
Exploring the Algerian teachers and Learners' attitudes on the implementation of English course in Primary School

Explorer les attitudes des enseignants et des apprenants algériens sur la mise en œuvre du cours d'anglais à l'école primaire

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Abstract: *The Algerian primary schools are among those who do not offer opportunity to their pupils to introduce for them English course from the very first year of the acquisition of L2 though young learners will need the language of science and technology due to its status; as well it will open the door for many opportunities in their future professional career. Therefore, the current study attempt to examine if the English language will take place in the Algerian primary schools instead of French, due to their great status as it provides necessary information about the importance of learning English in an early age. Furthermore, it looks to find out the appropriate methodology for the young beginners, which would be helpful in designing suitable activities to children. Many researches in the field of teaching and learning languages at an early age agree on the fact that learning foreign language is easier than learning it in an older age, that's why it is essential for children to learn English language because it is a global language spoken in many countries so it is important to introduce it primary schools. For this reason, primary third-Grade pupils are chosen as the most suitable target study first, since, they are the first who are concerned with the teaching of the first foreign language and a descriptive method has been used to confirm the evidence of the hypothesis through Two questionnaires were administered to both pupils and teachers in order to gather data about their attitudes towards introducing English course in general and their learning outcome in particular. Most of findings show that the majority of pupils show positive attitudes to learn English language. Finally, from the results of the obtained study recommendations are suggested for an effective foreign language teaching to young learners.*

Keywords: *English Course, Pupils' attitudes, Teachers' views, Algerian Schools*

Résumé : *Les écoles primaires algériennes font partie de celles qui n'offrent pas la possibilité à leurs élèves de leur initier des cours d'anglais dès la première année d'acquisition de la L2 alors que les jeunes apprenants auront besoin de la langue des sciences et technologies en raison de son statut ; cela leur ouvrira également la porte à de nombreuses opportunités dans leur future carrière professionnelle. Par conséquent, la présente étude tente d'examiner si la langue anglaise sera enseignée dans les écoles primaires algériennes à la place du français, en raison de leur grand statut, car elle fournit les informations nécessaires sur l'importance de l'apprentissage de l'anglais dès le plus jeune âge. En outre, il cherche à trouver la méthodologie appropriée pour les jeunes débutants, ce qui serait utile pour concevoir des activités adaptées aux enfants. De nombreuses recherches dans le domaine de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage des langues dès le plus jeune âge s'accordent sur le fait qu'apprendre une langue étrangère est plus facile que de l'apprendre à un âge plus avancé, c'est pourquoi il est essentiel que les enfants apprennent la langue anglaise car c'est une langue*

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parlée mondialement. Dans de nombreux pays, il est donc important de l'introduire dans les écoles primaires. Pour cette raison, les élèves du primaire de troisième année sont choisis en premier lieu comme cible d'étude la plus appropriée, car ils sont les premiers concernés par l'enseignement de la première langue étrangère et une méthode descriptive a été utilisée pour confirmer la preuve de l'hypothèse. À travers Deux questionnaires ont été administrés aux élèves et aux enseignants afin de recueillir des données sur leurs attitudes à l'égard de l'introduction des cours d'anglais en général et de leurs résultats d'apprentissage en particulier. La plupart des résultats montrent que la majorité des élèves font preuve d'attitudes positives à l'égard de l'apprentissage de la langue anglaise. Enfin, à partir des résultats de l'étude obtenue, des recommandations sont suggérées pour un enseignement efficace des langues étrangères aux jeunes apprenants.

Mots-clés : Cours d'anglais, Attitudes des élèves, Opinions des enseignants, Écoles algériennes



During the last decade, The Algerian Primary schools become one of the countries who favored learning languages at early age though early learning of foreign languages which is a critical issue; therefore, new efforts have been done in the field to improve foreign languages education in Algeria ,particularly, English as foreign language for the young learners has also witnessed a great interest in the field of didactics and educational psychology that give great importance to teach young children, regarding the age as a factor among other factors like: classroom, atmosphere, cognitive development of the child, and the appropriate methodology used in class for pupils ,Moreover, teaching young children is totally different from teaching adolescents or adults learners as they have a particular physical and behavioural characteristics , as well as styles of learning. The statistics produced by the ministry of national education all have shown that over a period of two years, the number of students who want to learn English as a first foreign language has dropped significantly. English continues to be taught in the first year of middle school as a second foreign language and up to high school. (Benrabah,1999 : 177) To complete, the languages in Algeria undergo very interesting linguistic changes, “the linguistic creativity that characterizes the native speaker appears vividly in the language of the young people who represent the majority of the population in Algeria, and practice dictated by immediate communication needs, produced a situation of conviviality and tolerance between the languages present”. It highlights also the status of English language in the Algerian educational system in general and in the Algerian primary schools in particular. It investigates mainly the possibility to incorporate English course in the Algerian primary schools.

Learning the foreign languages is a critical issue, Primary school age is known to be the most favorable for learning languages during the last decade and recently, new efforts have done to improve foreign languages education in our country. English as foreign language for the young learners of the third grade has also witnessed a great interest indeed; the field of didactics and educational psychology have dealt with the teaching of young children, taking into consideration the age as the main factor besides other factors such as: classroom, atmosphere, cognitive development of the child, and the methodology to teach appropriately young children .Moreover, teaching children is totally different from teaching adolescents or adults as they have a particular physical and behavioural characteristics , as well as styles of learning. Indeed the teaching of English as a foreign

language is now a subject in most private primary schools in Algeria. EFL teaching is often based on the formal aspects of the language which is grammar. However in the Algerian public schools they introduce French language from the third year after Arabic and the English at the first year in middle school.

Therefore, the present work seeks to find out if English is going to be dominant language in the Algerian primary schools and take a global place in our educational system? To answer the above raised questions, the hypothesis has been stated as follow:

- Since, English is considered to be the second foreign language in our Algerian educational system; it may receive considerable attention within the educational reform. And introduced at the level of first year middle school.

To fit the objectives of this study, an overview of the research methodology contains an account of the procedures used, methods done including research design selection and description of participants setting as well as instruments of data collection, it is primarily based on a descriptive method questionnaires used for the sake of gathering data, the first questionnaire is designed for pupils to know their point of view about the research problematic, the second questionnaire handed out to EFL teachers and to achieve this aim the data gathered has been analysed qualitatively and quantitatively.

1. Research Design

Case study is defined as a descriptive group or single event that investigates individuals. Case study can be defined as an empirical inquiry; that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used” According to (yin 1984 : 23). It is mainly used when conducting a research for the analysis it includes quantitative evidence since it seems reliable cited in (Rhee 2004/72). The case study allows the researcher to examine the analysis of more than one case, it also inquire how and what the respondent’s answer, Dornyei (2007 : 96) defines as” the group of participants, whom the researcher actually examines in an empirical investigation”.

Therefore, to carry out this research mixed methods are used in order to allow the researcher to collect reliable data through the answers. Also the descriptive method is going to be relied on this research, furthermore to reply the research question; it is important to collect and gain abroad range of data and try to find an extensive views beliefs and perceptions the reliable participants. Approaches provide research numbers to analyse, however qualitative data gives option view and thoughts of participants (brick green 2007. P,2)stated that Qualitative research is characterized by its aims, which relate to understanding main aspect for social life and its method generate words rather than numbers as data for analysis unlike quantitative research which is concerned with the analysis of data in terms of number and things that can be measured as time member’s age.

The present investigation seeks to achieve certain goals and to accomplish some objectives, thus, it is based on both qualitative and quantitative approaches of data collection since information will be collected through the use of teachers’ questionnaire where the questions are open-ended and require qualitative approach questions that are handed out to young learners and teachers are close-ended using multiple choices answer

options then, the data gathered will be analysed qualitatively and quantitatively through numerical data. In this sense, Cohen et al, assert that “A method then are process to identify select analyze as well used to gather data since the aim is to deal with introducing English course instead of..... range of approaches used in educational research to gather data which are to be used as basis for interpretation for explanation and prediction”. (Cohen *et al*; 2005 : 44) .In order to realize the goals of this research work we must collect data through providing different instruments. Questionnaire was the first instrument handed out for pupils of the third grade and the second instrument is an interview designed for teachers

1.1. Participants

Participants are the population, who are invited to cooperate in the research study. Thus, participants are Sixty pupils of the third grade in elementary school of Tlemcen. The purpose behind choosing the third year pupils is mainly that an early learning of foreign language is better than any other grade in addition to four language teachers from the same school who are responsible of the third grade are random sample to collaborate in answering the questions. The main reason behind their selection is to highlight their opinions and take them into consideration. Different views may be provided as well as gathering data for the research analysis.

1.2. Setting

This study in conducted in “ECHAHID IBN AHMED ALI IMAMA” primary school in where one questionnaire was hold out for Sixty pupils and the other was administered to four 4 language Teachers the reason behind choosing the setting is that the third elementary year are the only community who are concerned.

2. Data Collection Phase

The reason behind choosing questionnaire as method for collecting information is the best option to gather large amount of information and gain different views from a huge sample of participants without wasting much time, it is relatively cheap and so efficient to save time and gather a big amount of views information thoughts and beliefs. it is a process to achieve distinct views and make a difference between them, then to analyse our research the only reason behind choosing interview it is the efficient method to obtain detailed data information about individual feelings opinion and perception:

➤ **Pupil’s Questionnaire**

Pupils’ questionnaire is designed and administered to 40 pupils third-grade who have been chosen aimlessly to collaborate in the questionnaire that seeks to investigate what language do young pupils prefer to be introduced in their first year, of acquiring the first foreign language and it aims to know which language the child prefer to another.

➤ Teachers' Questionnaire

Teacher's Questionnaire is designed and administered to four (04) teachers of language at primary school. This later seeks to know the teachers' attitudes towards teaching English course in Algerian primary schools and their role in classroom activities.

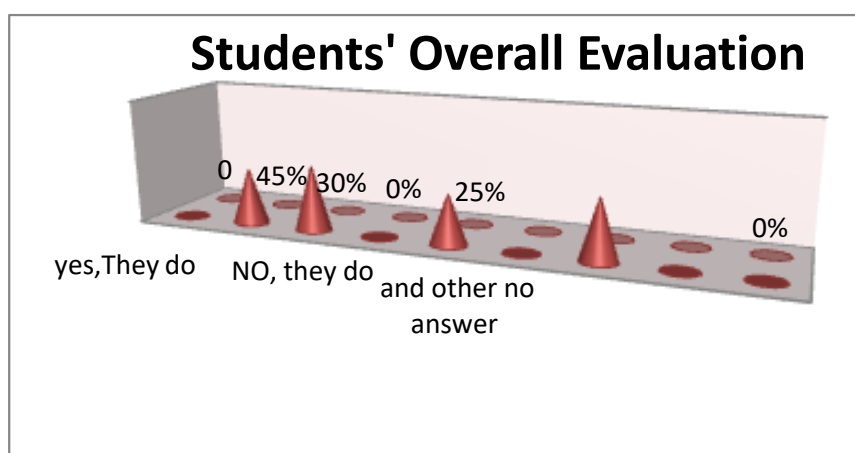
3. Data Analysis Phase

3.1. Pupils' Questionnaire's Analysis

Pupils' questionnaire is composed of four Questions which are categorized under only one part; it speaks about language interaction and cognitive skills where participants of the sample have to choose an option in order to respond. This questionnaire provide both closed and opened ended questions, it is designed like this to guarantee the participants collaboration the result of the students questionnaire are reported as follows. Language interaction and cognitive skills, Concerning this part of the questionnaire is intended to discover the child's code in order to communicate and identify the place of one language in relation to another, for that reason this part contains the most important questions about which language do children prefer to use as well which language they prefer to learn as a first foreign language.

Q 1: What language do you speak outside class?

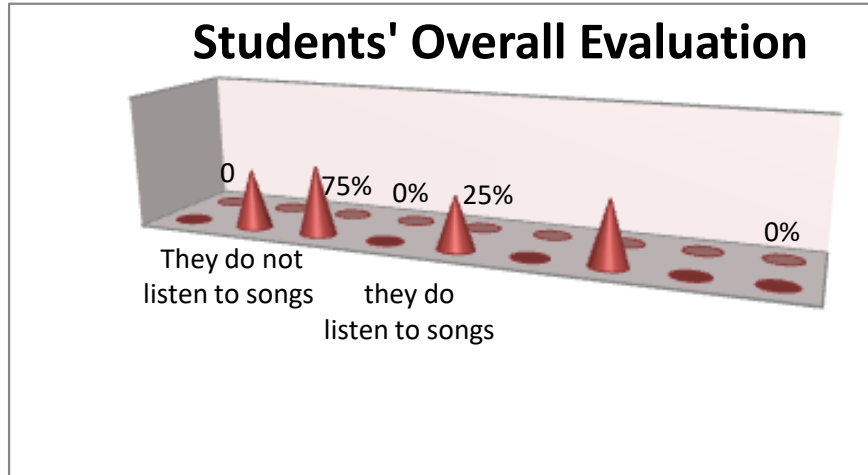
This question aimed to see if Pupils watch cartoons in English at home; hence the figure below indicates the different options which are given to the pupils.



The statistic of this figure show that twenty (30%) answer by (No), they do not watch cartoons in English, however, (45%) of them argue that they watch English cartoons and (25%) represent no responses.

Q 2: do you listen to songs in English?

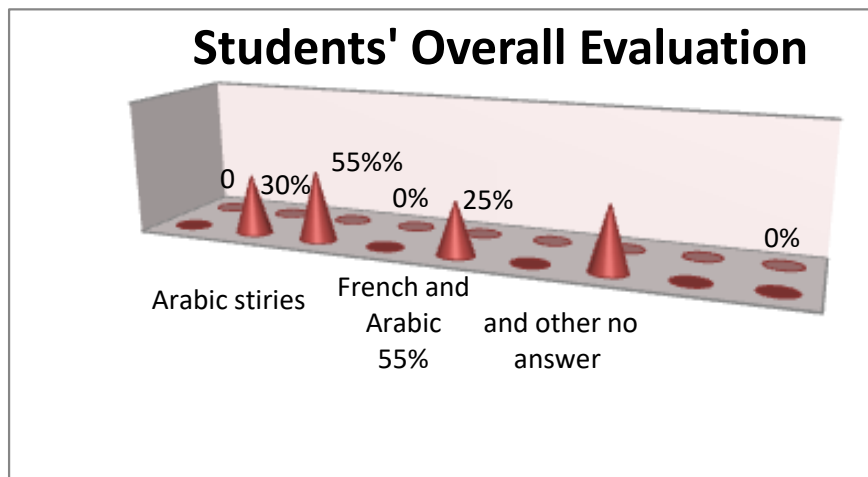
This question tries to identify whether pupils of the third grade listen to songs in English in order to identify their priorities the results are shown in the figure below.



The results show that (25%) of youngsters argue that they listen to English songs, on the other hand (75%) reported the majority of the pupils who argue that they do not listen to songs in English.

Q 3 : in which language you read short Stories ?

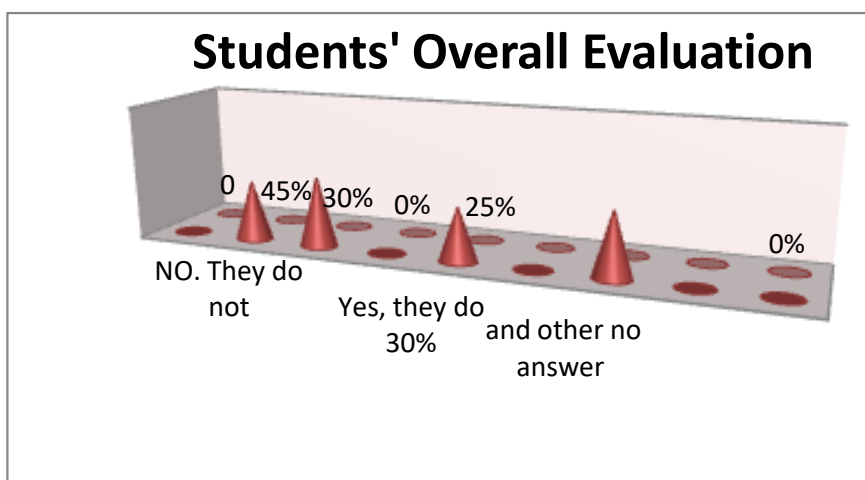
This question is conducted to know which language young learners use when reading stories and the results shown in the figure below are interpreted according to their answers.



The figure shows that a great number of students pick up more than one option (55%) of pupils pick French and Arabic, and (30%) claimed that they read Arabic stories however (25%) represents pupils with no responses.

Q 4 : Do you know some word in English?

This question is designed to discover whether those category of pupils do know some words in English, hence two option were given to students the following figure show the results of the answer .



The figure shows that (70%) of pupils said that they don't know any word in English, and the second category that represent (30%) of learners said the contrast.

3.2. Teachers' Questionnaire Analysis

Teacher's questionnaire is composed of Six open-ended questions deal with teacher's attitude towards the Introduction of English Course in primary school.

Q 1: do you think that is important to study English in primary schools?

All Teachers said that it is important to study English language in elementary schools because it will help them in learning English easier in the next levels, as well English has a widely use in our daily life that need the understanding of children that's why it is important to learn English in primary level.

Q 2: Do you agree with the introduction of English in Algerian primary schools?

All Teachers did not refuse the idea of introducing English course in primary schools but they think that it is not enough to learn only one language they said if the Algerian Ministry of education decide to introduce English in primary schools they have to manage with both languages they include English with French because they think that learning more than one language in an early age it increase the opportunities as well it enrich the mind.

Q 3: In your opinion, do you think that the Algerian minister of education will formalize English language as first foreign language in Algerian primary schools?

All Teachers said that they think that the Algerian minister of education will formalize English in Algerian primary schools because they already tried but it

lasted only for two years, they disagree that the minister will formalized it again though the system of education in Algeria give the opportunity for French.

4. The Main Findings

The finding from the questionnaire which has been administered to young learners and teachers has given us a deep insight concerning the issue if English is going to be the dominant foreign language in the Algerian elementary schools. It also show that the majority of young learners of the third grade elementary school agreed with the replacement of French with English in primary schools this study would like to find out the kinds of motivation dominate them in the light of the results that are collected for the pupil's questionnaire is discussed in relation to the already raised hypothesis we analyzed that student have enough self confidence when they agreed with the idea of introducing English course in Algerian primary schools they did not considered it as a weird issue, as far as the first hypothesis is concerned the results obtained affirm that the English could be the dominant language in the Algerian elementary schools also they claimed that they are interested to learn the English language but they are not a good and fluent speakers in both French and English languages hence they do not use the English language to speak moreover they have some English vocabulary they have already learn it from cartoons, songs we can analyse clearly from the findings and results of pupil's questionnaire that they are excited and motivated.

The hypothesis was about if English is going to be the language of the future an interview was maintained for French language teachers to know their opinion for validating the hypothesis.

The discussion and the interpretation of the results draw attention that all teachers agreed that English cannot replace French in neither Algerian society nor primary school because they considered French as an heritage also they focus that the Algerian minister of education has already initiated a process to introduce English in Algerian primary schools but this process only lasted For two years.

Conclusion

In the present study questionnaire has been analysed for young learners to determine the evidence their prior knowledge about English and to see how much pupils are motivated for the idea, through the analysis of data pupils' answers revealed that most of pupils of the third primary grade agreed with the idea of introducing English course, as well the analysis of teacher's questionnaire confirmed that possibly English will not replace French language neither in primary schools nor in the Algerian society as a whole; for that reason they see that English language will not be the future dominant language in the Algerian educational system.

But rather teachers motivate young learners to learn languages to do so are completely with the idea of introducing English course in Algerian primary schools

they see that unless children do not start from an early age to read and write in English the fluency will be never attained. In general the observation and findings that was taken from both questionnaire and interview, the majority of samples population give a great importance to English in the Educational system.

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