interrelated; they are inseparable. This interrelationship

is what made researchers in the field of S/F language teaching reconsider adjusting the language teaching curriculum.

Many scholars defended the idea that culture should be integrated in the S/F language curriculum. The importance of this issue is displayed in Krasner's statement (1999): "... it is clear that in a FL course both linguistic and extra-linguistic cultural features should be taught. Failure to teach some aspects of culture could result in miscommunication, misinterpretation, and a major culture shock on the part of the students". She adds "A critical goal of teaching culture in a FL classroom is raising students' awareness about the new culture. Acceptance, understanding, and empathy lead to real cultural and linguistic proficiency" (p.88). In addition, Byram (1989), also argued that language curriculum should include the elements of culture since speakers' values and perceptions of the world are reflected via language. Resultantly, a successful learning of a language must be accompanied by learning the aspects of its culture.

In order to integrate culture in an L2/FL language curriculum, one must be aware of the critical difference between "cultural assimilation" and "cross-cultural awareness". According to Encyclopaedia Britannica (2014), Assimilation is "the process whereby individuals or groups of differing ethnic heritage are absorbed into the dominant culture of a society. The process of assimilating involves taking on the traits of the dominant culture to such a degree that the assimilating group becomes socially indistinguishable from other members of the society." Consequently, the full acceptance of the target culture may result in the loss of cultural identity of an ethnic group. On the other hand, Cross-cultural awareness is the foundation of communication and it involves the ability of standing back from ourselves and becoming aware of our cultural values, beliefs and perceptions (Pokhilko, 2016).

Conclusion

This chapter aimed to expose the relationships between identity, culture, and S/F language learning. In conclusion, “Identity Approach” has succeeded in bringing new perspectives to the field of SLA, which in turn, facilitated both teaching and learning. Furthermore, it has been show that the integration of culture is very critical in the process of language teaching, as it achieves high levels of cross-cultural awareness among students. Resultantly, S/F language teachers and curriculum designers should focus more on involving big “C” culture and cross-cultural awareness so as to protect students from a loss of their original cultural values, and therefore, a hurtful reconstruction of identity.

Chapter Three: Field Work

Introduction

3.1. Narrative Inquiry

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Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to discussing the results obtained from a series of interviews performed with six English teachers at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University. First, it provides an overview on the Narrative Inquiry as a method of research. Then, it explains the aim of the interviews and how they were administered. Afterthat, it provides a succinct description the interviews. Subsequently, it introduces the teachers as Participants of the study, and it analyses the results having been obtained after being coded. Notably, it moves to a discussion of the results at the end of each category, in order to finally reach the general conclusion.

1. Narrative Inquiry

Narrative Inquiry, or Narrative Analysis, emerged as a discipline from within the broader field of qualitative research in the early 20th century (Riessman, 1993). This method uses field texts, such as stories, autobiographies, journals, field notes, letters, conversations, interviews, family stories, photos (and other artifacts), and life experience, as the units of analysis to research and understand the way people create meaning in their lives as narratives (Clandinin et al., 2001).

Narrative inquiry has been employed as a tool for analysis in the fields of cognitive science, organizational studies, knowledge theory, sociology and education studies, among others. This method challenges the philosophy behind quantitative/grounded data-gathering and questions the idea of “objective” data (Boje, 2001).

2. The Aim of the Interviews

First of all, the interviews aim at investigating the factors having shaped the identities of teachers of the English language as learners of English through analyzing the chronicles of their

English learning journey. Subsequently, they seek to conclude the reasons behind these teachers' success in learning the English language as present teachers at the university.

3. Administration of the Interviews

A series of questions grouped into four sections, were addressed to six random teachers of the English language. The interview was performed in person with these teachers, and tape recorded in aim to be transcribed. In addition, the researchers gave instructions and provided explanations when needed.

4. Description of the Interviews

Basically, the interview is composed of four major sections, three of which have been chronologically ordered. The first section contains general questions about the participants' status, and certain attitudes about using foreign languages. The second section, however, provides questions about the participants' experiences with either French or English in the primary school (depending on the participant's first exposure to the language). Subsequently, the third section contains questions about the participants' experience with the English language as a foreign language in middle and high school. Lastly, the fourth section provides questions in the phase of university.

5. Introducing the Participants

This interview is addressed to current E.F.L teachers at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia in Jijel. They all have been asked the same questions in aim to give general backgrounds about themselves. The following details are not the researchers' choice; but they are, rather, what the participants chose to reveal about themselves.

Participant 01: A male of an approximate age of 57-62. He has been an English teacher at the university for seventeen years. The participant comes from a religious family in the countryside. He was taught Quran by his father, which, accordingly, helped him gain a proficiency in the Arabic language at a very early age of his life. At the age of six, his family moved to a city, where he started his learning journey.

Participant 02: A 33 years old female. She graduated from Setif University in 2006; and has been teaching English in the university for eleven years. The participant's father spoke French fluently, and her uncle was, accordingly, a very successful English teacher.

Participant 03: A 31 years old female. She graduated from E.N.S (École Normal Supérieure) in Constantine. Accordingly, she comes from a stable family. She had a regular childhood. Like Participant 01, Participant 03 also spent her childhood in a countryside; however, she did not move her residence, as she carried on her studies in educational institutions that were near her home. The participant has been teaching English in the university for almost two years, after she was, previously, a teacher in high school.

Participant 04: A 39 years old female who has been an official English teacher at the university for three years. She was graduated from Constantine university. Accordingly, she spent a 'wonderful' childhood; especially when being in her grandparents' farm. The participant also revealed that she is currently married, and has three children; one of which, is an English major.

Participant 05: A 33 years old female who has been teaching EFL for twelve years. She was graduated from E.N.S in Constantine. The participant's father was the director of her primary school, while her mother was the director of her middle school. Despite that fact, the participant stated that she had a 'very normal' childhood.

Participant 06: A 32 years old female who, accordingly, has been teaching English for more than eight years. The participant stated that she lived in the countryside before moving to live with her grandmother in the city in order to be closer to school. She eventually got her BAC degree in 2006, which was followed by a Magister degree in Bejaya. And she is currently working on her PhD.

6. The Results

This section provides the analysis of the data obtained through the teachers' narratives. Although the data was gathered in the shape of chronologically ordered questions according to the participants educational life, the questions have been analyzed in terms of categories.

Section One: Imagined communities

Q 1: Are there any situations in which you feel that using the English language, or at least some English words, would give you certain advantages? Explain.

When asked about the advantages which speaking English might offer, only Participant 01 stated that using the English language in Algeria would give certain advantages as it helps one be more 'explicit' in his/her expression of thoughts.

Two of the remaining subjects believe that it has some advantages when going abroad; this might be due to the significant status of English around the globe. As one of the participants stated:

“Yes (.) maybe when travelling abroad... you can realize that most of people abroad will understand what you're saying” -Participant 05

On the other hand, the three remaining Participants had somewhat similar reactions to the question, as the oddity of the idea that using English outside of the university

context in Algeria would give them advantages seemed obvious on their facial expressions and tones of voice. Participant 02, for instance, stated:

“No, it’s the contrary, I use English in the context of university. But speaking English in public would draw attention to me, so I avoid being on the spot light”

This view is perhaps shared by most of the Algerian English speakers who are still aware of the current dominance of French over English in the country.

Q 2: What aspects of the English culture you feel should be embraced by the Algerian culture?

3/6 of the participants answered this question positively. Each of these participants has listed some aspects which they felt should be embraced by the Algerian culture. Participants 02, 04 and 06 seemed to strongly support the idea of being open to another culture, and most of what they mentioned was morally valuable such as respect, politeness and the way of expressing feelings. The participants stated:

“Many aspects in fact: politeness, the way people communicate ... a high level of communication everywhere, respecting all people regardless of their jobs or social class... this is all needed” -Participant 02

“One of the major aspects that perhaps differentiate western people from our people is that they are hard workers, self-reliant... Most of Algerian people are not hard workers. They’re lazy, and most of them are reliant, especially on their parents (.) So, these are two aspects that I’ve adopted in my life... western ones (.) and I always try to make my students aware of the importance of these two qualities: working hard, and self-reliance... or autonomy (.) I like my students to be autonomous in their studies, work... everywhere” -Participant 06

Notably, the latter were “invisible” aspects of the big “C” culture. This view was opposed to the rest’s. Participant 01, for instance, refused the idea of taking cultural aspects from a foreign language and applying them in his native culture in any way; furthermore, he discouraged anyone who is willing to. However, the subject, still, confessed the fact that being exposed to a culture is needed to teach certain modules. Similarly, Participant 03 indicated that it is impossible to adapt to new cultural aspects. Finally, Participant 05 was completely reluctant to responding due to her lack of knowledge about the topic. As a result, cultural assimilation and cross-cultural awareness, in order to learn a foreign language, are still very debatable, even among successful EFL learners.

Q 3: Does being in full command of the English language make you feel more educated, intelligent, and accomplished?

3/6 of the teachers answered positively; they agreed upon the idea that being in command of the English language makes them feel more educated, intelligent, and accomplished. Participant 04 explained her feeling by revealing that it is caused due to the ‘international status’ of English nowadays. She stated:

“Of course, because of the international status of this language nowadays”

However, there were different opinions across the rest of participants. Participant 01 answered according to what he teaches in his module about language and intelligence; he denied that being in advance of the language equals being intelligent. Another participant related it to the concept of self-confidence instead of education; especially when mastering the lexis of the language. Participant 05, in turn, answered negatively; yet, she acknowledged the importance of the English language in her life and career.

Q 4: Do you think that English helped you to set secret codes you might use when seeking privacy?

Only 2/6 of the interviewees gave a straight “no” to this question. Participant 06 explained her position by stating that talking in a different language in front of someone who could not fathom its expressions would be considered as a ‘rude’ behavior. While Participant 06 chose to understand the question in negative connotations, Participant 02 answered that she has used the language to protect her privacy by using it to write her diaries. Similarly, Participant 03 admitted that she used the English language in situations when she was seeking privacy with her friends and family:

<laughs> “Yes, if the person cannot understand the language (.) So yeah, I did it a lot with my friends, my family members... but nowadays I think English is widespread (.) everyone can understand at least keywords... so I need to use gestures or just another language to... keep my privacy”

Participants 01 and 04, on the other hand, stated that they might have not used English to seek privacy, but they have, in fact, used French to do the job for them. Additionally, Participant 04 also stated that she might soon be able to use English with her daughter, who happens to be an English major. Lastly, it might as well be worthy of mentioning that 3/6 of the participants laughed after hearing this question; this behavior, perhaps, indicates that the idea of using a language to keep one’s privacy is considered to be sort of ‘mischievous’ or ‘devilish’. The participants who answered with a straight “yes” could not hide the expressions of amusement while revealing their ‘tricks’. This phenomenon, according to Kramsh (2009), represents “the pleasure caused by forming a secret

community that draws special privilege and distinction from use of a foreign code, because it excludes others.”

Q 6: Do you think that your mother tongue’s culture is sufficiently articulated in the English curriculum?

“No, of course not, two completely different cultures” -Participant 01

The majority of the participants stated that their mother tongue’s culture is not sufficiently articulated in the English curriculum. This question was a warm up to the next one.

Q 7: Do you think that your mother tongue’s culture should be given more prominence? Why?

When asked whether the mother tongue’s culture should be included in the English curriculum, 4/6 of the participants answered that it should not be articulated. The subjects insisted that a language must be accompanied by its own culture; that is, in order to ‘avoid a cultural shock’, as Participant 02 put it.

“I think we should introduce the foreign language culture more to avoid being culturally shocked” -Participant 02

Interestingly, Participant 06 suggested that presenting authors’ works from the mother tongue’s culture could be useful for teaching English. She stated:

“Perhaps... I’m not sure how (.). For example, in Literature for instance, we don’t have any writers from our own culture who would write in English... otherwise we could include them. I know there are some promising students here in this

department. One of them, in the first year, writes very good poems in English. I think he will be a very promising poet... Algerian poet”

Section Two: Subjectivity

Q 1: How would you describe yourself as an EFL learner? (Strengths, weaknesses, affective attitudes)

3/6 of the teachers avoided providing direct positive descriptions about themselves as English learners, due to several reasons. Participant 06, chose to say that she has never considered herself to be good enough; She stated:

“Perhaps... I’m not sure how (.) For example, in Literature for instance, we don’t have any writers from our own culture who would write in English... otherwise we could include them. I know there are some promising students here in this department. One of them, in the first year, writes very good poems in English. I think he will be a very promising poet... Algerian poet”

The participant’s use of the present simple only indicates that she still maintains her view. Despite that opinion, perhaps to satisfy the interviewers’ need for the answer, Participant 06 still provided positive descriptions about herself as an English student, by stating that she was ‘hardworking, diligent, and devoted’. The second “hesitant” description came from Participant 04 who stated that she ‘cannot say positive things’ about herself:

“So, let me tell you how others saw me because I cannot say positive things about myself... so I’ve always been considered as a hardworking student”

During the interview, one of the interviewers suggested that the participant might be a ‘perfectionist’ in terms of being an English learner, and the subject instantly agreed. However,

the participant stated that others might describe her as a ‘hard working student’. This adjective, along with other similar positive adjectives was shared by more than one participant. Participant 05, who was also hesitant to describe herself as a ‘good’ English learner, perhaps to protect a certain image of a “modest person”, stated that others would, in fact, describe her as a ‘good student’. On the other hand, Participants 01, 02, and 03, were more willing to share their thoughts about themselves as English learners. While Participant 02 stated that she was ‘hardworking’, Participant 03 was willing to share both her strengths and weaknesses, by declaring that she was determined, but had difficulties keeping things by heart. Finally, Participant 01 was even more willing to provide a story to prove that he was ‘strong’ and ‘in advance’ compared to other students in his EFL classes. Notably, the extremely descriptive narration which Participant 01 provides, shows that his learning experience was a significant area of his life to the point of being able to remember very detailed memories. Resultantly, despite the differences in the ways the participants provided the information, it is only fair to say that they all share the same positive opinions about themselves as English learners.

Q 2: How often do you find yourself using foreign languages outside the classroom context?

– Which language do you use more?

5/6 of the teachers answered that they use French more than English. Only one answered that she does not use either of foreign languages outside of the classroom context, except when on ‘social media’. Notably, most of the teachers stated that they did not use English outside of the classroom context; As one of the participants stated:

“Outside? What do you me-? Foreign languages, it means French and English? So, I mainly use French, very often, English for me is my language of job, but French, it's

because of the environment, my mother was a teacher of French and all my family spoke French, that's why I was influenced by this language"-Participant 04

This is perhaps due to the significant role which the French language plays in the Algerian society. It is the dominant foreign language in the social discourses, while speaking English outside of a learning context would be considered as an "odd" behavior. In one of the responses given by Participant 02, she justified her abstention from using English in the social world by simply avoiding being in 'the spot light'. She said:

"...speaking English in public would draw attention to me, so I avoid being on the spot light"

Q 3: Do you feel you are a different person when using the English language? How?

4/6 of the narrators stated that they do feel different when using the English language. Their reasons, however, differ to some degree:

"Yes, it's good to be able to speak two languages, that's why you feel a bit superior from others who just speak one language" -Participant 04

"I feel different from other people, special, because not many Algerians use it in our society" -Participant 05

While some of them answered that they feel different and special because of their ability to speak a second or third language, Participant 03, for instance included a level of inner self-awareness, saying that she feels different even on the inside:

"Well, somehow, I think that when you use English, you feel a bit different. So, how? I feel special among my mates, hmm... I mean, with my friends, I feel that I am a bit

special. When I was a student, teachers told us that we have to think in English, and when you think in English, you feel that you are an Englishman or something, so you HAVE to feel that you are something ELSE”-Participant 03

The participant states that in order to successfully use English, one must adopt the thinking of an ‘Englishman’. Interestingly, the participant’s opinion is related to the Whorfian Hypothesis. While the latter states that language shapes the way a person thinks, the participant revealed that she deliberately changes the way she thinks in order to use the language more appropriately.

Q 4: Does using English allow you to express feelings you cannot express using Arabic?

5/6 of the participants denied the fact that using English could be more expressive than Arabic. Participant 05 stated that she feels ‘more at ease when speaking Arabic’, while Participants 03 and 06 agreed that it is related to the strength of the feelings involved when using the mother tongue. Participant 06 chose to share her personal experience with her students in this matter. According to her, students understand the word in English, but only ‘feel’ it in their first language:

“Not always, hmm... Arabic is better in terms of expressing feelings, because in linguistics they say in Arabic, you FEEL it, but with other languages, you know the meaning, but you don’t feel it (.) Sometimes when I explain a word to my student, they understand the meaning, but they only feel it when I say it in Arabic”

Q 5: When was the first time you were exposed to the English language? (as a student/ or before studying the language) – What were your first impressions about the language?

3/6 of the participants had been exposed to English before they had it as a school subject. Two of them used to read dictionaries or translated books, respectively. On the other hand, the

rest of the participants were first exposed to English when they had it in the middle school. Their first impressions towards the English language were different. For instance, Participant 01 admitted that he had no idea what ‘impressions’ were, at that time, due to his youth:

“... I cannot remember my first impression, and at that time we do not know what impressions are, but something I like, yes, I used to like English of course”

Participants 02, 03, 05, and 06 had very positive attitudes towards the English language since the first encounter with the language. Participant 03 even felt that English is easier than French, unlike Participant 04 who found it difficult to learn.

“That was in my second year of middle school. It was something new. Everyone can feel that English language is a bit, I mean easier than French. So, I focused my attention on English and forgot about French”-Participant 03

“The first year in middle school... [it was] very difficult. It's a new language that I have never heard about before” -Participant 04

The justification that could be provided in the case of Participant 04, is the huge influence which French had on the latter across her education, through her fluent French speaking family members.

Q 6: Have you ever felt that the more developed your proficiency in English becomes, the less confident you become in your skills in the mother tongue?

3/6 of the participants admitted that learning English came at the expense of their mother tongue; however, two of them stated that this sudden decrease in their proficiency in their mother tongue did not affect their confidence.

“Maybe it’s just the opposite, I feel now ashamed of speaking English with very limited mistakes, and on the other hand, speaking Arabic with a very poor level. However, whenever things require me to express myself in Arabic, I do it. So it did although it affected my level, it did not affect my confidence” -Participant 02

The other three subjects, however, denied the fact that learning a new language has affected their mother tongue whatsoever. Participant 02, who might have misinterpreted the question at first, stated later that she feels ‘ashamed’ to speak English with such limited mistakes while speaking Arabic with a ‘very poor’ level. Resultantly, the participants’ confidence might not have been changed; however, their level of proficiency in the language did, in fact, decrease as a result to the target language command.

Q 7: Was the increase of self-awareness that generally happens at that age accompanied by an increase or decrease in the desire to learn English?

All of the interviewees agreed that the self-awareness that happens at that age was accompanied by an increase in the desire to learn English, even though each had a different point of view about the matter. For instance, Participant 01, provided a very detailed answer by referring to scientists’ viewpoint about the increase of the desire to learn and its relationship with self-awareness; however, he did not give a straight answer, stating that what is currently referred to as “self-awareness” is not in fact the real Self-awareness. His detailed answer, perhaps, indicates a reluctance to describe difficult emotions, as was first noticed in his answer which started with a ‘big sigh’. Participants 02 and 03, on the other hand, stated that self-awareness helped to learn languages in general and not only English; they both asserted that it is a way of mastering the language, of being smart, and special, respectively.

“Being aware of the importance of the language would certainly encourage the learner to learn the language. It was necessary for me at the time to master these languages. It was evident” -Participant 02

“Well, an increase in the desire to learn LANGUAGES... languages in general (.) I wanted to learn them to become smart, and special, and to use them for communication with others. Using French or English, is a way of prestige, especially nowadays”- Participant 03

In addition, Participant 04 stated that her self-awareness was accompanied by an increase in the desire to learn ‘French’ instead of English because she had never thought of English as a major. Also, Participant 05 responded very briefly and explicitly without providing further explanation. Participant 06, in turn, expressed her ‘infinite’ desire to learn English and to be ‘better’ as she stated.

Q 8: How did you feel about your English at this specific point in time? (When choosing to major in English)

4/6 of the subjects did not give straight answers which indicate their complete confidence in their English before choosing it as a university major. Most of the interviewees stated that they only had sufficient levels to start studying English; however, they did not show satisfaction with these levels. On the other hand, Participant 05 answered succinctly and surely that she “DID” have confidence in her English, and Participant 01 explained his confidence in his capacity to learn the language by stating that the encouragements of others gave him the feeling that he had ‘some strengths to elaborate on’:

“I explained what happened to me when I began to study English. I had all the time been encouraged, either directly or indirectly... so when someone is being encouraged not because he is weak, he had some strengths that I can elaborate on” -Participant 01

Notably, the participant avoided the use of the first pronoun while attending to state that he had strengths in the language. It is perhaps, due to a certain desire to stay humble while talking about such a topic. Similarly, other participants such as Participants 02, 03, and 06, avoided the same situation by indicating that their English was ‘not that good’, but it was ‘good enough’.

Q 9: At the beginning of your learning experience, how confident were you overall, in specific areas or tasks?

While Participant 01 misinterpreted the question, or perhaps avoided to answer by provoking other topics, 5/6 of the participants answered that they were quite confident in their first year of education. The degree of confidence, however, varied from one participant to another:

“I was always very confident of myself” -Participant 02

“Of course, I tried to do my best to be a good learner and good student, so I was somewhat confident at the beginning” -Participant 06

Q 10: What characteristics did you possess that you think were useful for learning a language?

In two similar answers, both Participants 04 and 06 stated that being hard workers was useful for learning a language. As Participant 04 added that she was also highly motivated, Participant 06 mentioned ‘autonomy’ and ‘devotion’ as useful characteristics in learning a language. ‘Asking questions’ was also a characteristic which Participant 01 saw to be useful. Notably, most

of the responses provided by the successful students relate to the characteristics of an extrovert student who is a 'risk taker':

"Asking questions" -Participant 01

"I was a self-confident person. I always took the initiative. Even when teachers gave us assignments that were optional, I used to be the first one to do it. Also, being daring... I was a risk-taker" -Participant 02

Participant 03, however, stated that her strongest characteristic was having an 'excellent' writing. This is due to being an introvert student, as she admitted in another question; which in turn, allowed her to pour her knowledge on paper and perfect it:

"The thing that was advantageous for me was 'writing'. I had a talent of WRITING. According to my teachers, my writing was excellent" -Participant 03

Section Three: Positioning

Q 1: Have you ever felt that using French instead of English gave you a more prestigious position in the social world?

5/6 of teachers agreed that using French instead of English in the social world often gives the speaker a more prestigious position. Most of them explained the phenomenon as being related to the powerful status of French in Algeria:

"Sometimes it does, why? Because of our society. Culturally speaking, our society, our culture, particularly Algerian culture is a mixture speaking Arabic and French, and people using French, sometimes they use it for prestige" - Participant 01

Furthermore, most of the subjects, were also reluctant to show their emotions about the issue; they only chose to agree that French does give a certain prestige to the speakers in Algeria. Participant 03 even used a special tone of voice to emphasize the necessity of speaking the language in this country:

“Yes, of course, because it is, I mean, it is the second language and we HAVE to speak French in Algeria” -Participant 03

On the other hand, Participant 06 was not hesitant to show her feelings of misfortune for not being able to speak English outside of the classroom:

“This is true in our country, because as we all know, French is the second language... and you will find yourself sometimes obliged to use it. unfortunately, we are unable to use English outside of the classroom” -Participant 06

Q 2: Could you tell us precisely when you felt that your journey with English had reached the point of no-return? (in other words, when exactly did you realize that success in life requires success with English?)

2/6 of the participants answered the question negatively, one said that he never realized it, while the other simply preferred to pass. Other Participants indicated the period of time in which they realized English was the key to their success, and that differed from middle school for Participant 02, to university for Participants 03 and 06; while Participant 04 precisely mentioned the year of 1995. Participants 02 and 04 went further and explained the reasons why they thought English was so important; those reasons were restricted between the personal and social importance of the language. Participant 02 linked it with mass-media and television, while for Participant 04, it was due to her well-established knowledge of the

French language and the ‘increasing demand’ of the English language which made her want to learn it.

“All mass-media... the fact of watching channels speaking English, I started being aware of the importance of the English in general. It was around middle school” -Participant 02

“Yes, hmm... because of the importance of the language at that time. I learned English in 1995 (.) So at that time, there was an increasing demand of that language, it was like a fashion, that's why I decided to learn this language, I did not choose French because I already had it, I wanted to learn a new language” - Participant 04

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Q 3: What difficulties did you encounter at the beginning of your EFL learning experience?

5/6 of the teachers stated that they did not encounter any sort of difficulties at the beginning of their EFL learning experience; Participant 04 was the only exception. She had already mentioned in a previous question how difficult English was for her, especially in ‘Speaking’. This might go back to the fact that she felt such a strong influence by the French language; and this influence was initially provoked by her mother who was a French teacher and who used the French language extensively at home in order to communicate with her family members.

Q 4: Do you think that French had positive or negative effects on your development in learning English? – Explain. How did you cope with the transition from studying only French to studying both French and English?

All of the participants strongly agreed that French had positive effects on learning English. Repetitions such as ‘sure, sure’, and spoken words with extra emphasis such as ‘VERY’, indicate the significant role which French played in facilitating English learning in the participants’ journeys.

“Sure, sure, positive, because of the great similarities between French and English... similarities in structure then in culture at all levels of the language: phonology, syntax, semantics, morphology, and pragmatics” -Participant 01

“VERY positive, because of the similarities between the languages. Many words have the same interpretations, meanings... etc. when it comes to pronunciation too, it’s approximately the same... and I used to guess the meaning of words in English through French. I did not find the transition difficult at all. I didn’t even realize that I was studying two languages” -Participant 06

Furthermore, they all concurred with the view that the obvious similarities between the two languages helped them to learn the English language easily, which points out to the theory of Contrastive Analysis. The latter states that ‘The similarities between languages lead to success in learning them’. Concerning how the participants coped with the transition from studying only French to studying both languages, Participants 02, 05, and 06 stated that they did not encounter any difficulties switching from one language another, because they had already formed a good background in the French language. However, Participant 03 admitted

that she faced some difficulties mixing between French and English vocabularies, even in formal examinations, which, in turn, led her to neglecting the French language as the only solution she could find in order to be successful in the English language.

“Well, of course French has positive effects. It is the language of communication. The similar words between French and English made it easier to memorize some of the English words... also the grammar of the French was much more difficult, so English grammar was easy for me. Concerning how I coped with the transition, I had a difficulty at first in differentiating between some French words and some English one. I used to put some French words in my English exam papers for instance, so I concentrated on English and forgot about French” -Participant 03

Q 5: Did you feel at any point in time that learning English comes at the expense of learning French?

4/6 of the teachers declined the fact that English came at the expense of French. Participant 01 stated that the constant use of English and French maintained his excellence in both languages. Similarly, Participants 02, 04, and 05 denied that English ever came at the expense of French; it is, notably, because of the effect of their surroundings on their learning of the French language such as the case of Participant 04 whose mother was an English teacher, and Participant 05 whose both parents were inspectors of French at school. On the other hand, Participants 03 and 06 agreed that learning English came at the expense of French.

“Yes, well, when I first encountered the English language, I completely forgot about the French language, and I concentrated on English. Of course, I

BORROWED some vocabulary from French, but I still focused more on English, and forgot about French, except when using it as a means of communication” -

Participant 03

“Yes, it came at the expense of French, especially at the university, I totally neglected the language and now I have problems restoring it” -Participant 06

The learners ‘neglected’ the French language since their first encounter with English, and gave the latter all of their attention and interest; yet, they still used French when the case required them to.

Q 6: Did you find the first year of the English License curriculum difficult? what difficulties did you encounter?

3/5 of the participants answered negatively to the question, indicating that they did not find the first year of their university studies to be difficult. On the other hand, Participant 04 stated that the difficulties which she faced were due to the change of nature in studying from high school to university, and the student’s obligation to rely on him/herself in order to successfully study. Participant 06, in turn, admitted that she had faced difficulties at the beginning of her university years as the language of learning had suddenly changed from Arabic to English. However, in her opinion, it was only a matter of time before she was adjusted to the unfamiliar environment.

“It was difficult at the beginning, because in high school, we learned everything in Arabic. So, it was very hard to study everything in English all the sudden. This difficulty lasted for about two months, later on, I got used to everything” -

Participant 06

Section Four: Language learning

Q 1: While studying in the middle or high school, did you have any teacher who had played a significant role in changing your attitude towards the English language?

- If yes,

⇒ **What was specific about his/her method(s)?**

5/6 of the teachers provided positive comments towards their model teachers' methods. Participant 01, however, was first reluctant to answer; he, then, expressed his feelings of misfortune about his teachers who were not 'methodically chosen'. Others, shared positive views about their teachers. For instance, Participants 02 and 03 described their teachers as being 'communicative' in the classroom:

"Her method was communicative. She used to communicate a lot with her pupils. She always used positive feedback to encourage the students." -Participant 02

Participant 03, however, continued to express her deep admiration to her teacher by praising his character as well as his pronunciation. She also mentioned the fact of him 'never using traditional methods' such as textbooks or boards:

"I cannot remember him ever using the board or the textbook. He focused on communication. that really attracted me at the time is the way of communication in his class, he really liked chatting. But the thing that was most impressive about him was his character and his pronunciation. He spoke English like a native speaker, so I was very impressed by him" -Participant 03

Also, Participant 05 stressed the fact of her teacher's refrain from using the textbook, in addition to using innovative techniques such as 'fun games and videos'. On the other hand,

Participant 06 was unable to remember any of the methods; yet, she described her teacher as 'perfect', due to his lenience with students and his 'good pronunciation'.

Q 2: While studying in the middle or high school, did you have any teacher who had played a significant role in changing your attitude towards the English language?

- If yes,

⇒ **Were there any special activities that contributed markedly to your evolution as an EFL learner?**

2/5 of the teachers could not remember any sort of activities that contributed markedly in their evolution as EFL learners. This difficulty in recalling events might be either caused by memory lapses, or the uninteresting or unmotivating nature of practices performed. On the other hand, both Participants 02 and 03 mentioned group work assignments as 'helpful' practices in learning English. In addition, Participant 02 added that performing dialogues helped her with the language:

"I remember that she focused a lot on the interactive activities, group assignments, writing in groups which was very helpful because I learned a lot from my groups. Also performing dialogues in front of the class helped me with the language to an extent" -Participant 02

Participant 05, in turn, briefly mentioned that games and riddles were the practices which contributed to her development in the English language.

Q 3: While studying in the middle or high school, did you have any teacher who had played a significant role in changing your attitude towards the English language?

- If yes,

⇒ **Was this teacher completely reliant on the textbook or did s/he rely on other tools or methods?**

“She was not a slave of the textbook. Each time, she modified unsuitable exercises in accordance to the needs of the class” -Participant 02

“Speaking about the teacher of English? I never... I never, remember him using the textbook. He created his own special method, and focused a lot on Oral Expression” -Participant 03

“He used to use everything except the textbook” -Participant 05

$\frac{3}{4}$ of the participants who gave straight answers to this question stated that their teachers did not rely on the textbook. While participants 03 and 05 stated that they had never seen their teachers using the textbook, Participant 02 indicated that her teacher was ‘not a slave’ of a textbook; according to her, the teacher modified the textbook instructions based on her students’ needs.

Q 4: Was there any teacher who played a critical role in your development as you advanced across your university studies? What was special about his/her methods?

$\frac{6}{6}$ of the participants stated that they did have a teacher who had a critical role in their advancement through their university studies. To most of the participants, the success of their teachers was not related to the methods being practiced; as Participant 02 stated “... nothing special was being practiced”. Participant 01, passionately, described his teacher as “very explicit, methodical, and smart, modest, attractive”; he also added that his teacher “knew what feedback was”. Subsequently, Participant 02 focused on her teacher’s communicative

way. She also expressed her positive attitudes towards her teacher's traditional grammar method and the assignment of reading a literature book. Participant 01, in contrary, expressed his dislike to such assignments within the answer of another question; according to him, reading literature should not be something that is assigned, and that students should read whatever they wish to read. Participant 03, such as Participant 04, focused on her teacher's encouragements; while Participant 04 added that her teacher was the type "who would come to you and talk to you about your problems". On the other hand, Participants 05 and 06 both focused on the professional level of their teachers. While Participant 05 mentioned that her teacher was devoted, serious, and 'on time', Participant 06 was fascinated about her teacher whom she described as a 'genius'; talking about another teacher, she also admired her for being encouraging. To sum up, all of the participants stated, each in his/her own way, that the success of a teacher does not lie in her/her method, it is mostly about their character, way of dealing with students, and professional level.

Q 5: Which type of media did you specifically rely on in your university years?

4/6 of the participants stated that they used media in their educational careers. Computer, especially when connected to the Internet, along with television, were the main tools which the participants used. In an interesting story Participant 02 provided, she described how her reliance on the Internet, as an extra source of knowledge, helped her earn the best mark in her class, with an outstanding performance in the examination:

"I used to rely on computers. Whenever a teacher gave us a concept that was not very clear to me, I headed to the cyber café and just looked for it and tried to understand it more. I remember one of my linguistic teachers taught us about Chomsky in a very complicated way, so I insisted on studying it on my own. So I

used internet to search for it and learned about it. At the exam, I remember I had the best mark in the whole level... and he asked about me the day he handed us the papers back, he said it was the first time someone explained and understood what Chomsky was talking about” -Participant 02

Resultantly, media had a critical role in most of the participants’ EFL learning experiences.

Q 6: During the period of learning the language, did you set goals for your learning progress?

4/6 of the participants stated that they did set goals for their learning progress. However, they did not set goals through the learning progress, but only eventual goals such as success, proficiency, and having a job:

“My ultimate goal was to be as fluent as possible in English. I always strived to be a good speaker in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar... etc.” - Participant 02

“Yes, at the end of my fourth year, I started to think to be a teacher at university” -Participant 04

“Yes, of course. My primary... goal was to be excellent, successful, different from the others...” -Participant 06

Q 7: Is there anything you found particularly useful/ inhibiting during your university years?

Two of the participants answered that the most inhibiting thing they found during their university studies was being away from home; it is perhaps worth mentioning that both of the participants were females who had to reside far from home during their studies.

“The inhibiting thing is the fact of being far from family” -Participant 04

“Living in the campus was very inhibiting. Being far from family can be very hard” -Participant 06

Participant 01, who was a married man during his university studied, stated that his age was the most inhibiting part of his studying years. lastly, while Participant 04 stated that her university’s rich library was the most useful thing she found, Participant 03 chose a general positive view stating that everything she had faced was ‘somehow useful’.

Q 8: Was there any subject you wish you studied or focused more on in your studies?

When asked about the modules which the participants wished they studied, or studied more of, the participants gave interesting answers based on their first-hand experiences. Two of the participants admitted their wish of studying Literature more. However, while Participant 05 had mere remorse for not giving importance to the module back then, Participant 02 shared more passionate feelings and attitudes towards Literature. In addition, another participant expressed her feelings of misfortune for not being able to study TEFL with a certain teacher whom she liked. On the other hand, Participants 01, 03, and 04, talked about modules which did not exist in their education. While Participant 01 stated that he wished study his mother tongue: Arabic, Participant 03 showed more interest in the cultural aspect of the language, suggesting a module named ‘Cultural Issues’:

“Cultural Issues... We have to implement this module for Masters students. In the module, we can take any Participant that is related to culture, either mother culture, or foreign culture, and talk about it” -Participant 03

Accordingly, this module could be very helpful for students as it helps them to become aware of the cultural differences through discussing their issues. Another intriguing suggestion was proposed by Participant 04 who said she wished she studied a module called ‘Study Skills’. This module, according to her, teaches students about the techniques used for studying, such as taking notes, researching, and preparing for exams.

“Study Skills, it is a module that I have never heard about until I taught English here...” -Participant 04

Section Five: Motivation

Q 1: had you been exposed to French before it was introduced as a school subject in your education? (family, neighbours, media... etc.) – If yes, what role did your surroundings play in your experience with this language?

4/6 of teachers had been exposed to French before it was introduced as a school subject. Apparently, their family members played a significant role with their first exposure to the French language; some of the participants stated that it was because of their parents, uncles, or migrant cousins. Two other teachers among the participants denied any kind of prior exposure to French. Participant 03, mentioned that the fact of her living in the countryside might be a reason, in her opinion, of her lack of exposure to the French language.

Q 2: Did you immediately realize the social importance of French right from the first encounter with this language?

3/6 of teachers could realize the social importance of French despite of their young ages. While Participant 02 showed a high level of awareness and determination towards the French language since a very young age, which could be explained by the influence of the family, Participant 06 felt the importance of such a language from her surroundings.

“Of course, I did. I had been psychologically prepared that I needed to master that language because it would open many gates for me in the future” -Participant 02

“Yes, because many old people used to speak this language, and when I started to learn it, I understood that it had some importance” -Participant 06

Participant 03, however, showed an extent of realization towards that language, but did not provide any further explanation. On the other hand, Participants 01 and 05 admitted that they did not realize the social importance of French because they of their young age, which is understandable.

Q 3: Was there any person/ teacher/ or event that might have changed your attitude towards the French language? (either positively or negatively).

In response to this question, all of the six participants agreed upon having particular individuals who changed their attitude towards the French language. While Participant 02 mentioned that her father and uncles were her first supporters, the rest of the participants mentioned their former French teachers.

“Yes, the first person was my father, then my uncles... and later, my best friend who is a French teacher” -Participant 02

“In primary? yes, my teachers, I had... excellent teachers that I still remember, they were skillful, competent, fluent...” -Participant 04

Participant 01 was eager to share one of his experiences with a teacher who ‘liked’ him. The participant emphasized the positive effects of praising and rewarding students which can support, help, and even change a certain attitude towards a school subject from negative to positive.

“...What happened is in the ‘lycée’... I used to study with someone I used to like "Mr. X" a teacher of French, and one day, he was teaching vocabulary in French, and there was the word "aimer passionnement", and he looked for someone who knows another synonym of the word. I was the last one to be asked, and I told him “C'est ‘adorer’”. I remember he told me “OOOH! Mon adore!”, and came to me, and kissed me. What do you think? Does it encourage or discourage?” - Participant 01

Similarly, Participants 03, 04, 05, and 06 shared passionate memories about the teachers who contributed markedly to their excellence in the language. Participant 03 indicated that her teacher’s secret was the motivating topics she used, in combination with her ‘attractive’ character and ‘the way she dealt with children’. And while Participant 04 chose to speak about her teachers in general, stating that they were skillful, competent, and fluent, Participants 05 and 06 felt that the lenience of their teachers was the major reason of their positive attitudes towards French. In summary, the way teachers treated the participants

reflected their attitudes towards the French language; they all emphasized the fact that the personality and method of the teacher is the major factor behind, either their positive, or negative emotions towards that language.

Q 4: While studying in the middle or high school, did you have any teacher who had played a significant role in changing your attitude towards the English language?

When asked if there were a teacher who played a role in changing their attitude towards English, 5/6 of the teachers answered positively. Participant 01, however, mentioned that he only had a teacher who discouraged him to learn the language. the participant stated that the ‘poor’ level of his Pakistani teacher discouraged him to learn the language; which indicates that student’s motivation could be affected by his teacher’s limited level or command of the language.

“Maybe discouraged, because I have already been encouraged before, but discouraged, yes, because in the 4th year, we have been taught by a Pakistani and that Pakistani is a Pakistani! so he has to be taught in English, and I was frustrated, very frustrated, the problem is I had found the same teacher when I got to the lycèe <high school>, so these are the temporary situations in which I was discouraged...” -Participant 01

Q 5: While studying in the middle or high school, did you have any teacher who had played a significant role in changing your attitude towards the English language?

- If yes,

⇒ **Is this positive view towards this teacher specific to you or is it shared by other classmates?**

The answers of this question were both different among the participants, and contradictory within the individuals themselves. Participant 01, for instance, could not think of a specific teacher because, according to him, he had many good teachers before. Therefore, the participant gave a general, and somewhat neutral, statement. In addition, Participant 06 also gave a contradictory answer, by stating that it ‘may be shared by some’ of the classmates, but it was still specific to her. On the other hand, both Participants 02 and 03 indicated that the positive view towards their teachers was shared by other classmates. Lastly, Participant 05 was the only one who, hesitantly, felt that it was specific to her, by using hesitation sounds combined with the word “maybe”.

Q 6: While studying in the middle or high school, did you have any teacher who had played a significant role in changing your attitude towards the English language?

- **If yes,**

While Participants 01 and 02 seemed to be unaware of the meaning of ‘individual’ at that time, Participants 03 and 06, answered almost closely, they acknowledged the fact that both determination and passion to learn English drove their teachers’ attention; therefore, it reflected their teachers’ treatment of them as individuals.

“I was the best student of English in my class, so he liked me and treated me in a special way. So naturally I liked his Participant and focused my efforts on English” -Participant 03

“Yes, perhaps. I also wanted to be an English teacher just like him.” -Participant 06

On the other hand, Participant 05 showed hesitation in giving her answer. She first answered with 'no', then altered her answer to: 'maybe his treatment to all of us was good'; this hesitation was perhaps due to memory lapses, or the fact that the participant was in quite a hurry to finish the interview.

"Hmm... no (.) well, maybe his treatment to all of us was good." -Participant 05

Q 7: Being a teenager, you must have felt, most probably, the need for a role model in your life. Were you suddenly interested in knowing, or imitating a specific personality? -whether in your life (friend, teacher, parent, classmate... etc.), or public? Was proficiency in foreign languages in general, or English in particular, one of the strengths of this personality?

4/6 of teachers admitted the fact that they had a role model during their teenage period. Participants 03 and 04 had role models beyond the English language context; the former imitated many teachers and actors who were not proficient in the English language, while the latter looked up to her parents. Participant 05, in turn, acknowledged that she looked up to her English teacher whom she admired very much. Nevertheless, Participant 01 denied that he had a role model in his life; his denial, however, was not straightforward, which might indicate that he intentionally refused to provide further information. Lastly, Participant 06 stated that she could not remember a certain role model while being a teenager; however, she did have a teacher whom she looked up to, while she was studying in the university.

"I went to Setif with my aunt, then met some mates who, at that time, warned me not to study English because I'd be taught by this teacher, Mr. X1, a severe teacher... but he became my role model afterwards" -Participant 06

Q 8: What was the cause behind your decision to major in English?

3/6 of the participants answered that the main cause behind choosing English as a university major was their positive feelings towards the language, by giving direct expressions of those feelings, such as ‘I liked English’, ‘I just really love it’, and ‘I admired the English language’. Participant 02 on the other hand, stated that the cause behind her decision, was the family environment and her English teachers, who had a huge effect on her decision.

“All of my English teachers had an imprint on me. I was very lucky to have good teachers in my English learning. They all had great personalities. Also, my uncle was an English teacher as well, he encouraged me, <the same teacher who encouraged Participant 01> he was one of the reasons why I chose English... also two of my uncles’ wives were English teachers. It was just my dream... I would never imagine studying something other than English” -Participant 02

Lastly, Participant 03 was the only one to admit that majoring in English was not a personal decision, but her father’s wish. As a result, most of the participants chose to major in English based on their own will; this might indicate that succeeding in a language requires positive attitudes towards it, in addition to the initial willingness to engage in such imagined community. These attitudes and willingness are usually shaped due to certain motivating factors in the learner’s environment.

Q 9: What kind of ‘key’ experiences did you have during your university years?

Answering about their ‘key’ experiences in the university, the participants provided different narratives. Participants 03 and 06 chose their experiences with certain ‘successful’ teachers as ‘key’ experiences in their English learning journey.

“The only specific event that I can remember is when a teacher from the U.S.A came to teach us when we were in the fourth year. At the first period, he gave us a task... we had to imagine that there were different people [from different races and religions] for example a man who is an Imam, a boy, a pregnant woman... etc. and we had to think of who to save (.) So, each of us gave different answers, and at the end, he wrote on the blackboard something which indicates that discrimination is a very bad thing” -Participant 03

On the other hand, Participants 01 and 02 mentioned their personal efforts and emphasized on their importance. As Participant 01 stressed the importance of reading, Participant 02 narrated a story when she decided to be a risk taker, and eventually accomplished her desired goal. The participant showed much pride in her attitudes and their successful outcomes.

“I remember that in my third year, we had an assignment with my oral teacher, I insisted on having a special topic (.) So I took the risk of doing an interview with smoking girls in the campus, to know what they do that (.) Some of them even took drugs (.) I told them I just wanted to know the reasons. Their stories made me cry. I'm not defending them by the way. But I could not make a prejudice against them. I narrated their stories and I was attacked by my classmates that I was defending them, but I held my position and by the end of the session, my teacher, who was a very religious woman, and who was disgusted by my topic at first, was the first one to clap for me (.) That experience made me be more confident in myself and proud to be a risk-taker, because I took the initiative to talk about such a sensitive topic... so I broke that “taboo” (.) I always looked for distinguished things to be done” -Participant 02

Lastly, Participant 05 who was a student at E.N.S. stated that the most considerable experience she had was her ‘practical training’, when she had the opportunity to be a part-time teacher while still being a learner.

Section Six: Investment

Q 1: Would you describe yourself as an extrovert or introvert student?

5/6 of teachers described themselves as extrovert students. Participants 02 and 05 showed extra emphasis on being an extrovert student by using the stressed word ‘VERY’. Participant 04, described herself as ‘the first one’, which means “extrovert”; yet, she was reluctant to provide extra information about it, perhaps, because she did not comprehend the meaning of the word. However, in addition to describing herself as an extrovert student, Participant 06 still provided extra positive descriptions about herself by stating that she was communicative, daring and fearless in participating. Notably, Participant 01 stated that he was mostly extrovert; however, he was also introvert when the case required him to be. On the other hand, Participant 03 was the only introvert student amongst the group of participants; her reluctance to participate was explained by her as for being a shy person.

“I was an introvert student. I was a bit shy. I was among those who liked keeping things to themselves. Even now as a teacher, I like writing more than speaking... and this is the character of someone who used to be shy in the past” -Participant 03

Resultantly, extroversion had been always the distinguishing character of successful learners, as it gives the learner certain advantages such as fluency in speaking. However, one must not ignore the fact that other successful learners were still introverts. As seen with Participant 03,

writing was her strongest suit. Introversion allows students to be creative writers, good listeners, and accurate speakers of the language.

Q 2: Have you ever felt reluctant to participate in a class so as to avoid any kind of humiliation?

4/6 of the participants said that they had at least a time in their lives when they were reluctant to participate as to avoid humiliation. Participant 01 shared a story about a teacher who offended him during the class.

“Never, except one day, I told you I was married, at that time I already had a daughter, and it was a teacher of Phonetics, and I used to conceal my ‘being married’, and to hide the fact that I was married, so I would behave in a normal way with students, and one day, the teacher of Phonetics asked a very silly question, a very easy question to a lady... pointed to her, and she could not answer, and I was terribly annoyed because the question was easy, so I gave the answer, and he pointed to me and told me “are you a lady?” I was terribly perplexed, and the student next to me was laughing, and I felt humiliated. From then on, I did not participate, I stopped speaking, I left the classroom. he sent after me one... a student... friend of mine... then <after the narrator went back to the classroom> he asked me “Excuse me, are you annoyed by my remark or question?” ... “Of course,” I told him “of course, yes! You don't know what I am. I am married. I have a lady, and you told me “Are you a lady?”. He was sorry. So, this was an experience that happened. Yes, at that time I used to be reluctant because I did not want people to put me in such a situation... and I forgot about that” -Participant 01

The participant in the story was a married man while he was studying; therefore, his teacher's offense stopped him from participating in order to protect his identity as a "respectable husband and father". Furthermore, Participant 03 stated that she refrained from participation with a certain teacher who was 'discriminative' against students from her region.

"Kind of humiliation means racism for example? I mean the teacher differentiating between students? Even those who live in Constantine and outsiders... Yes, it happened to me when I was studying in Constantine some teachers were discriminative against students from my region. So, I did not want to participate" -Participant 03

In addition, Participant 04 mentioned that she had been through the same situation, but could not remember an exact time; the participant only stated that it was sometimes due to her fear of providing the wrong answer, or using a rusty accent or false pronunciation. Lastly, Participant 06 simply explained her refrain from participation in class by 'a change of learning style'; as it went from being extrovert, to being auditory.

Q 4: Which modules did you participate most in? why?

Concerning this question, the participants gave very different answers. 4/6 of them justified the reasons of their participation in the modules; and these reasons were all distinguished. Participant 01, for instance answered that he used to participate in Civilization mostly; however, he said that it was only a matter of 'obligation'. In his view, he was fulfilling a duty of participating to have a good grade, in order to eventually succeed in life. Participant 02, on the other hand, justified her constant participation in the Oral Expression session as a desire to 'impose' herself in the classroom; according to her, she always wanted to be 'unforgettable'.

Furthermore, Participant 03 stated that she liked participating in both Syllabus Design and American and British Civilization because she admired her Syllabus design teacher (which was mentioned in another answer), and because she liked listening and knowing about events which occurred in the world. Lastly, Participant 6 stated that she liked participating in most of the modules because, according to her, all of her teachers were “very good”.

Q 5: How important were examinations for you? How did you react to feedback from exams? (success/ failure, teacher comments...)

6/6 of the subjects indicated that examinations were to some extent, important for them. Two of the participants answered that they cared more about their English development than examinations. Furthermore, 4/6 of the participants stated that they always appreciated their teachers’ feedback and used it to be better English learners. Interestingly, three of the participants mentioned that they had rarely, or never failed in their English learning careers. However, Participant 06 stated that when failing, one must never ‘give up’, as she narrated a story about a failing experience which she encountered, and had successfully overcome.

“Exams? Exams were important so some extent (.) However my primary goal was to improve my English. I wanted to get good marks, but to have a good level at the same time (.) I used to get good marks most of the time... except once, I had a very bad mark in Culture in my first year, I was very disappointed, but I did not give up, I worked hard and succeeded in this module in the second semester” -

Participant 06

3.7. Discussion of the Results

The first section in this study is concerned with the imagined communities involved in the participants' language learning journeys. The answers obtained from (Q 1) showed that 5/6 of the participants do not believe that using English has advantages in the Algerian community; accordingly, using English is only advantageous when in the classroom, or going abroad. Another answer on a different section also showed that using English is advantageous in an internet-mediated situation. Other results revealed that only 2/6 of the participants have ever used English as a secret code, another 2/6 stated that they have used French for this purpose instead. Moreover, half of the participants stated that English makes them feel more educated or intelligent. The results obtained in this section show that most of the participants' imagined communities were restricted within the confines of the classroom context, and the actual native language speakers' communities. This restriction is mainly caused by the French language status in the Algerian community, as it dominates most of the aspects of life in the country.

The second section is concerned with the teachers' narratives in relation to Subjectivity. The results showed that most of the participants shared somewhat similar opinions in terms of their own 'self-awareness'. (Q 7) revealed that all of the participants believed that self-awareness which occurred in their age of adolescence was accompanied by an increase in the desire to learn languages generally, or English specifically. Most of them, also stated that they feel different when using the English language. In addition, in (Q 1), 6/6 of the subjects indicated positive opinions about themselves as EFL learners. Furthermore, in (Q 8), most of them stated that they had a 'sufficient' to a 'good' level of English before deciding to major in the language. however, their higher degrees of confidence were expressed in the answers of (Q 9). (Q 10) also revealed that all of the participants felt that they had certain useful characteristics for the process of

language learning. The conclusion which can be drawn from this section is that the participants' sense of self has been constant through time; however, their positions were not always powerful.

The third section is related to the issue of positioning. 5/6 of the participants admitted that they use French instead of English in certain situations as to position themselves as prestigious individuals. However, in terms of Human Agency, the results obtained did not provide rich data in this sense. The participants seemed to rarely face any problems in their educational careers. Most of them stated that they had never faced difficulties neither at the beginning of their EFL learning experience, nor in their 1st year in the university. French, for most of the subjects, worked as a complimentary language to English, as it seems that most of the participants in the study had intense exposure of the French language which did not oblige them to cope with the transition. Only 2/6 of the participants were not sufficiently exposed to French before encountering English, which led them to neglect the French language in order to preserve English.

The fourth section aims at casting light on conditions of learning, learning practices, and participation and/or non-participation in language communities. Succinctly, the results revealed by this section show that all of the participants had a teacher who had played a significant role in their target language development; and these teachers were, as indicated by the participants, described as methodical, creative, and communicative. Therefore, half of the participants could recall several activities which helped them evolve across their language learning. The participants signaled the innovative activities in which they were mostly involved, and emphasized the non-use of the textbooks. One intriguing conclusion that can be drawn in this context, is that the participants have shaped their identities as successful language learners as a result of their previous encounter with these teachers. The latter were significantly influential due

to their methodologies, characters, and professional dealings with students. Moreover, the vast majority of the participants utilized media as a crucial means of their target language learning. Additionally, two participants showed a similarity in their responses when indicating that the most inhibiting factor was their far residence from home, during their university years. When asked about modules which the participants wished to study, two of them provided interesting answers. One subject stated that she would have liked to be taught about study skills during her university studies, as she expressed how this module can be very beneficial for students in order to explore their learning styles and abilities. Another participant suggested the teaching of a module named Cultural Issues. This module, accordingly, discusses the similarities and differences between both native and target culture, as to avoid cultural shock for language learners. As a result, the participants in the study agreed that their major reason of shaping a good level and attitude to the English language was their successful previous encounters with their teachers, and their appropriate exposure to the language in somewhat modern and non-traditional methods. This, of course, is not to say that these learners were exposed to an ideal learning environment, as the methods they explained were not very sophisticated and updated in accordance to the latest teaching methods.

The fifth section was designed in hope of getting some insights about the factors that may result in learners' motivation. The data displayed in this section show that 4/6 of the participants had been exposed to French before dealing with it as a school subject. That is, to say that French plays a crucial role in local communities, due to the social status it fulfils within the Algerian society. However, such exposure to the French language has rarely been accompanied with a realization of the social importance of that language, because the learners are usually not matured enough to be aware of such an importance. Furthermore, findings on (Q 3) and (Q 4)

show that the all of the participants had a person who changed their attitudes towards both French and English, this person was either a teacher or a member of family. This might conclude the strong effect of surroundings on the target language learners, for they could hold either positive or negative attitudes towards that language. Additionally, a considerable number of participants confessed that the success of their teachers lied in their treatment of them as individuals, also, most of the participants reckoned that the positive view towards these teachers was mostly specific to them, which indicates that teachers' treatment of the learners is more likely to reinforce, or inhibit, the target language learning. Moreover, the majority of the participants self-chose to major in English, stating different reasons such as their strong positive feelings toward the language (The case of Participants 01, 05 and 06), and their teachers and families' support which generated a sort of motivation (case of Participant 02). The data obtained signal that the participants had an inner desire towards the attainment of majoring in English, they have, internally, intended to study the language which they 'admired'. Lastly, the participants provided a variety of key experiences which they underwent during their university studies. Most of these experiences were related to their teachers and eventually reinforced their motivation and desire to learn the language.

The sixth section is devoted to tackling the interrelation between investment and language learning; as non-participation can, in some way, help the learners preserve integrity of their imagined communities. Results in (Q 1) show that in their journey as former successful learners, the majority of participants happened to have been extrovert students, only one participant was introvert. That is, to say that participation is a major factor contributing to the participants' success in the target language learning, as they were all active, daring, and communicative inside the classroom. However, based on the case of Participant 03, it has been proven that introvert

students can, in fact, be successful, as introversion allows them to develop their writing, accuracy, and listening skills. Furthermore, a vast majority of the participants felt reluctant, at a certain point in time, to participating in classroom, as they have been treated discriminatively by other classmates or teachers. Additionally, the participants held positive attitudes towards exams; they admitted the importance of examinations and teachers' feedback. The results of this section show that most of the participants in the study were invested in the learning practices of the language, as they chose to join the imagined community of Algerian EFL Learners, and invested in it within the classroom context. Notably, this investment was interrupted when the identities of the subjects were threatened, whether it is the identity of a successful EFL learner, or other identities such as being "a respectable husband and father" (case of participant 01).

All in all, the results of this study have shown that, in contrast to Block's hypothesis which claims that identity in a FL context does not change, the participants narratives displayed a reconstruction of identity through historical time; their identities were negotiated, and renegotiated in relation to the larger social world.

Findings, also showed that these participants declined the use and importance of English in the Algerian society, for it does not fulfill a social status in the country. That is, to say that French still dominates almost all spheres of life in Algeria, which could stand as obstacle in forming a larger community of Algerian English speakers. Subsequently, teachers' imagined communities were, notably, restricted to both classroom and native language community. Furthermore, it is noticeably concluded that the majority of participants shared a degree of self-awareness and confidence, which can both be accompanied with a deep desire to learn English. Moreover, the participants could often preserve their positions, as they have, rarely, encountered any difficulties during their EFL learning. As a result, success in learning the TL is fulfilled in

accordance to the way in which learners position themselves in the imagined community of the language. Additionally, an investigation in the language practices could be significantly influential to the learners of the TL, in the sense that the participants held positive views towards the activities in which they were involved, and the surroundings that played a crucial role in their evolution of English. The results obtained from the data have, also, indicated the importance of motivation as a crucial means of language learning. When shaping their identities, learners require motivating factors, as to be able to evolve across their learning, and overcome inhibiting situations. The results also revealed that all of the participants shared similar situations with regards to their investment. Identities were protected by refraining the participants' investment in the TL communities.

The results obtained indicated multiple similarities with regards to the participants' formation of identity. However, these similarities were not as striking as predicted. Certain differences were also displayed in terms of identity aspects. This might go back to the fact that the sample was not homogenous enough, as it contained participants from different ages and backgrounds, and therefore different types of exposure to the target culture, and consequently, different types of correlations between language and culture. The second explanation to these differences is that Algeria, being a FL context, is marked by low intensity of exposure to the target culture, therefore, few learners succeed in learning the culture and the language, as language identities rarely undergo the required level of change, which may lead in turn, to high levels of proficiency. The few people succeeded such as the ones in the study, underwent changes because each one has succeeded on his/her individual efforts. This, in turn, results in different types of correlations between language and identity.

The question of differences displayed in the study should be remedied through a better articulation between language and identity, which cannot be achieved unless the intensity of exposure to the target culture is increased. Another suggestion is the need to cater more for individual differences in the classroom, as each individual brings about a distinct identity, and therefore, a different chain of reactions to language and culture.

3.8 Recommendations

- The most significant finding of this study is that the relationship between language and identity should be articulated in aim of improving the English language curriculum through the intensity of exposure to target culture.
- One intriguing finding of this study is bringing about awareness syllabus designers, material designers, teacher educators, and decision makers of the importance of culture in the English language studies.
- Cultural Issues integration in a language program is of crucial importance, as to raise learners' consciousness about different matters of culture.
- Arabic is significantly important in the English curriculum, as to not neglect one's native culture, in addition to casting light on both similarities and differences of both cultures.
- Syllabi of English should implement the module of Study Skills, for it allows teachers to provide guidelines for first year students, in order to help the latter, adjust to the new environment of university and provide a beneficial experience.
- The authorities ought to schedule conferences for teachers to exchange expertise and viewpoints, so that they can serve new teachers, or may share methods and techniques in teaching.

- It is highly recommended that teachers would, preferably, teach aspects of small “c” rather than big “C”.

Conclusion

This chapter has mainly dealt with the practical part of the study. In accordance with the data obtained, the analysis of the narratives has revealed that successful language learners in the study had undergone the process of identity reconstruction during their educational careers. Furthermore, the data displayed multiple similarities among the participants' narratives in terms of their identity aspects, along with fewer differences.

General Conclusion

After the field of SLA had been historically dominated by the cognitive perspective, a challenge to include a more social perspective in the study was proposed to researchers by Norton (1995). The new perspective integrated the use of identity as an approach to SLA, to work as complementary to the already well established cognitive theory. In relation to this issue, and opposed to Block's (2007) hypothesis which stated that learners acquiring a language in a foreign language context, have little or no reconstruction of identity, it is hypothesized that successful EFL learners will display a great deal of similarities in terms of their identity formation within their autobiographic narratives.

The findings of the study indicate that there are multiple similarities among narratives of successful English Language learners in terms of their identity formation. These similarities were mostly displayed in relation to motivation, language learning, and investment. Therefore, disconfirming Block's hypothesis, because the identities of these learners were, in fact, reconstructed within a foreign language context.

As a result of the narrative analysis performed in the study, it has been confirmed that there are common aspects concerning the relationship between identity and target language proficiency in the autobiographic narratives of EFL Algerian university teachers, as successful English learners.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Participants' Interview

General questions about the participant's status

- Could you tell us briefly about yourself? (general background) (social status: family, friends, childhood residence Vs school location)
- How long have you been teaching English as foreign language?
- How would you describe yourself as an EFL learner? (Strengths, weaknesses, affective attitudes)
- How often do you find yourself using foreign languages outside the classroom context? – Which language do you use more?
- Have you ever felt that using French instead of English gave you a more prestigious position in the social world?
- Do you feel you are a different person when using the English language? How?
- Are there any situations in which you feel that using the English language, or at least some English words, would give you certain advantages? Explain.
- Does using English allow you to express feelings you cannot express using Arabic?
- What aspects of the English culture you feel should be embraced by the Algerian culture?
- Does being in full command of the English language make you feel more educated, intelligent, and accomplished?
- Do you think that English helped you to set secret codes you might use when seeking privacy?

Primary School Phase

- Which foreign language did you study in the primary school?

In case of French:

- had you been exposed to French before it was introduced as a school subject in your education? (family, neighbors, media... etc.) – If yes, what role did your surroundings play in your experience with this language?
- Did you immediately realize the social importance of French right from the first encounter with this language?
- Was there any person/ teacher/ or event that might have changed your attitude towards the French language? (either positively or negatively).

In case of English:

- had you been exposed to English before it was introduced as a school subject in your education? (family, neighbors, media... etc.) – If yes, what role did your surroundings play in your experience with this language?
- Was there any person/ teacher/ or event that might have changed your attitude towards the English language? (either positively or negatively).

Middle and high school phase

Teachers who studied English in the primary school will be asked the following:

- When was the first time you were exposed to the French language? (as student/ or before studying the language) – what were your first impressions about the language?

- Did you immediately realize the social importance of French right from your first encounter with this language?
- Was there any person/teacher/ or event that had a role in shaping your attitude towards the language?
- Were there any similarities among the difficulties that you encountered when studying both foreign languages at the beginning of middle school?
- Do you think that the French language impacted your development in learning the English language? (either positively or negatively) – explain.
- How did you cope with the transition from studying only English to studying both languages in the middle school?

Teachers who studied French in the primary school will be asked the following:

- When was the first time you were exposed to the English language? (as a student/ or before studying the language) – What were your first impressions about the language?
- What difficulties did you encounter at the beginning of your EFL learning experience?
- Do you think that French had positive or negative effects on your development in learning English? – Explain. How did you cope with the transition from studying only French to studying both French and English?

All participants will be asked the following:

- While studying in the middle or high school, did you have any teacher who had played a significant role in changing your attitude towards the English language?
- If yes,

- ⇒ Is this positive view towards this teacher specific to you or is it shared by other classmates?
- ⇒ Does the success of this teacher lie in his/her treatment of you as an individual?
- ⇒ What was specific about his/her method(s)?
- ⇒ Were there any special activities that contributed markedly to your evolution as an EFL learner?
- ⇒ Was this teacher completely reliant on the textbook or did s/he rely on other tools or methods?
- Would you describe yourself as an extrovert or introvert student?
- Being a teenager, you must have felt, most probably, the need for a role model in your life. Were you suddenly interested in knowing, or imitating a specific personality? - whether in your life (friend, teacher, parent, classmate... etc.), or public- Was proficiency in foreign languages in general, or English in particular, one of the strengths of this personality?
- Did you feel at any point in time that learning English comes at the expense of learning French?
- Was the increase of self-awareness that generally happens at that age accompanied by an increase or decrease in the desire to learn English?
- Could you tell us precisely when you felt that your journey with English had reached the point of no-return? (in other words, when exactly did you realize that success in life requires success with English?)
- What was the cause behind your decision to major in English?
- How did you feel about your English at this specific point in time?

University phase

- Did you find the first year of the English License curriculum difficult? what difficulties did you encounter?
- At the beginning of your learning experience, how confident were you overall, in specific areas or tasks?
- Have you ever felt reluctant to participate in a class so as to avoid any kind of humiliation?
- Was there any teacher who played a critical role in your development as you advanced across your university studies? What was special about his/her methods?
- Which modules did you participate most in? why?
- What characteristics did you possess that you think were useful for learning a language?
- Which type of media did you specifically rely on in your university years?
- During the period of learning the language, did you set goals for your learning progress?
- How important were examinations for you? How did you react to feedback from exams? (success/ failure, teacher comments...)
- Have you ever felt that the more developed your proficiency in English becomes, the less confident you become in your skills in the mother tongue?
- Do you think that your mother tongue's culture is sufficiently articulated in the English curriculum?
- Do you think that your mother tongue's culture should be given more prominence? Why?

- Is there anything you found particularly useful/ inhibiting during your university years?
- Was there any subject you wish you studied or focused more on in your studies?
- What kind of ‘key’ experiences did you have during your university years?
- What advice would you give first year students of English at the university?

Appendix B

Teachers’ Narratives

Transcription Conventions

- **X, X1, X2, X3** indicate the participant’s name, and/or any other unidentified person
- **Teacher B:** a teacher who was present during one of the interviews
- A slash / shows the end of a chunk of talk
- A hyphen- illustrates an incomplete word or utterance
- A question mark ? indicates a question intonation
- (.) indicates a short pause in a chunk talk
- ... indicates the speaker’s willingness to talk more
- A square bracket at the beginning of a word indicates an [interruption
- Double brackets around a word show that there is ((doubt about the transcription))
- < phrases or words> in angled brackets is an additional comment by the transcriber
- WORDS in CAPITAL letters are spoken with extra emphasis
- : means an elongated vowel
- <sic> indicates that the word spoken by the participant is flawed

These conventions have been cited in (Block, 2007, p.9), with additional modifications according to the researchers' need.

Participant 01

General questions about the participant's status

- Could you tell us briefly about yourself? (general background) (social status: family, friends, childhood residence Vs school location)

Participant 01: What do you mean? My background life? I mean, in the past or now?

Interviewer 01: In the past.

Participant 01: When I was a child or-?

Interviewer 02: Yes, in the primary school/

<interruption by another teacher>

Participant 01: Look, my schooling, so, to be frank, I was living in a village that we can call "Douar" okay? in our culture(.) So, and then, when I was six, when I began schooling, we moved to a city, a somewhat small city, or village, big village okay? Or what we call in French "Commune". From then on, I began my schooling, my real schooling, although I began it when I was in Douar, but really, actually it began when I moved to El Ancer. Then, I began [studying] at primary school. Of course, like everyone I spent six years. What I remember about myself is that I was bright. Why? Because I have been already sort of educated in Arabic, particularly in Quran, by my own father. My own father was a religious man (.) then what? So, the exams, I started the exam of 'Sixième', then we had 4 years of middle school because at that time-<interrupted by interviewer 02>

Interview 02: Did you have a school in your Douar?

Interviewer 01: Was it far from your residence?

Participant 01: I did not study there, because I just began there and then I moved. Primary school, middle school in El Ancer, then high school in El Milia. So, I had a scientific background. We studied in French, that's what we call 'Bilingual'. Technically, it was called "Transitional science"... 'Science Transitoire' in French. Then, when I was in 'lycée', I was a bit sort of disruptive student. I began to dislike studying. <both interviewers tried to stop him in order to continue talking about it in the right phase of the interview but he went on> ... and then, we set the exam of Baccalaureate, I failed. Why? Because in fact, in the 3rd year I did not study. I was doing my 3rd year alone in the café studying Physics and Mathematics, but look, I failed, why? Because I had zero in Sports because I did not satisfy it at all/

Interviewer 02: We are going to ask you about that, so try to answer briefly because we have a lot of questions.

- How long have you been teaching English as foreign language?

Participant 01: I have taught English informally and formally. But you are speaking about formally, so I began that [teaching] formally right after university in 2001. But before that, I had been teaching English for- <interviewer 02: around sixteen or seventeen years?> Yes. At the university, it began in 2001/

- How would you describe yourself as an EFL learner? (Strengths, weaknesses, affective attitudes)

Participant 01: I did not catch the question.

Interviewer 02: As a learner of English as a foreign language, how would you describe yourself?

Participant 01: You mean E-F-L. when I pronounce it, I say E-F-L (.) To be frank, I have all the time been strong in English. If you want this piece of information... this detail, we used to compete, a girl and me. The first time we began to study English in the 3rd year in the middle school, and we studied with someone called " Mr X" in El Ancer, he taught me... we used to find him somewhere in Jijel, we used to call him Andy, because we had a book called "Andy in Algeria" if you remember that, and we used to compete, the female student 'the girl' and me, when we set the exam, the teacher should correct the papers before we go out, before we go, and I remember a detail, when he gave me 19.75, I told him "why Sir? I should have 20, the answer is correct" We were doing 'contractions'... no we have not yet done 'contractions', he gave us the verb "To be" in the present and the plural, and to be negated, and instead of writing 'they are not', I wrote 'they aren't (.) and so he omitted 0.25, telling me that "You have not yet come to this", so you should not have written it (.) so, this, in order to say that I was sort of in advance, compared to my- Why? because it was something I used to like, my first introduction to English informally when I was studying in 1st year <Interviewer 02: we're going to ask you about that in a moment> in middle school using a dictionary and a book that my uncle brought to me called "Anglais Sans Parler" ... "English without talk"/

Interviewer 02: So, I need you to hold that piece of information because I'm going to ask you about that in my questions okay?

Participant 01: Okay

- How often do you find yourself using foreign languages outside the classroom context? – Which language do you use more?

Participant 01: I don't use it, frankly (.) I only use it when I read, so, maybe in reading/

Interviewer 02: So, you only use Arabic?

Participant 01: Arabic, or French, with people who can speak French/

- Have you ever felt that using French instead of English gave you a more prestigious position in the social world?

Participant 01: Sometimes it does, why? Because of our society. Culturally speaking, our society, our culture, particularly Algerian culture is a mixture speaking Arabic and French, and people using French, sometimes they use it for prestige/

- Do you feel you are a different person when using the English language? How?

Participant 01: Tell me, do you see me as a different person? Of course I'm not. I use English in order to teach, that's all, and when I'm teaching of course I have to use it, so then, this difference is not apparent, not evident, and myself, I don't feel it/

- Are there any situations in which you feel that using the English language, or at least some English words, would give you certain advantages? Explain.

Participant 01: Maybe the advantage that can be got is that of being more explicit, sometimes, because some of the concepts and thoughts can better be communicated in English, particularly when you are with the people who are literate/

- Does using English allow you to express feelings you cannot express using Arabic?

Participant 01: No

Interviewer 01: Never?

Participant 01: Yes

- What aspects of the English culture you feel should be embraced by the Algerian culture?

Participant 01: No one, no aspect (.) They are two totally different cultures. But for universal purposes, the things that we teach in fact when we deal with languages particularly in Linguistics or Pragmatics, we ((preconize)) that for example students in order to be more exposed to the foreign culture they have to embrace some of the aspects, but I discourage people from that (.) because of the effect that this may have later on the person/

- Does being in full command of the English language make you feel more educated, intelligent and accomplished?

Participant 01: IF you have full command... I don't know. <Interviewer 02: As an EFL teacher, you have a certain [acceptable] command of the language> - Look, you cannot teach if you are not in full command, but you cannot say 'full command', you cannot set a degree of command, mastering the language, so how can you teach if you are yourself need to be taught?

Interviewer 02: So, does it make you feel more educated or intelligent?

Participant 01: Command of the language is not a sign of education or intelligence... because normally, everyone as Mr Chomsky teaches is supposed to have a mastery of his own first language ... mother tongue. Now in case of foreign languages, it's only something that you are adding to yourself... a means of expressions but this doesn't mean that it is intelligence, except when you consider that you have improved too, Mr. Gardner with multiple intelligences(.) but I personally, I disagree with him/

- Do you think that English helped you to set secret codes you might use when seeking privacy?

Participant 01: I don't understand what you mean.

Interviewer 02: As a person who can speak English, do you feel that English helped you to keep a kind of privacy, for example you write down your own thoughts in English because you know others cannot understand you or maybe-

Participant 01: I don't know, but this domain, you have to- in order to fulfil this domain, you have to be someone who communicates with foreigners for example or others, and then use such medium as a code that is only-

Interviewer 02: maybe with others, or just with yourself just writing...

Participant 01: I don't write, I don't write and I don't communicate with foreigners(.) I only read, teaching you from time to time diverts, ok? And then, give extra knowledge from other domains, but I'm not using codes, I'm being explicit. Otherwise what's the point then? But this can happen-

Interviewer 01: To us, as students, we like writing down our thoughts in another language...

Participant 01: Yes, I used to do that, I used to write in French because I have been taught in French. I used to write my diaries in French, and yes sometimes we even use symbols or codes in order to highlight certain details to yourself so that the others when reading, they do not understand, this may happen when you're young/

Participant's experience with French/ English in the primary school

- Which foreign language did you study in the primary school?

Participant 01: French

- had you been exposed to French before it was introduced as a school subject in your education? (family, neighbors, media... etc.) – If yes, what role did your surroundings play in your experience with this language?

Participant 01: Look, the only situation where I was introduced to French was with my cousins, these are migrant cousins (.) They usually come from summer to summer, and I remember when I was a child in primary school, it could have happened around the fourth or fifth grade (.) But at that time, I did not master (.) it did not have a big role/

Interviewer 02: So, for you, it didn't play a role in your education?

Participant 01: It may have played, because that was something I used to like so much, to communicate with my cousins though I didn't know how to, but I used to force myself and learn and read and ask how to call this and so on/

Interviewer 02: So, they made you interested in the language?

Participant 01: Yes, and this was a motive, I was motivated by this. But they did not want to motivate me, but I felt motivated/

- Did you immediately realize the social importance of French right from the first encounter with this language?

Participant 01: No, I did not understand this.

- Was there any person/ teacher/ or event that might have changed your attitude towards the French language? (either positively or negatively).

Participant 01: In primary school? I don't think so.

Interviewer 02: What about middle school?

Participant 01: In middle school, Yes. I remember at the time we began to understand what is feedback, particularly positive feedback, and of course when someone is rewarded or praised, particularly for something that is not usual as a foreign language(.) at the time French. So, praising someone for example giving a word, or correct word or sentence, I used to like that-

Interviewer 02: So, they used to praise you.

Participant 01: Yes, Teachers praise for continuity of the same action or behavior, but of course we did not understand that the teachers were doing that for a particular purpose like this, but we liked being praise, and from then on, my inclination for French as a language was strengthened, but what happened in fact, I would be more explicit now... What happened is in the 'lycée'... I used to study with someone I used to like "Mr. X" a teacher of French, and one day, he was teaching vocabulary in French, and there was the word "aimer passionnement", and he looked for someone who knows another synonym of the word. I was the last one to be asked, and I told him "C'est 'adorer'". I remember he told me "OOOH! Mon adore!", and came to me, and kissed me. What do you think? Does it encourage or discourage?

Interviewers: Of course, it encourages

Participant 01: That is, it.

Middle and high school phase

- When was the first time you were exposed to the English language? (as a student/ or before studying the language) – What were your first impressions about the language?

Participant 01: Okay, before studying the language, it was because of the dictionary, I still have that dictionary, I bought it in 1981, or my father bought it to me, and my book called from the series of ((ACM)) "L'anglais Sans Peine", so it's a sort of the application of the Audiolingual method that you have studied in TEFL... sentences in English and then translated in French together with exercises ...etc. so I was given that book when I was studying in second year [in the middle school] ... meaning one year before I was introduced to English. <The subject started studying English at his third year in the middle school> and I began to study that, but of course it was incomplete learning maybe it was incorrect, but that was encouraging me to know more English/

Interviewer 02: So, what were your first impressions about the language?

Participant 01: I cannot remember my first impression, and at that time we do not know what impressions are, but something I like, yes, I used to like English of course/

Interviewer 02: Did you feel that the words were complicated?

Participant 01: Different yes, different from French, different from Arabic of course, and of course we didn't know that French will be something that will disturb, like we have seen this in

linguistics, but I was asking myself why English and French are similar but different at the same time! I used to ask myself this without an answer/

- What difficulties did you encounter at the beginning of your EFL learning experience?

Participant 01: I have not encountered any. The only thing, is [that] my study at the university was a problem for me, because I got married and then went to the university. As I told you, I failed my Baccalaureate exam (.) then, I began to work, I had a job, then went to the army, then got my 'BAC' as literary stream, because I decided before, to sit the exam and then enrolled in English/

- Do you think that French had positive or negative effects on your development in learning English? – Explain. How did you cope with the transition from studying only French to studying both French and English?

Participant 01: Sure, sure, positive, because of the great similarities between French and English... similarities in structure then in culture at all levels of the language: phonology, syntax, semantics, morphology, and pragmatics – <interviewer 01: And how did you cope with the transition from studying only French to studying both French and English?> I can't explain it, because I was a child (.) To be frank, I'm not going to explain it with my feelings now/

- While studying in the middle or high school, did you have any teacher who had played a significant role in changing your attitude towards the English language?

Participant 01: What do you mean?

Interviewer 02: Did you have a teacher who, maybe, encouraged you or discouraged you to learn the language?

Participant 01: Maybe discouraged, because I have already been encouraged before, but discouraged, yes, because in the 4th year, we have been taught by a Pakistani and that Pakistani is a Pakistani! so he has to be taught in English, and I was frustrated, very frustrated, the problem is I had found the same teacher when I got to the lycée <high school>, so these are the temporary situations in which I was discouraged/

Interviewer 02: Weren't you encouraged by any teacher?

Participant 01: I had all the time been (.) not directly encouraged, but either, I can understand that kind of attitudes of teachers with whom I was studying/

Interviewer 02: So, I need you to answer this generally... I mean, think of a specific teacher, or maybe all of the teachers [who encouraged you to study the English]

- ⇒ Is this positive view towards this teacher specific to you or is it shared by other classmates?

Participant 01: You cannot be the only one, sure there are others, but you're not obliged to look for who likes the teacher, but it was sufficient that you yourself liked the teacher or two or more/

- ⇒ Does the success of this teacher lie in his/her treatment of you as an individual?

Participant 01: I did not use to understand this individuality and so on/

⇒ What was specific about his/her method(s)?

Participant 01: Methods change- because when I began to understand what a method is, I was at the university, but before that, each teacher, particularly the teachers we used to have, were not methodically chosen, meaning, they had not been trained to teach English (.) so we used to be taught by teachers who failed in their baccalaureate exam for example what we call 'terminal', so they were not good teachers, but you cannot explain why there were not, but the methods (.) I began to understand them when I was at the university, so I can say now that at that time, there were methodical teachers that I remember now, and others who were not, and the method encouraged me and encouraged all the students, of course, because it's necessary to have a good method for someone to like the subject not only English/

⇒ Were there any special activities that contributed markedly to your evolution as an EFL learner?

Participant 01: Maybe [with] an Oral Expression teacher in the first year at the university <the subject could not remember specific teaching practices during his middle and high school>

⇒ Was this teacher completely reliant on the textbook or did s/he rely on other tools or methods?

<The subject did not have a specific teacher on mind. Therefore, this question could not be asked>

• Would you describe yourself as an extrovert or introvert student?

Participant 01: Both, sometimes I'm an introvert, when the case requires, and sometimes I'm extrovert, but the majority of my time I'm extrovert/

Interviewer 02: So, you are introvert when you are not sure of your answers maybe?

Participant 01: Depends, depends on the: sensitivity of the subject or idea, but for sure I'm someone who dares, I used to dare, because I understood right from the beginning that in order to learn I have to try, to make efforts, so I used to try my answers, but let me say with modesty that most of the time my answers were right/

• Being a teenager, you must have felt, most probably, the need for a role model in your life. Were you suddenly interested in knowing, or imitating a specific personality? -whether in your life (friend, teacher, parent, classmate... etc.), or public? Was proficiency in foreign languages in general, or English in particular, one of the strengths of this personality?

Participant 01: I don't remember.

• Did you feel at any point in time that learning English comes at the expense of learning French?

Participant 01: In my case, no, because I have been taught in French before(.) and then I decided to teach myself in English, so I used both languages, so I used-

Interviewer 02: So, they were complimentary to you.

Participant 01: Yes, of course

- Was the increase of self-awareness that generally happens at that age accompanied by an increase or decrease in the desire to learn English?

Participant 01: <sighs> ‘Big sigh’, at the beginning... look, in normal situation, what scientists have normally found, it encourages self-awareness, but they speak of ‘self-awareness’ that’s in fact not ‘self-awareness’, it is a manipulated ‘self-awareness’, but real ‘self-awareness’ is when you are conscious, you have a consciousness raising that is actual, because many things changed (.). This is the thing I have been teaching you, I mean, ‘extra knowledge’/

- Could you tell us precisely when you felt that your journey with English had reached the point of no-return? (in other words, when exactly did you realize that success in life requires success with English?)

Participant 01: I’ve never realized this (.). maybe this question is what you have felt but it’s not the case.

- What was the cause behind your decision to major in English?

Participant 01: I liked English. I used to like it very much. I used to have a dictionary before studying it/

Interviewer 02: So, you never aspired to teach English or had plans before?

Participant 01: Maybe, my primary objective was to teach English

- How did you feel about your English at this specific point in time?

Participant 01: I explained what happened to me when I began to study English. I had all the time been encouraged, either directly or indirectly... so when someone is being encouraged not because he is weak, he had some strengths that I can elaborate on/

Interviewer 02: So, you had confidence in yourself.

Participant 01: Sure.

University phase

- Did you find the first year of the English License curriculum difficult? what difficulties did you encounter?

Participant 01: Not at all, I used to be a ‘major’ <first in class> beside that, I used to study and work at the same time, together with family responsibility... because I told you I was married/

- At the beginning of your learning experience, how confident were you overall, in specific areas or tasks?

Participant 01: In English? Maybe, there are- there were some (.). I’m sorry to announce this, I’m speaking to you Sir. <addressing teacher B> but, what I used to hate in the English curriculum was Civilization, because Civilization was only relating scholars...

Teacher B: Perhaps you just hated the WAY people taught Civilization.

Participant 01: Not only Civilization, there was also Literature... particularly when you are forced to read a novel, why should I read I novel? But the thing I used to like... was Grammar, linguistics, all that is more scientific, what makes you THINK/

- Have you ever felt reluctant to participate in a class so as to avoid any kind of humiliation?

Participant 01: Never, except one day, I told you I was married, at that time I already had a daughter, and it was a teacher of Phonetics, and I used to conceal my 'being married', and to hide the fact that I was married, so I would behave in a normal way with students, and one day, the teacher of Phonetics asked a very silly question, a very easy question to a lady... pointed to her, and she could not answer, and I was terribly annoyed because the question was easy, so I gave the answer, and he pointed to me and told me "are you a lady?" I was terribly perplexed, and the student next to me was laughing, and I felt humiliated. From then on, I did not participate, I stopped speaking, I left the classroom. he sent after me one... a student... friend of mine... then <after the narrator went back to the classroom> he asked me "Excuse me, are you annoyed by my remark or question?" ... "Of course," I told him "of course, yes! You don't know what I am. I am married. I have a lady, and you told me "Are you a lady?". He was sorry. So, this was an experience that happened. Yes, at that time I used to be reluctant because I did not want people to put me in such a situation... and I forgot about that/

- Was there any teacher who played a critical role in your development as you advanced across your university studies? What was special about his/her methods?

Participant 01: Normally, all the teachers have.

Interviewer 02: Can you think of a specific teacher?

Participant 01: My Oral Expression teacher in 1st year inspired me very much.

Interviewer 02: What was specific about his/her methods?

Participant 01: He was very explicit, methodical, and smart, modest, attractive... and it seems that he knew what was feedback, because later on I discovered that he used to teach even TEFL. I understood that he was aware of the method he was using, and even if someone erred, he used to thank him and give positive feedback. That was encouraging...

Interviewer 02: What about his methods? Can you remember how you used to study-

Participant 01: Okay, so, it's the way we teach Oral Expression all the time... listening... at that time there were no videos... so, we'd listen to the tape for 5 or 10 minutes and then we ask questions that we should answer based on what we listened to... and of course correct or not correct, depends on what we have heard... and then of course there would be a correction and then practice using the same concepts that we have found in the tapes in other areas of life... and the way- maybe because it was our first year of English... with the new techniques that were applied at the university... they're different from those that used to be applied in the 'lycée' ... but that year was striking for me... and of course, the teacher also... and other teachers... because there was another teacher in Phonetics" Mr X" from Jijel. He was also very friendly, and there were some female teachers, but many of them were 'failing' teachers, we have recognized that after finishing our license... I recognized that most of the female teachers were failing

teachers. Do you share my opinion Sir? <addressing Teacher B> <interviewers laughing>
Sorry, I mean the fact, that at university, most failing teachers are females...

Teacher B: I think this would be a bit offensive, but I do share your opinion. I think female teachers are one of the reasons of the failure in the Algerian System... frankly speaking.

Participant 01: This is big! It's a big idea...

Teacher B: No offense!

- Which modules did you participate most in? why?

Participant 01: Civilization, I used to hate, and I used to get fifteen and sixteen <out of twenty> meaning for me, when in the exams, I do not give differences, in fact, I do not take into consideration my feelings (.) for me it's something I had to execute, carry out, so I move to another level, so that I finish and have my degree, so that later on I can work, so it's not a term of likes and dislikes, but it was sort of a responsibility I had to fulfil/

- What characteristics did you possess that you think were useful for learning a language?

Participant 01: Asking questions.

- Which type of media did you specifically rely on in your university years?

Participant 01: The book (.) the only [thing] available at that time/

- During the period of learning the language, did you set goals for your learning progress?

Participant 01: How?

Interviewer 02: For example, knowing how you would like your English to be by the end of the semester or the year.

Participant 01: No, I never set goals.

- How important were examinations for you? How did you react to feedback from exams? (success/ failure, teacher comments...)

Participant 01: Of course they were important, but (.) I don't know-

Interviewer 01: Did you prepare for exams? Like, tomorrow is your exam and you-

Participant 01: It depends on the subject. For example, when you have to read a novel in literature, so you have to read a novel.

Interviewer 02: Did you care more about your exams' results than your English level?

Participant 01: Both, because at that time, we used to be: more inclined towards having degrees, grades, so that the others would praise us, to be frank, this happened to us all/

- Have you ever felt that the more developed your proficiency in English becomes, the less confident you become in your skills in the mother tongue?

Participant 01: I don't know if this can happen!

Interviewer 02: It does. It happened to me, sometimes when you feel you've reached a certain level of English, and all of your thoughts are in English, you start losing some words in Arabic, and you start hesitating...

Participant 01: But this is not 'confidence', you have used the word 'confidence', Look, of course if you do not practice your mother tongue it will get weaker, you will be more proficient in the English language, at the expense of the other language, the first language, and it happened to me.

Interviewer 02: So, you agree that it does happen at the expense of your mother tongue.

Participant 01: Language is practice, and when we say first language, we don't mean the mother tongue, because the mother tongue as Chomsky has pointed...you have mastered it by 4 and a half, so you have mastered your mother tongue, so your first language is different from your mother tongue, lexis and pragmatics are more evolved than the mother tongue, so they need to be learned in the same way a foreign language should be learned, because the first language for some, is another foreign language, so if you do not practice it, you will not get proficient in it/

- Do you think that your mother tongue's culture is sufficiently articulated in the English curriculum?

Participant 01: No, of course not, two completely different cultures/

- Do you think that your mother tongue's culture should be given more prominence? Why?

Participant 01: Where? In the English curriculum? I don't know how. I don't think it would have an impact on the acceleration of your learning of the FL, because to be proficient in the FL, you need to use its culture... to learn the language within its culture, but this should be done at the expense of the original culture/

- Is there anything you found particularly useful/ inhibiting during your university years?

Participant 01: Yes, age (.) maybe for me, it was 'age', with my family situation, it was more inhibiting than encouraging/

- Was there any subject you wish you studied or focused more on in your studies?

Participant 01: Arabic.

- What kind of 'key' experiences did you have during your university years?

Participant 01: Look, I don't know if this experience can be generalized, but I used to read very much, but now I don't encourage people to read because of what I have discovered, but maybe something that boosted my English was 'reading' (.) I used to sleep with the book in my hand... of course in English/

- What advice would you give first year students of English at the university?

Participant 01: if I went back in time, I wouldn't study English, I would be someone else (.) when we learn a language, we don't just learn a language (.) we have imposed psychology and linguistics and literature... etc. it's not to help people master a language, because these have nothing to do mastering a language (.) but it's in order to shape their personalities... their cognitive personalities. To fix the way they will behave. Because we have understood that

cognition is very important to shape someone's personality (.) Particularly with their performance and behavior (.) So they want human beings to have only specific types of knowledge and exclude other types, specifically the religious ones (.) Now, how am I going to advise students in terms of English? "Lean English". Only English... the language itself (.) Merely exposing yourself to ideas, you are losing yourself. The ideas that get into our mind are subconscious (.) This knowledge isn't the right knowledge (.) If someone can study only a language, let him do it (.) But in the university, it's impossible/

Participant 02

General questions about the participant's status

- Could you tell us briefly about yourself? (general background) (social status: family, friends, childhood residence Vs school location)

- How long have you been teaching English as foreign language?

Participant 02: I'm a teacher of English <could not understand social status>. Graduated in 2006. I studied in Setif. My school was near to my home. I've been teaching English for 11 years/

- How would you describe yourself as an EFL learner? (Strengths, weaknesses, affective attitudes)

Participant 02: You want an adjective? A hardworking EFL learner/

- How often do you find yourself using foreign languages outside the classroom context? – Which language do you use more?

Participant 02: Rarely. I use French more. English is reserved at university level mainly/

- Have you ever felt that using French instead of English gave you a more prestigious position in the social world?

Participant 02: Yes, speaking French in front of people gives certain prestige/

- Do you feel you are a different person when using the English language? How?

Participant 02: No, never. I've never had that feeling/

- Are there any situations in which you feel that using the English language, or at least some English words, would give you certain advantages? Explain.

Participant 02: No, it's the contrary, I use English in the context of university. But speaking English in public would draw attention to me, so I avoid being on the spot light/

- Does using English allow you to express feelings you cannot express using Arabic?

Participant 02: YES, since English is a language in which I could express my thoughts (.) According to my perspective, I used to always express myself better in English than in French or Arabic/

- What aspects of the English culture you feel should be embraced by the Algerian culture?

Participant 02: Many aspects in fact: politeness, the way people communicate ... a high level of communication everywhere, respecting all people regardless of their jobs or social class... this is all needed/

- Does being in full command of the English language make you feel more educated, intelligent and accomplished?

Participant 02: It's not about education. I could say I feel more confident as a teacher(.) I mean mastering the language in terms of vocabulary or grammar... etc. gives me a certain confidence as a teacher/

- Do you think that English helped you to set secret codes you might use when seeking privacy?

Participant 02: Yes. I used to write journals when I was as young as you. I used to do it in English because I was sure no one else could understand it, especially with family (.) keeping that privacy in your life (.) I used to even write poems, and keeping them for myself (.) It gave me the impression that no one else could read what I'm writing. It's one of the most beautiful advantages of knowing another language that isn't usually spoken outside of the frame of classroom/

Participant's experience with French/ English in the primary school

- Which foreign language did you study in the primary school?

In case of French:

- had you been exposed to French before it was introduced as a school subject in your education? (family, neighbors, media... etc.) – If yes, what role did your surroundings play in your experience with this language?

Participant 02: Yes. My father and uncles are good speakers of the language, so I had a lot to learn from them even before studying it. I thought it was an excellent language to learn, and I had the dream to have a license or master degree in French/

- Did you immediately realize the social importance of French right from the first encounter with this language?

Participant 02: Of course, I did. I had been psychologically prepared that I needed to master that language because it would open many gates for me in the future/

- Was there any person/ teacher/ or event that might have changed your attitude towards the French language? (either positively or negatively).

Participant 02: Yes. The first person was my father, then my uncles... and later, my best friend who is a French teacher/

Middle and high school phase

- When was the first time you were exposed to the English language? (as a student/ or before studying the language) – What were your first impressions about the language?

Participant 02: It was in the first year in the middle school. I never had a previous encounter. I was impressed with the language because I've always adored languages. I was eager to study the language/

- What difficulties did you encounter at the beginning of your EFL learning experience?

Participant 02: I don't remember any kind of difficulties/

- Do you think that French had positive or negative effects on your development in learning English? – Explain. How did you cope with the transition from studying only French to studying both French and English?

Participant 02: Positive. It helped me a lot, especially the way sentences are formed. Also in terms of vocabulary... there were a lot of similar words. It paved my path to study English in a good way. I did not need to cope because I did not have any problem with the two languages... at all/

- While studying in the middle or high school, did you have any teacher who had played a significant role in changing your attitude towards the English language?

Participant 02: Yes, in high school.

- If yes,

- ⇒ Is this positive view towards this teacher specific to you or is it shared by other classmates?

Participant 02: Yes, in high school. A lot of classmates, she was a model teacher... very known in Jijel society/

- ⇒ Does the success of this teacher lie in his/her treatment of you as an individual?

Participant 02: I did not understand this.

- ⇒ What was specific about his/her method(s)?

Participant 02: Her method was communicative. She used to communicate a lot with her pupils. She always used positive feedback to encourage the students.

- ⇒ Were there any special activities that contributed markedly to your evolution as an EFL learner?

Participant 02: I remember that she focused a lot on the interactive activities, group assignments, writing in groups which was very helpful because I learned a lot from my groups. Also performing dialogues in front of the class helped me with the language to an extent/

- ⇒ Was this teacher completely reliant on the textbook or did s/he rely on other tools or methods?

Participant 02: She was not a slave of the textbook. Each time, she modified unsuitable exercises in accordance to the needs of the class/

- Would you describe yourself as an extrovert or introvert student?

Participant 02: I was a very extrovert student/

- Being a teenager, you must have felt, most probably, the need for a role model in your life. Were you suddenly interested in knowing, or imitating a specific personality? -whether in your life (friend, teacher, parent, classmate... etc.), or public- Was proficiency in foreign languages in general, or English in particular, one of the strengths of this personality?

Participant 02: No.

- Did you feel at any point in time that learning English comes at the expense of learning French?

Participant 02: No, not at all.

- Was the increase of self-awareness that generally happens at that age accompanied by an increase or decrease in the desire to learn English?

Participant 02: Being aware of the importance of the language would certainly encourage the learner to learn the language. It was necessary for me at the time to master these languages. It was evident/

- Could you tell us precisely when you felt that your journey with English had reached the point of no-return? (in other words, when exactly did you realize that success in life requires success with English?)

Participant 02: All mass-media... the fact of watching channels speaking English, I started being aware of the importance of the English in general. It was around middle school/

- What was the cause behind your decision to major in English?

Participant 02: All of my English teachers had an imprint on me. I was very lucky to have good teachers in my English learning. They all had great personalities. Also, my uncle was an English teacher as well, he encouraged me, <the same teacher who encouraged Subject 01> he was one of the reasons why I chose English... also two of my uncles' wives were English teachers. It was just my dream... I would never imagine studying something other than English/

- How did you feel about your English at this specific point in time?

Participant 02: It was not that perfect, to be frank with you. It was good enough to major in English and be a good student/

University phase

- Did you find the first year of the English License curriculum difficult? what difficulties did you encounter?

Participant 02: No. Maybe the only module that was somehow difficult was Phonetics because it was new to me (.) I had no problem with the others/

- At the beginning of your learning experience, how confident were you overall, in specific areas or tasks?

Participant 02: I was always very confident of myself/

- Have you ever felt reluctant to participate in a class so as to avoid any kind of humiliation?

Participant 02: Never. I was always the first person to raise her hand or participate. I always took the first initiative to talk/

- Was there any teacher who played a critical role in your development as you advanced across your university studies? What was special about his/her methods?

Participant 02: Yes, a lot of teachers made me the person I am today. Most of them were great. It was not about their methods. It was about their personalities. Most of the teachers I had were very communicative. The grammar teacher, for instance, had a traditional method, but only the

fact that he made us, as learners, thinking logically before answering, made me love the method he used (.) Also in phonetics, a teacher always asked us to participate or communicate... it really helped (.) Also in literature, teachers made us read a book and then teaching about it in the class... that whole process was very genuine... to have a chance to teach my classmates (.) It did not have a lot to do with the method. Nothing special was being practiced. I think it was also because of my love for the English language... it made me love being in the classroom/

- Which modules did you participate most in? why?

Participant 02: Oral expression. I wanted to impose myself in the classroom. I always refused to be invisible. I was that kind of student who always wanted to be unforgettable/

- What characteristics did you possess that you think were useful for learning a language?

Participant 02: I was a self-confident person. I always took the initiative. Even when teachers gave us assignments that were optional, I used to be the first one to do it. Also, being daring... I was a risk-taker/

- Which type of media did you specifically rely on in your university years?

Participant 02: I used to rely on computers. Whenever a teacher gave us a concept that was not very clear to me, I headed to the cyber café and just looked for it and tried to understand it more. I remember one of my linguistic teachers taught us about Chomsky in a very complicated way, so I insisted on studying it on my own. So I used internet to search for it and learned about it. At the exam, I remember I had the best mark in the whole level... and he asked about me the day he handed us the papers back, he said it was the first time someone explained and understood what Chomsky was talking about/

- During the period of learning the language, did you set goals for your learning progress?

Participant 02: My ultimate goal was to be as fluent as possible in English. I always strived to be a good speaker in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar... etc./

- How important were examinations for you? How did you react to feedback from exams? (success/ failure, teacher comments...)

Participant 02: Of course, the results were very important (.) They are always important for students who want to improve their English. I always relied on the teachers' comments to improve my grades. I cannot tell you how I reacted when I failed, because I never did. The worst grade I ever had was 8.5/20. I remember I was very sick and I couldn't finish the exam so I had to leave. On the other hand, teacher's praise when I succeeded was very pleasing because it satisfied my arrogance as an English learner, and at the same time, it was a factor that pushed me to be at the level of my teachers' expectations/

- Have you ever felt that the more developed your proficiency in English becomes, the less confident you become in your skills in the mother tongue?

Participant 02: Maybe it's just the opposite, I feel now ashamed of speaking English with very limited mistakes, and on the other hand, speaking Arabic with a very poor level. However, whenever things require me to express myself in Arabic, I do it. So it did although it affected my level, it did not affect my confidence/

- Do you think that your mother tongue's culture is sufficiently articulated in the English curriculum?

Participant 02: Not really/

- Do you think that your mother tongue's culture should be given more prominence? Why?

Participant 02: I think we should introduce the foreign language culture more to avoid being culturally shocked/

- Is there anything you found particularly useful/ inhibiting during your university years?

Participant 02: Only being away from my family, because each time I had exams, I could not study around the campus, I had to go back home and study. However, in class, nothing was inhibiting for me, but the experience of having novels to read in Literature was very useful, it helped me to know a lot of things about the language and its civilization. Maybe the other time I was inhibited to participate was with a teacher who had a stiff and strict personality, so it was hard to communicate with him/

- Was there any subject you wish you studied or focused more on in your studies?

Participant 02: Literature. I wished I had my "Magister" degree in literature. Although I like linguistics, I just love that focus on the beauty of the language, the richness of the English language that might be discovered plainly from the reading of novels (.) I was very passionate about the fact of only reading and analyzing a novel/

- What kind of 'key' experiences did you have during your university years?

Participant 02: I remember that in my third year, we had an assignment with my oral teacher, I insisted on having a special topic (.) So I took the risk of doing an interview with smoking girls in the campus, to know what they do that (.) Some of them even took drugs (.) I told them I just wanted to know the reasons. Their stories made me cry. I'm not defending them by the way. But I could not make a prejudice against them. I narrated their stories and I was attacked by my classmates that I was defending them, but I held my position and by the end of the session, my teacher, who was a very religious woman, and who was disgusted by my topic at first, was the first one to clap for me (.) That experience made me be more confident in myself and proud to be a risk-taker, because I took the initiative to talk about such a sensitive topic... so I broke that "taboo" (.) I always looked for distinguished things to be done/

- What advice would you give first year students of English at the university?

Participant 02: To be risk-takers, to be self-confident, to take the initiative to talk, to study as much as they can, and ask whenever they have questions to their teachers, to be serious (.) They should love the language they are studying to be successful, Otherwise, no result will be brought by the end of their studying (.) Always try to be visible (.) Do not allow yourself to be invisible with any teacher. Always try to be in the memory of who taught you/

Participant 03

General questions about the participant's status

- Could you tell us briefly about yourself? (general background) (social status: family, friends, childhood residence Vs school location)

- How long have you been teaching English as foreign language?

Participant 03: My name is X. I am 31 years old. I am from Jijel, El Kenar. Concerning primary school, I was a student in Lemzayer (.) yeah, concerning friends, I had just 2 friends. Concerning my family, hmm... I mean I come from a regular family. My school was near my home. I've been teaching at the university for one and a half year, and I was teaching in secondary school/

- How would you describe yourself as an EFL learner? (Strengths, weaknesses, affective attitudes)

Participant 03: As an EFL learner, I was among the best learners. I had difficulties in keeping things by heart, this my... I mean weakness, studying at university requires this... let's say talent, it is a talent, keeping things by heart. Concerning strengths... strengths, hmm... let's say I was... I won't say among those who keep learning, I was among those who have this determination, I wanted to achieve something in the future/

- How often do you find yourself using foreign languages outside the classroom context? – Which language do you use more?

Participant 03: I wasn't, or I didn't (.) I wasn't among those who communicate, I preferred to read rather than speak...I use French language very often/

- Have you ever felt that using French instead of English gave you a more prestigious position in the social world?

Participant 03: Yes, of course, because it is, I mean, it is the second language and we HAVE to speak French in Algeria/

- Do you feel you are a different person when using the English language? How?

Participant 03: Well, somehow, I think that when you use English, you feel a bit different. So, how? I feel special among my mates, hmm... I mean, with my friends, I feel that I am a bit special. When I was a student, teachers told us that we have to think in English, and when you think in English, you feel that you are an Englishman or something, so you HAVE to feel that you are something ELSE/

- Are there any situations in which you feel that using the English language, or at least some English words, would give you certain advantages? Explain.

Participant 03: Yes of course. Especially when you go abroad, and even with foreign persons here/

- Does using English allow you to express feelings you cannot express using Arabic?

Participant 03: Not all the time... not all the time, because even if you think that you are speaking another language, you will never be a native speaker, and some thoughts... hmm, I

mean... need to be expressed in a strong way using your language (.) well, a thought or a FEELING specifically/

- What aspects of the English culture you feel should be embraced by the Algerian culture?

Participant 03: What aspects? Okay, what do you mean? Would you give me some examples?

Interviewer 01: It could be respect, communication...

Participant 03: Communication, respect... These are moral aspects, moralities that are shared by all communities, what is morally acceptable in a community is acceptable in another, so I don't think that this question is specific. Culture is a way of life: customs, traditions, moral values that are shared by the SAME community... I feel you should ask this question in another way: can you adapt to new cultures? You mean? So, I don't think so/

- Does being in full command of the English language make you feel more educated, intelligent and accomplished?

Participant 03: Of course.

- Do you think that English helped you to set secret codes you might use when seeking privacy?

Participant 03: Could you please repeat the question because I was thinking of the previous one?

<The question is repeated>

Participant 03: <laughs> Yes, if the person cannot understand the language (.) So yeah, I did it a lot with my friends, my family members... but nowadays I think English is widespread (.) everyone can understand at least keywords... so I need to use gestures or just another language to... keep my privacy/

Participant's experience with French/ English in the primary school

- Which foreign language did you study in the primary school?

French

- had you been exposed to French before it was introduced as a school subject in your education? (family, neighbors, media... etc.) – If yes, what role did your surroundings play in your experience with this language?

Participant 03: No, never (.) I was living in the countryside, so, I never had this opportunity/

- Did you immediately realize the social importance of French right from the first encounter with this language?

Participant 03: Yeah, I think so... not so much.

- Was there any person/ teacher/ or event that might have changed your attitude towards the French language? (either positively or negatively).

Participant 03: Of course... of course (.) I had a female teacher, and I think, I mean... her way of teaching really affected my view of my future, that's why I am a teacher now (.) I could not understand her methods because I was a child, she just brought topics that were motivating, and used examples that really touched me... but she had a good character... she was attractive, motivating. She had this craft of dealing with children in a very nice way/

English as a Foreign Language

Middle and high school phase

- When was the first time you were exposed to the English language? (as a student/ or before studying the language) – What were your first impressions about the language?

Participant 03: That was in my second year of middle school. It was something new. Everyone can feel that English language is a bit, I mean easier than French. So, I focused my attention on English and forgot about French/

- What difficulties did you encounter at the beginning of your EFL learning experience?

Participant 03: Nothing (.) I encountered nothing, especially at the beginning of my learning.

- Do you think that French had positive or negative effects on your development in learning English? – Explain. How did you cope with the transition from studying only French to studying both English and French?

Participant 03: Well, of course French has positive effects. It is the language of communication. The similar words between French and English made it easier to memorize some of the English words... also the grammar of the French was much more difficult so English grammar was easy for me. Concerning how I coped with the transition, I had a difficulty at first in differentiating between some French words and some English one. I used to put some French words in my English exam papers for instance, so I concentrated on English and forgot about French/

- While studying in the middle or high school, did you have any teacher who had played a significant role in changing your attitude towards the English language?

Participant 03: Yes, I did.

- If yes,

- ⇒ Is this positive view towards this teacher specific to you or is it shared by other classmates?

Participant 03: It was shared by all the class... but it was specific to me to an extent. I was very influenced by Mr. X, and he made me aspire to be an English teacher/

- ⇒ Does the success of this teacher lie in his/her treatment of you as an individual?

Participant 03: I was the best student of English in my class, so he liked me and treated me in a special way. So naturally I liked his subject and focused my efforts on English/

- ⇒ What was specific about his/her method(s)?

Participant 03: I cannot remember him ever using the board or the textbook. He focused on communication. that really attracted me at the time is the way of communication in his class, he

really liked chatting. But the thing that was most impressive about him was his character and his pronunciation. He spoke English like a native speaker, so I was very impressed by him/

⇒ Were there any special activities that contributed markedly to your evolution as an EFL learner?

Participant 03: Well... I... found project assignments very helpful. The teachers used to assign us to these projects to write about cultures, so this really improved my English/

⇒ Was this teacher completely reliant on the textbook or did s/he rely on other tools or methods?

Participant 03: Speaking about the teacher of English? I never... I never, remember him using the textbook. He created his own special method, and focused a lot on Oral Expression/

- Would you describe yourself as an extrovert or introvert student?

Participant 03: I was an introvert student. I was a bit shy. I was among those who liked keeping things to themselves. Even now as a teacher, I like writing more than speaking... and this is the character of someone who used to be shy in the past/

- Being a teenager, you must have felt, most probably, the need for a role model in your life. Were you suddenly interested in knowing, or imitating a specific personality? -whether in your life (friend, teacher, parent, classmate... etc.), or public- Was proficiency in foreign languages in general, or English in particular, one of the strengths of this personality?

Participant 03: When I was a teenager, I used to imitate a lot of people before constructing my own personality... especially actors, teachers, well... even if they were male teachers (.) However, English was not one of their strengths/

- Did you feel at any point in time that learning English comes at the expense of learning French?

Participant 03: Yes, well, when I first encountered the English language, I completely forgot about the French language, and I concentrated on English. Of course, I BORROWED some vocabulary from French, but I still focused more on English, and forgot about French, except when using it as a means of communication/

- Was the increase of self-awareness that generally happens at that age accompanied by an increase or decrease in the desire to learn English?

Participant 03: Well, an increase in the desire to learn LANGUAGES... languages in general (.) I wanted to learn them to become smart, and special, and to use them for communication with others. Using French or English, is a way of prestige, especially nowadays/

- Could you tell us precisely when you felt that your journey with English had reached the point of no-return? (in other words, when exactly did you realize that success in life requires success with English?)

Participant 03: When I entered university... at that period of time, I realized that I had missed a lot of things, and bear in mind that I was raised in the countryside. Knowing a foreign language was not important/

- What was the cause behind your decision to major in English?

Participant 03: Majoring in English was in fact not my goal, it was my father's wish/

- How did you feel about your English at this specific point in time?

Participant 03: I won't say that my English was great, even today, I have to write and read a lot to avoid forgetting the language/

University phase (E.N.S)

- Did you find the first year of the English License curriculum difficult? what difficulties did you encounter?

Participant 03: Well, I don't think so, because this is my area of interest.... (the subject misinterpreted the question due to a lack of explanation on the interviewer's part)

- At the beginning of your learning experience, how confident were you overall, in specific areas or tasks?

Participant 03: I was very confident, especially in syllabus design/

- Have you ever felt reluctant to participate in a class so as to avoid any kind of humiliation?

Participant 03: Kind of humiliation means racism for example? I mean the teacher differentiating between students? Even those who live in Constantine and outsiders... Yes, it happened to me when I was studying in Constantine some teachers were discriminative against students from my region. So, I did not want to participate/

- Was there any teacher who played a critical role in your development as you advanced across your university studies? What was special about his/her methods?

Participant 03: Yes, Mrs. X encouraged me. She was my teacher in syllabus design and development (.) This is why I became interested in this module. I wanted to stop in my fourth year, but she encouraged me and convinced me to carry on my studies. She had the language of convincing others... her eyes were always shining... she just had the craft of convincing others/

- Which modules did you participate most in? why?

Participant 03: Syllabus Design, American and British Civilization (.) what attracted me the most was foreign policy of America. I am among those who don't talk a lot, but I liked watching and listening. I LIKED watching news and following all the events that occurred over the world. So, I was interested in these/

- What characteristics did you possess that you think were useful for learning a language?

Participant 03: The thing that was advantageous for me was 'writing'. I had a talent of WRITING. According to my teachers, my writing was excellent/

- Which type of media did you specifically rely on in your university years?

Participant 03: Internet and TV. I liked watching English speaking movies/

- During the period of learning the language, did you set goals for your learning progress?

Participant 03: Of course, I did. I think everyone has to set some goals before hmm I mean- so when I was an adolescent I set my goals. I wanted to reach some goals, even if they were shared by family/

- How important were examinations for you? How did you react to feedback from exams? (success/ failure, teacher comments...)

Participant 03: Well I think that exams were very important for me because they determine the level of the students. I liked written, written exams more than the oral ones. Of course, when I passed my exams, I felt very happy. The reaction I got from my teachers encouraged me a lot, although teachers' comments could either encourage or discourage students, but concerning failure, I won't lie, I never failed. I never experienced the feeling of failure/

- Have you ever felt that the more developed your proficiency in English becomes, the less confident you become in your skills in the mother tongue?

Participant 03: No, never. This is my mother language.

- Do you think that your mother tongue's culture is sufficiently articulated in the English curriculum?

Participant 03: The Arabic culture you mean? No, I don't think so/

- Do you think that your mother tongue's culture should be given more prominence? Why?

Participant 03: No, when learning a foreign language, we need to learn their culture. All teachers say that we need to think in English, so, we have to learn their culture. Language is a part of culture/

- Is there anything you found particularly useful/ inhibiting during your university years?

Participant 03: Everything I faced in my experience was somehow useful/

- Was there any subject you wish you studied or focused more on in your studies?

Participant 03: Cultural Issues... We have to implement this module for Masters students. In the module, we can take any subject that is related to culture, either mother culture, or foreign culture, and talk about it/

- What kind of 'key' experiences did you have during your university years?

Participant 03: The only specific event that I can remember is when a teacher from the U.S.A came to teacher us when we were in the fourth year. At the first period, he gave us a task... we had to imagine that there were different people [from different races and religions] for example a man who is an Imam, a boy, a pregnant woman... etc. and we had to think of who to save (.) So, each of us gave different answers, and at the end, he wrote on the blackboard something which indicates that discrimination is a very bad thing/ <the subject did not specify what kind of effect the experience had on her.>

- What advice would you give first year students of English at the university?

Participant 03: The only advice that I can give them is that ‘you have to focus on your studies... nothing else deserves your concentration... and if you have a goal, you need to work hard for it’/

Participant 04

General questions about the participant's status

- Could you tell us briefly about yourself? (general background) (social status: family, friends, childhood residence Vs school location)

Participant 04: Okay, so, my name is X. I'm 39 years old, and I'm a teacher at the university of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, for three years full time I was(.) teaching English part time for more than five years, and recently I got my 'full status' if you want. I'm married, and I have three children/

Interviewer 01: Do you have friends?

Participant 04: Of course, my colleagues

Interviewer 02: When you were little, was your school near your residence?

Participant 04: Yes, [it was] near.

Interviewer 02: What about your family?

Participant 04: I spent a wonderful childhood, where my grandparents in a farm mainly, because my grandparents had a farm with animals, you know, everything was green at that time, I still remember my wonderful time that I spent there with my aunts, my uncles, my grandparents.../

- How long have you been teaching English as foreign language?

Participant 04: Three years in full time/

- How would you describe yourself as an EFL learner? (Strengths, weaknesses, affective attitudes)

Participant 04: So, let me tell you how others saw me because I cannot say positive things about myself <laughs>

Interviewer 02: Maybe you're a perfectionist then...

Participant 04: Yes... that's it... So, I've always been considered as a hardworking student/

- How often do you find yourself using foreign languages outside the classroom context? – Which language do you use more?

Participant 04: Outside? What do you me-? Foreign languages, it means French and English? So, I mainly use French, very often, English for me is my language of job, but French, it's because of the environment, my mother was a teacher of French and all my family spoke French, that's why I was influenced by this language/

- Have you ever felt that using French instead of English gave you a more prestigious position in the social world?

Participant 04: Yes, because of the status of French in our society as an official language/

- Do you feel you are a different person when using the English language? How?

Participant 04: Yes, it's good to be able to speak two languages, that's why you feel a bit superior from others who just speak one language/

Interviewer 01: What about using French? Do you have other thoughts?

Participant 04: I feel, hmm how to say it? At ease when I speak French/

- Are there any situations in which you feel that using the English language, or at least some English words, would give you certain advantages? Explain.

Participant 04: Where? if it is in class yes, if it outside, honestly, I don't use English outside the class <laughs>/

- Does using English allow you to express feelings you cannot express using Arabic?

Participant 04: No.

What aspects of the English culture you feel should be embraced by the Algerian culture?

Participant 04: Would you please explain this question? you mean taken by the Algerian culture? Perhaps when they express their feelings, perhaps in this aspect, they are more, how can I say it? more expressive/

- Does being in full command of the English language make you feel more educated, intelligent and accomplished?

Participant 04: Of course, because of the international status of this language nowadays/

- Do you think that English helped you to set secret codes you might use when seeking privacy?

Participant 04: <laughs> Perhaps in the coming years with my children (.) I have a daughter who is in her first year in English, so it gives me more opportunities to connect with her or to use some English words but for the moment, honestly... I use French/

Participant's experience with French/ English in the primary school

- Which foreign language did you study in the primary school?

Participant 04: French

- had you been exposed to French before it was introduced as a school subject in your education? (family, neighbors, media... etc.)

Participant 04: Yes, a lot, through TV, family...

– If yes, what role did your surroundings play in your experience with this language?

Participant 04: I was excellent in this language, in terms of vocabulary, writing, listening, I used to use this language in letters, I used to read novels-

Interviewer 02: In primary school?

Participant 04: No, no, not in primary school/

- Did you immediately realize the social importance of French right from the first encounter with this language?

Participant 04: Of course, yes.

- Was there any person/ teacher/or event that might have changed your attitude towards the French language? (either positively or negatively).

Participant 04: In primary? yes, my teachers, I had... excellent teachers that I still remember, they were skilful, competent, fluent.../

English as a Foreign Language

Middle school phase

- When was the first time you were exposed to the English language? (as a student/ or before studying the language)

Participant 04: The first year in middle school

– What were your first impressions about the language?

Participant 04: Very difficult. It's a new language that I have never heard about before/

- What difficulties did you encounter at the beginning of your EFL learning experience?

Participant 04: Speaking

- Do you think that French had positive or negative effects on your development in learning English? – Explain.

Participant 04: Yes, because of the many similarities between both languages/

- How did you cope with the transition from studying only French to studying both French and English?

Participant 04: You mean the two languages at the same time? I started to love English so fast, so I hugely focused on languages, English was my second favorite language/

- While studying in the middle or high school, did you have any teacher who had played a significant role in changing your attitude towards the English language?

Participant 04: Not really.

- Would you describe yourself as an extrovert or introvert student?

Participant 04: Hmm... the first one.

- Being a teenager, you must have felt, most probably, the need for a role model in your life. Were you suddenly interested in knowing, or imitating a specific personality? -whether in your life (friend, teacher, parent, classmate... etc.), or public- Was proficiency in foreign languages in general, or English in particular, one of the strengths of this personality?

Participant 04: Imitating? <laughs> hmm... perhaps my parents (.) English was not one of their strengths/

- Did you feel at any point in time that learning English comes at the expense of learning French?

Participant 04: No, not at all, they were complimentary

- Was the increase of self-awareness that generally happens at that age accompanied by an increase or decrease in the desire to learn English?

Participant 04: This self-awareness happened when I got my baccalaureate.

Interviewer 01: When you were a teenager... did you want to learn languages?

Participant 04: Honestly, just French, because I didn't plan to study English at university/

- Could you tell us precisely when you felt that your journey with English had reached the point of no-return? (in other words, when exactly did you realize that success in life requires success with English?)

Participant 04: Yes, hmm... because of the importance of the language at that time. I learned English in 1995 (.) So at that time, there was an increasing demand of that language, it was like a fashion, that's why I decided to learn this language, I did not choose French because I already had it, I wanted to learn a new language, I didn't expect myself to be a teacher in college, I wanted to be a translator, and at that time when I finished my license in Constantine, I got a job in South Algeria in a company, and at the same time I got a job in an airplane company in Khalifa airway here in Jijel and finally, I have chosen to be here in Jijel and to work for the airplane company for two years

- What was the cause behind your decision to major in English?

Participant 04: To learn a new language

- How did you feel about your English at this specific point in time?

Participant 04: Not really good/

University phase

- Did you find the first year of the English License curriculum difficult? what difficulties did you encounter?

Participant 04: You had to change the secondary [school] behavior, there are many demanding skills at the university (.) you have many modules, many teachers, the language that was used by teachers. The majority of the teachers were educated (.) you know, their way of speaking... So many difficulties/

- At the beginning of your learning experience, how confident were you overall, in specific areas or tasks?

Participant 04: Of course, I tried to do my best to be a good learner and good student, so I was somewhat confident at the beginning/

- Have you ever felt reluctant to participate in a class so as to avoid any kind of humiliation?

Participant 04: Of course, it happens to everyone, but I don't remember/

Interviewer 01: Is it because of the teacher, the competition between you and your classmates?

Participant 04: Perhaps, and perhaps afraid of giving the wrong answer, or the accent or pronunciation/

- Was there any teacher who played a critical role in your development as you advanced across your university studies?

Participant 04: Yes, a teacher of TEFL in 4th year/

What was special about his/her methods?

Participant 04: The content of the module, I liked to know about the methods, the techniques of teaching. The teacher was amazing, he is the teacher who comes to you, talks to you about your difficulties, moreover, I am from Jijel and he loved Jijel <laughs>, so we, the students of Jijel, had a special treatment from him/

- Which modules did you participate most in? why?

Participant 04: linguistics, TEFL, Grammar

- What characteristics did you possess that you think were useful for learning a language?

Participant 04: Hard working, highly motivating <sic>/

- Which type of media did you specifically rely on in your university years?

Participant 04: Internet, listening to videos, looking for my lessons in there, reading eBooks/

- During the period of learning the language, did you set goals for your learning progress?

Participant 04: Yes, at the end of my fourth year, I started to think to be a teacher at university, that's why I went to France. I did many tests and exams and failed, so I decided to go to France to get my master, when returned, and this is the interesting thing, they gave me the first year of Magister, so I entered the university of Setif directly to just write my dissertation, so the two years of master's degree equal the first year of Magister in Algeria and I just had to write my dissertation/

- How important were examinations for you? How did you react to feedback from exams? (success/ failure, teacher comments...)

Participant 04: Ah yeah, they were very important, and I appreciated the feedback, I always looked for constructive feedback/

- Have you ever felt that the more developed your proficiency in English becomes, the less confident you become in your skills in the mother tongue?

Participant 04: No, no...

- Do you think that your mother tongue's culture is sufficiently articulated in the English curriculum?

Participant 04: In the English curriculum here at the university? I don't know, I have no idea/

- Do you think that your mother tongue's culture should be given more prominence? Why?

Participant 04: They have a module of Literary Arabic in the English curriculum. In Constantine, they have a module "Arabic Literature"/

- Is there anything you found particularly useful/ inhibiting during your university years?

Participant 04: As a student? The library of Constantine university, the sources, it was a huge library. The inhibiting thing is the fact of being far from family/

- Was there any subject you wish you studied or focused more on in your studies?

Participant 04: Study Skills, it is a module that I have never heard about until I taught English here. When I first taught here, they gave me this module it was called Research methodology, I was lost, so I went to Mr. X, he gave me some guidelines; my GREAT error was taking the secondary year program and simplifying it to first year students, it was about MLA, how to write a research paper etc... Then I went to my TEFL teacher Mr. X, he told me that for first year students there is nothing named Research Methodology it is "Study Skills" I wondered what is module is about, so started making research, and found that that Study Skills is about all the techniques and strategies students should use in their studies, so in the following year I changed the method and started teaching my students how to read, how to take notes...but MLA and all these styles of research methodology are needless. I also asked them to change to title of the module. I'm teaching it for more than four years now and it's amazing, and I learned many things with my students, so I regretted not being taught this module/

- What kind of 'key' experiences did you have during your university years?

Participant 04: I cannot remember a specific 'key' experience in my education in the university. The only general 'key' experience I had was going to France.

- What advice would you give first year students of English at the university?

Participant 04: Just first year students? The new comers, it is a difficult transition that's why we have to teach them Study Skills, you know in Study Skills, we teach them how to be an independent learner because I always tell them not to rely on the teacher, they should read books, look for information for themselves, and tell them to be prepared to know how to take notes, so Study Skills helps first year students in changing their learning behavior... I also advise them to ask teachers for guidelines, to be more mature, because they are still kids, everything is new (.) I advise them to prepare before coming to university to learn about the new life and culture of the university because it is a shocking culture/

Participant 05

General questions about the participant's status

- Could you tell us briefly about yourself? (general background) (social status: family, friends, childhood residence Vs school location)
- How long have you been teaching English as foreign language?

Participant 05: Is it really necessary?

Interviewer 02: Just try to provide any general information about yourself... just briefly.

Participant 05: I am ... 33 years old. Graduated from E.N.S in Constantine. Concerning my childhood, it was very normal. I used to live inside of my primary school then I lived inside of my middle school, because my mother was the director of the primary, while my father was the director of the middle school. I've been teaching English for 12 years/

- How would you describe yourself as an EFL learner? (Strengths, weaknesses, affective attitudes)

Participant 05: [I cannot say how I was as an English learner. People described me as a good student/

- How often do you find yourself using foreign languages outside the classroom context? – Which language do you use more?

Participant 05: I use them very often. I even use English with my own children sometimes(.) they do not understand much, but this is my own way to make them learn. I use French very often... more than English/

- Have you ever felt that using French instead of English gave you a more prestigious position in the social world?

Participant 05: Not really, as far as French and English are concerned, it's approximately the same/

- Do you feel you are a different person when using the English language? How?

Participant 05: I feel different from other people, special, because not many Algerians use it in our society/

- Are there any situations in which you feel that using the English language, or at least some English words, would give you certain advantages? Explain.

Participant 05: Yes (.) maybe when travelling abroad... you can realize that most of people abroad will understand what you're saying/

- Does using English allow you to express feelings you cannot express using Arabic?

Participant 05: Not really, I feel more at ease when speaking Arabic/

- What aspects of the English culture you feel should be embraced by the Algerian culture?

Participant 05: I'm not going to say something about THAT because we are not aware of everything as far as the English culture is concerned. But I can tell you that culture and language cannot be separated from each other... but to give you concrete examples... I'm not sure I can do it/

- Does being in full command of the English language make you feel more educated, intelligent and accomplished?

Participant 05: Hmm... not really, but using English is very important in my life (.) As an English teacher, I have to use it correctly and appropriately/

- Do you think that English helped you to set secret codes you might use when seeking privacy?

Participant 05: No, I've never done that/

Participant's experience with French/ English in the primary school

- Which foreign language did you study in the primary school?

In case of French:

- had you been exposed to French before it was introduced as a school subject in your education? (family, neighbors, media... etc.) – If yes, what role did your surroundings play in your experience with this language?

Participant 05: I had been exposed to it a lot. Both of my parents used to be French inspectors, So they used ONLY French at home, and we used to listen to their conversations, and we acquired the language unconsciously (.) The way they used it, pushed us indirectly to love the language and feel the desire to learn more about it/

- Did you immediately realize the social importance of French right from the first encounter with this language?

Participant 05: No, because I was too young to realize that/

- Was there any person/ teacher/ or event that might have changed your attitude towards the French language? (either positively or negatively).

Participant 05: Hmm... I had experiences with teachers in the primary school. They all had positive effect on me. I used to love my French teacher. She was single. She devoted to her job. She used to treat us as her own children, that's why we used to love her, and as I remember, I used to go to class after school... because I could do it... and I used to take pieces of chalk and write on the board in French/

Middle school phase

- When was the first time you were exposed to the English language? (as a student/ or before studying the language) – What were your first impressions about the language?

Participant 05: My first encounter with the language was in my seventh grade, which was one year before we had it as a subject. I just loved it... A LOT. I liked everything about it, and I still do/

- What difficulties did you encounter at the beginning of your EFL learning experience?

Participant 05: Frankly speaking, I never did. I just found it very easy/

- Do you think that French had positive or negative effects on your development in learning English? – Explain. How did you cope with the transition from studying only French to studying both French and English?

Participant 05: VERY positive, because of the similarities between the languages. Many words have the same interpretations, meanings... etc. when it comes to pronunciation too, it's approximately the same... and I used to guess the meaning of words in English through French. I did not find the transition difficult at all. I didn't even realize that I was studying two languages/

- While studying in the middle or high school, did you have any teacher who had played a significant role in changing your attitude towards the English language?

Participant 05: yes

- If yes,

- ⇒ Is this positive view towards this teacher specific to you or is it shared by other classmates?

Participant 05: Hmm... maybe it's specific to me/

- ⇒ Does the success of this teacher lie in his/her treatment of you as an individual?

Participant 05: Hmm... no (.) well, maybe his treatment to all of us was good.

- ⇒ What was specific about his/her method(s)?

Participant 05: He used to use anything EXCEPT the textbook, use innovative teaching techniques, activities... he would bring tape recordings, songs... we used to play with lyrics of songs... playing games, riddles, and he never used any language but English in his class, that's why we really appreciated attending his lectures/

- ⇒ Were there any special activities that contributed markedly to your evolution as an EFL learner?

Participant 05: Games and riddles/

- ⇒ Was this teacher completely reliant on the textbook or did s/he rely on other tools or methods?

Participant 05: He used to use everything except the textbook/

- Would you describe yourself as an extrovert or introvert student?

Participant 05: Extrovert... VERY, I always said what I had inside/

- Being a teenager, you must have felt, most probably, the need for a role model in your life. Were you suddenly interested in knowing, or imitating a specific personality? -whether in your life (friend, teacher, parent, classmate... etc.), or public- Was proficiency in foreign languages in general, or English in particular, one of the strengths of this personality?

Participant 05: My English teacher was my role model (.) Years later, I found out he studied in England (.) Maybe that's why he was very good as an English teacher/

- Did you feel at any point in time that learning English comes at the expense of learning French?

Participant 05: Never.

- Was the increase of self-awareness that generally happens at that age accompanied by an increase or decrease in the desire to learn English?

Participant 05: Increase of course/

- Could you tell us precisely when you felt that your journey with English had reached the point of no-return? (in other words, when exactly did you realize that success in life requires success with English?)

Participant 05: Forget about it, jump- [to the next question]/

- What was the cause behind your decision to major in English?

Participant 05: I just really love it/

- How did you feel about your English at this specific point in time?

Participant 05: I DID have some confidence in my English/

University phase

- Did you find the first year of the English License curriculum difficult? what difficulties did you encounter?

Participant 05: No, not at all

- At the beginning of your learning experience, how confident were you overall, in specific areas or tasks?

Participant 05: Very confident/

- Have you ever felt reluctant to participate in a class so as to avoid any kind of humiliation?

Participant 05: Never, I used to speak a lot/

- Was there any teacher who played a critical role in your development as you advanced across your university studies? What was special about his/her methods?

Participant 05: Yes, my teacher of written expression in the first year. It's not a matter of methods, she was devoted to her job. She used to be on time, serious (.) she used to make ALL of her students working. And she used to have a special attention to me. So I liked her/

- Which modules did you participate most in? why?

Participant 05: All of them

- What characteristics did you possess that you think were useful for learning a language?

Participant 05: Maybe competence. I did not find any difficulty in any module/

- Which type of media did you specifically rely on in your university years?

Participant 05: I did not use any kind of media, I only relied on attending and taking notes/

- During the period of learning the language, did you set goals for your learning progress?

Participant 05: Not really

- How important were examinations for you? How did you react to feedback from exams? (success/ failure, teacher comments...)

Participant 05: They were quite important, but I cared more about my learning. I used to take my teacher's remarks into consideration/

- Have you ever felt that the more developed your proficiency in English becomes, the less confident you become in your skills in the mother tongue?

Participant 05: No. it has never been at the expense of Arabic/

- Do you think that your mother tongue's culture is sufficiently articulated in the English curriculum?

Participant 05: No/

- Do you think that your mother tongue's culture should be given more prominence? Why?

Participant 05: No, I mean... we're not here to neglect our mother tongue's culture, but in teaching a foreign language, we have to teach both the language and its own culture. They cannot be separated from each other... you know that/

- Is there anything you found particularly useful/ inhibiting during your university years?

Participant 05: Nothing to remember except the fact that we used to study everyday... nothing specific/

- Was there any subject you wish you studied or focused more on in your studies?

Participant 05: Yes, Literature. I used to hate it before... so I did not attend much/

- What kind of 'key' experiences did you have during your university years?

Participant 05: Yes, in the fifth year, we had to do some practical training, so I appreciated the fact of being a part time teacher. it was interesting and very needed/

- What advice would you give first year students of English at the university?

Participant 05: I just... want to tell them that they have to study enough (.) They should be serious, and not just study English in the classroom (.) Teachers are only here to guide them (.) They have to practice outside of the classroom and not just watch movies in English (.) it would be better to seize the opportunity to travel abroad to England for example... if possible. I have never been there... but I wish I could/

Participant 06

General questions about the participant's status

- Could you tell us briefly about yourself? (general background) (social status: family, friends, childhood residence Vs school location)
- How long have you been teaching English as foreign language?

Participant 06: My name is X. I'm 32 years old. I live in Jijel. I'm currently a teacher of literature at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yehiya. Hmm... I've been teaching English for more than 8 years. I got my BA in the university of Setif in 2006, followed by a Magister in Bejaia. And now I'm working on my PhD, of course I'm specialized in Literature. Concerning my childhood, frankly, hmm... I used to live in the countryside, and school was very far, that's why my parents decided to send me to Jijel to live with my grandmother and study in a school near the house/

- How would you describe yourself as an EFL learner? (Strengths, weaknesses, affective attitudes)

Participant 06: As an EFL learner? I'm not really satisfied, because I know that language is like a SEA(.) and every time I read or learn English, I realize it's only a small part. So, I always want to learn more and more. However, I can say I was hardworking, diligent, and devoted/

- How often do you find yourself using foreign languages outside the classroom context? – Which language do you use more?

Participant 06: Outside? I rarely use foreign languages outside of the classroom, only in social media/

- Have you ever felt that using French instead of English gave you a more prestigious position in the social world?

Participant 06: This is true in our country, because as we all know, French is the second language... and you will find yourself sometimes obliged to use it. Unfortunately, we are unable to use English outside of the classroom/

- Do you feel you are a different person when using the English language? How?

Participant 06: Of course, I feel I am different from the others because not all people can speak it/

- Are there any situations in which you feel that using the English language, or at least some English words, would give you certain advantages? Explain.

Participant 06: Here in Algeria? Hmm... at the university, it gives many advantages, however outside, I... I doubt it/

- Does using English allow you to express feelings you cannot express using Arabic?

Participant 06: Not always, hmm... Arabic is better in terms of expressing feelings, because in linguistics they say in Arabic, you FEEL it, but with other languages, you know the meaning, but you don't feel it (.) Sometimes when I explain a word to my student, they understand the meaning, but they only feel it when I say it in Arabic/

- What aspects of the English culture you feel should be embraced by the Algerian culture?

Participant 06: One of the major aspects that perhaps differentiate western people from our people is that they are hard workers, self-reliant... Most of Algerian people are not hard workers. They're lazy, and most of them are reliant, especially on their parents (.) So, these are two aspects that I've adopted in my life... western ones (.) and I always try to make my students aware of the importance of these two qualities: working hard, and self-reliance... or autonomy (.) I like my students to be autonomous in their studies, work... everywhere/

- Does being in full command of the English language make you feel more educated, intelligent and accomplished?

Participant 06: Yes.

- Do you think that English helped you to set secret codes you might use when seeking privacy?

Participant 06: No. <laughs> I never do these things. For instance, when you speak in English with someone else and another person does not understand what you're saying, it would be considered as rude (.) Like with some Kabylia people/

Participant's experience with French/ English in the primary school

- Which foreign language did you study in the primary school?

Participant 06: I studied French, but honestly... I wished to study English because I loved it/

In case of French:

- had you been exposed to French before it was introduced as a school subject in your education? (family, neighbors, media... etc.) – If yes, what role did your surroundings play in your experience with this language?

Participant 06: No.

- Did you immediately realize the social importance of French right from the first encounter with this language?

Participant 06: Yes, because many old people used to speak this language, and when I started to learn it, I understood that it had some importance/

- Was there any person/ teacher/ or event that might have changed your attitude towards the French language? (either positively or negatively).

Participant 06: Yes, I remember in the middle school, I... I was taught by a really good teacher. I did not like teachers in the primary school because they were very severe with us. But when I passed to middle school, okay? And I had this really good teacher who made me love the language (.) She was the mother of one of our mates, so she was not severe as the other ones (.) She had a good personality/

Middle school phase

- When was the first time you were exposed to the English language? (as a student/ or before studying the language) – What were your first impressions about the language?

Participant 06: The first encounter was back in my primary school... I used to read some small translated books, so I learned a lot from them. I just really loved English/

- What difficulties did you encounter at the beginning of your EFL learning experience?

Participant 06: Hmm... honestly:... I was a good student, I did not encounter any difficulties... honestly/

- Do you think that French had positive or negative effects on your development in learning English? – Explain. How did you cope with the transition from studying only French to studying both French and English?

Participant 06: It had a positive effect of course, because of the many similarities, I used to understand the meaning of the word because I already knew what it meant in French... so it helped me to understand the English well. I did not have any problems with both languages. I studied them both, but I gave more importance to English/

- While studying in the middle or high school, did you have any teacher who had played a significant role in changing your attitude towards the English language?

Participant 06: Honestly, they didn't change my attitude, they reinforced me instead. There was Mr. X, I remember his name.

- If yes,

- ⇒ Is this positive view towards this teacher specific to you or is it shared by other classmates?

Participant 06: It may be shared by some of them, but it was still something personal to me/

- ⇒ Does the success of this teacher lie in his/her treatment of you as an individual?

Participant 06: Yes, perhaps. I also wanted to be an English teacher just like him.

- ⇒ What was specific about his/her method(s)?

Participant 06: <sigh> Honestly, I cannot remember because it happened many years ago (.) but I remember that he was not severe. He was perfect, the way he dealt with his students, his way of teaching, his pronunciation... just perfect!

- ⇒ Were there any special activities that contributed markedly to your evolution as an EFL learner?

Participant 06: I can't exactly remember the details/

- ⇒ Was this teacher completely reliant on the textbook or did s/he rely on other tools or methods?

Participant 06: I think he relied on the textbook most of the time.

- Would you describe yourself as an extrovert or introvert student?

Participant 06: I was one of the extrovert students. I had no problem participating <laughs> no fear, no problem, I talked, communicated, answered questions/

- Being a teenager, you must have felt, most probably, the need for a role model in your life. Were you suddenly interested in knowing, or imitating a specific personality? -whether in your life (friend, teacher, parent, classmate... etc.), or public- Was proficiency in foreign languages in general, or English in particular, one of the strengths of this personality?

Participant 06: I cannot remember that, perhaps I imitated many people (.) I had a role model when I was at the university. I remember that when I got my BAC, I went to Setif with my aunt, then met some mates who, at that time, warned me not to study English because I'd be taught by this teacher, Mr. X1, a severe teacher... but he became my role model afterwards/

- Did you feel at any point in time that learning English comes at the expense of learning French?

Participant 06: Yes, it came at the expense of French, especially at the university, I totally neglected the language and now I have problems restoring it/

- Was the increase of self-awareness that generally happens at that age accompanied by an increase or decrease in the desire to learn English?

Participant 06: I always wanted to learn English, and be better/

- Could you tell us precisely when you felt that your journey with English had reached the point of no-return? (in other words, when exactly did you realize that success in life requires success with English?)

Participant 06: When I chose to major in English/

- What was the cause behind your decision to major in English?

Participant 06: I admired the English language/

- How did you feel about your English at this specific point in time?

Participant 06: I felt that I had the capacity to learn the English language. I felt confident, however, I still felt that it was never enough/

University phase

- Did you find the first year of the English License curriculum difficult? what difficulties did you encounter?

Participant 06: It was difficult at the beginning, because in high school, we learned everything in Arabic. So, it was very hard to study everything in English all the sudden. This difficulty lasted for about two months, later on, I got used to everything/

- At the beginning of your learning experience, how confident were you overall, in specific areas or tasks?

Participant 06: I was very confident/

- Have you ever felt reluctant to participate in a class so as to avoid any kind of humiliation?

Participant 06: At the university? yes. I was extrovert in the past, but later I changed my style. I don't know why... but I became the kind who listens a lot. I went to the campus and revised a lot. We had good teachers, they explained very well, so I did not have any questions during the lecture/

- Was there any teacher who played a critical role in your development as you advanced across your university studies? What was special about his/her methods?

Participant 06: Yes of course. Mr. X1. He was a genius. He had a LOT of information. He taught me grammar in the first year. He was very severe and all students were afraid of him, and that fear motivated me to learn grammar, because he didn't give good marks... so I had to study very hard. I also remember the TD teacher who used to give us a lot of sentences and we had to fill the gaps and justify every choice. I used to fill in these gaps and show my answers to her... She encouraged me a lot. I remember one day I showed her my answers and she said, "your answers were all good, and you deserve 20/20" These words encouraged ME, so the day of the exam, I got the best mark. It was 15.5/20. And that was very good compared to the marks Mr X1 gave. It was great/

- Which modules did you participate most in? why?

Participant 06: I participated in most of the modules, because all of the teachers were very good. I was very lucky. I remember I studied with Mr. X2 in my fourth year. He taught Civilization. My dream is to meet him one day, because I owe him a lot of gratitude. In the fourth year, we were also afraid of him because they said he didn't give good marks. But I had good grades with him. I remember he taught us about the American Frontier. 2 years later, I took my Magister test in Bejaia, and I found the question was about the American Frontier, and it was probably thanks to him that I succeeded, because the way he taught the lesson was excellent. Of course, I relied on his information and my own personal effort... and I succeeded. Also, Mr. X3... He taught us American Literature, and I was affected by him... now I am also specialized in this area. He was very good. Many other teachers inspired me to be who I am today/

- What characteristics did you possess that you think were useful for learning a language?

Participant 06: I possess? Hard working, autonomy, and devotion/

- Which type of media did you specifically rely on in your university years?

Participant 06: T.V, I used to watch BBC... also some CDs/

- During the period of learning the language, did you set goals for your learning progress?

Participant 06: Yes, of course. My primary... goal was to be excellent, successful, different from the others. Because if you want to be different, you will work hard and succeed. I was also very ambitious. I did not want to be just any teacher. I had higher ambitions of continuing my studies and develop as much as possible/

- How important were examinations for you? How did you react to feedback from exams? (success/ failure, teacher comments...)

Participant 06: Exams? Exams were important so some extent (.) However my primary goal was to improve my English. I wanted to get good marks, but to have a good level at the same time (.) I used to get good marks most of the time... except once, I had a very bad mark in

Culture in my first year, I was very disappointed, but I did not give up, I worked hard and succeeded in this module in the second semester/

- Have you ever felt that the more developed your proficiency in English becomes, the less confident you become in your skills in the mother tongue?

Participant 06: This is true, because developing a certain language has to be at the expense of the mother tongue or any other language. It happens to a lot of people. The more you develop in a certain language, the more it could affect the other languages/

- Do you think that your mother tongue's culture is sufficiently articulated in the English curriculum?

Participant 06: No, I don't think so/

- Do you think that your mother tongue's culture should be given more prominence? Why?

Participant 06: Perhaps... I'm not sure how (.) For example, in Literature for instance, we don't have any writers from our own culture who would write in English... otherwise we could include them. I know there are some promising students here in this department. One of them, in the first year, writes very good poems in English. I think he will be a very promising poet... Algerian poet/

- Is there anything you found particularly useful/ inhibiting during your university years?

Participant 06: Living in the campus was very inhibiting. Being far from family can be very hard/

- Was there any subject you wish you studied or focused more on in your studies?

Participant 06: In the fourth year, we were taught by a very good teacher of TEFL... Mr. X. He was good. But unfortunately, he left us. Until now, I can remember the only two lessons we had with him, and till now, these were the only two good lessons we had in this module. So, I wished we studied more of TEFL with a good teacher/

- What kind of 'key' experiences did you have during your university years?

Participant 06: Studying with Mr. X1/

- What advice would you give first year students of English at the university?

Participant 06: I tell them that if you want to be successful, different, or special, you have to work hard (.) Start working hard now! From the first year (.) Do not wait till later, because it would be too late (.) I also want them to realize the importance of literature... how it is important to improve their English (.) It is one of the best means by which they can improve their English (.) Also work hard, be diligent, and be devote yourself, time and energy to learn this language (.) Most of students come with the idea that language is easy. The problem is not in the language, it is in LEARNING the language (.) Language is demanding. It demands much effort, energy, and time/

ملخص

عرف مفهوم الهوية تحولا مع مرور الزمن، حيث تركز اليوم جهود من البحث في محاولة استكشاف نظرية الهوية في المجال التعليمي ودرس القضايا المتعلقة بها، وذلك لأهمية الكبيرة التي تمثلها. هذه الأخيرة في مجال اكتساب اللغة الأجنبية. يهدف هذا البحث الى درس التشابهات في سرد الأساتذة لسيرتهم باعتبارهم تلاميذ ناجحين في اللغة الانجليزية، مع الاخذ بعين الاعتبار العلاقة بين هذا السرد والجوانب المختلفة في هوياتهم، وينتهج البحث في المعالجة منهجية السيرة الذاتية السردية. المعطيات المقدمة في هذا البحث متجسدة في حوار باللغة الانجليزية موجه لأساتذة اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة محمد الصديق بن يحي بولاية جيجل. اتضح من خلال تحليل المعطيات أن النتائج المتوصل إليها تؤكد الى حد ما صحة الفرضية المقترحة.

توصيات وتطبيقات تربوية تم اقتراحها لإجراء مزيد من البحوث.