
**The Impact of the Teacher-centred Pedagogy on Today's learners in Algerian
Schools**
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¹Algeria and Deradicalization: www.algerianembassy-japan.jp/docs/doc20151209-english.pdf
(accessed on Oct. 15th, 2017).

² 40 Thousand Cases of School Violence in Algeria every Year:
<https://www.echoroukonline.com/ara/articles/512747.htm> (accessed on Feb. 1st, 2017)

³ [ibid](#)

⁴ School Violence Took a Dangerous Turn:
<https://www.echoroukonline.com/ara/articles/512085.html> (accessed on Jan. 26th, 2017)

⁵ [ibid](#).

⁶School violence on the Rise in Algeria:www.echoroukonline.com/ara/articles/96283.html
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Undoubtedly, teaching in the future will be more difficult and more complex than we can imagine but more standardized. Thus, developing tomorrow's teaching profession necessarily will mean developing and applying teacher knowledge apart from other sources.

Conclusion

The implementation of yesterday's pedagogy in today's education is believed to be ineffective. Therefore, as teachers, we are expected to avoid using any pedagogy in class that is "autocracy-based". Instead, we are expected to embrace teaching pedagogies that are "democracy-based" in order to improve learning, enhance teaching and promote discipline.

Certainly, the shift from autocracy-based pedagogy to democracy-based pedagogy, though it is necessary, is not as easy as we may imagine, because, as teachers, we need, first of all, to believe in change which is supposed to be deeply rooted in our souls. So, if most of Algerian teachers succeed in implementing the democracy-based pedagogy in their teaching practices, education in Algeria will flourish and progress. If not, it will shrink and regress, the teacher and the learner will be in a stress and everything will be in a mess.

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level was adequate preparation for teaching that content at that level. Teachers needed to know and understand the content determined by the grade they planned to teach. An elementary reading teacher needed to be able to read, write, and compute at the elementary level. At the secondary level, a geography teacher needed a secondary level geography understanding and a mathematics teacher needed a secondary level mathematical understanding. Teachers are taught what they were taught, as they were taught. That was yesterday”.

As for today's teaching, it is a little bit difficult compared to yesterday's. If yesterday's teachers depended only on the mastery of content of the grade they intended to teach, today's teachers are expected to master both the content of the level the teacher intends to teach and the pedagogy of teaching as well. “Certainly, teachers need to know the content they are to teach, but they must also have knowledge about teaching and learning that content”(Niess 2008: 223).

Shulman (1986) who succeeded in identifying Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) states that it is not sufficient to know the content and pedagogy of teaching because effective teaching depends on specialized knowledge which is more than knowing the subject matter and pedagogy of teaching. In other words effective teachers must rely on rich knowledge that is well-organized and integrated so as to make the content more accessible to student (*Shulman, 1986, 1987*).

Tomorrow's teaching rests basically on critical pedagogy and the use of appropriate information and communication technologies. Thus, tomorrow's teaching will be more difficult and complex for it will attempt to deepen understanding based on high “quality instruction which requires a sophisticated professional knowledge that goes beyond simple rules” (Shulman, 1986). Niess (2008:223-224) goes as far as to say,

“If teacher methods courses continue as they have been, focused on the teaching strategies, classroom management, planning for instruction, and assessment of learning developed from directions of the twentieth century, they will most certainly rob the children of tomorrow. With the addition of an integration of new and emerging twenty-first century technologies as tools for learning, the preparation of teachers must evolve toward preparing pre-service teachers to teach in ways that help them to guide their students in learning with appropriate technologies. Today, the twenty-first century, teacher preparation methodology courses must assume the task of guiding pre-service teachers toward the abilities, strategies and ways of thinking for teaching today and tomorrow”.

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students achieve. Kaufhold (2002:11) states that “we are likely to teach in the fashion that we were taught. Therefore, it is difficult to break out of a traditional mode”.

What must be emphasized on is that today's teaching is multidimensional (see fig. 2). This means that it rests heavily on competence and not on experience. Competent teachers do not teach the way they were taught as learners. On the contrary, competent teachers are successful teachers who manage to integrate new practices and recent strategies into their teaching practices in ways that make them easily acceptable to students. Stated differently, successful teachers are good adapters (Fullan, 1991).

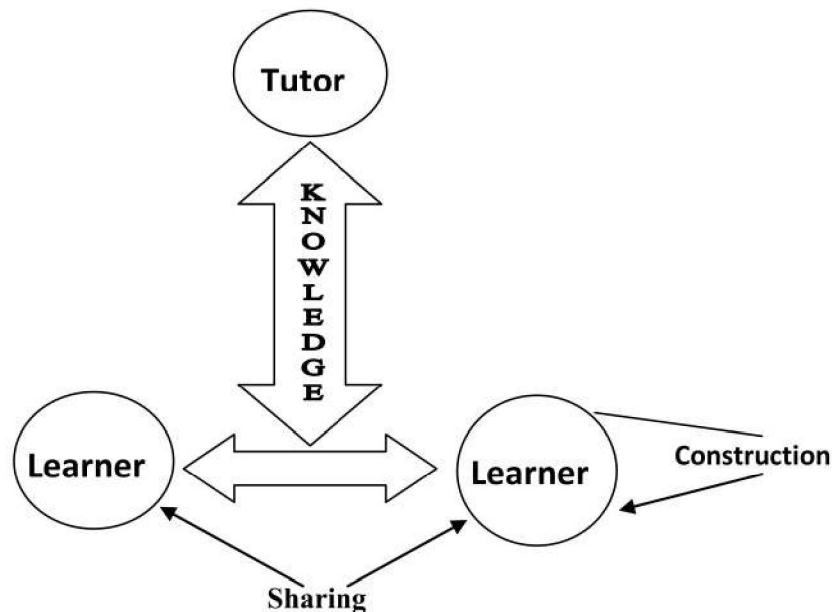


Figure 2: Today's teaching (Stefani, et al., 2006)

9. The Difference between Yesterday's Teaching and Today's

Yesterday's teaching was easy and simple. What the teacher was expected to do a long time ago was to prepare and master the content of the level he intended to teach; then, he taught it the way he had been taught as a learner. This means that anyone could be a teacher. He did not have to be resourceful and well-versed in different subjects. Niess (2008:223) argues that

“Two hundred years ago, the predominant belief about preparing teachers for teaching was that knowing the content at a particular

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Moreover, the chief of social change laboratory at the university of Algiers, Nourredine Hakiki, conducted a recent comparative study between two secondary schools: Okba Bnou Nafaas secondary school situated in Bab El Oued and Bouaamama high school located in Mouradia. The results revealed that aggression against teachers has increased by 20 percent in Bouaamama high school compared to Okba BnouNafaa secondary school. In a seminar held at the National Institute of Teachers Training in 2009, Hakiki stated a total of 60 percent of Okba's pupils are beaten by teachers compared to 49 percent in Bouaamama".⁶

The Algerian government is still doing its utmost to improve education because it is aware of its importance in progress and development of any independent nation that believes in change as a constructive tool.

A new pedagogy that is less teacher-centred and more learner-centred was introduced to enhance learning and promote teaching. Dewey (1916), who knew the difference between today's, yesterday's and tomorrow's teaching, stated that if we teach today as we taught yesterday, we rob our children of their tomorrow. In fact, Today's generation is open-minded and is looking for a new pedagogy that is also open-ended and democracy-based. Otherwise, the gap between the learner and the teacher becomes wider and wider and can never be bridged unless the autocracy-based pedagogy is replaced by the democracy-based pedagogy.

8.1 Changing Pedagogy of Teaching

Changing the conception of teaching is not as simple as it may first appear for the following reasons:

Firstly, they are seen as "a complex process that reaches into the soul of most teachers and can be affronting to their beliefs about the way they teach" (Hargreaves, 1998, cited in McLoughlin & Taji 2005:201). According to Gow & Kember (1993), Moore (2001) and Kaufhold (2002), every teacher operates according to the teaching conception he believes in because he does not know how to teach in different ways.

Secondly, there is a widespread belief that the conception of teaching affect teacher's belief and the methods students use to learn, and the learning outcomes

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in junior high schools, 16,000 cases in primary schools and more than 6,000 cases in high schools (My translation).²

The Ministry of Education and Parents' Associations along with Trade Unions are convinced that student indiscipline is a nightmare that will never end unless it is cured once for good.

8. Measures against School Indiscipline

The Inspector general argued that "about 400,000 students from 400 secondary schools were surveyed. 63 percent of them preferred to stay in their homes rather than studying in hostile surroundings (My translation)."³

The increasing violence in Algerian schools urged the Ministry of National Education to intervene in order to curb indiscipline and establish law and order in our educational institutions. To combat school violence, the Ministry of National Education suggested the following set of strict measures against perpetrators.

According to Ministry of Education, these measures were set up by sociologists and psychologists in collaboration with the Unicef. In addition, these measures are expected to (My translation)⁴:

- Reactivate the interior school regulation
- get parents more involved in the fight against violence
- work jointly with the National Security to combat school violence and the threats of the internet

Although these measures are necessary, they seem to be insufficient because pedagogy, the most efficient measure against school violence and other forms of misbehaviour is missing. Indeed, the crisis needs pedagogical strategies and not disciplinary measures. Pedagogy to the learner is like medicine to the patient. If it is well-used by a good teacher, it is likely to be a panacea; if not, the reverse will be the case.

Undoubtedly, the number of undisciplined people will skyrocket in the future as stated by the Inspector General of the Ministry of National Education in press conference held in February 2017 that about 40,000 cases of school violence are annually reported in various educational institutions. He added that 260 thousand cases of violence were recorded between 2000 and 2014 in the school, either between the teacher-student or between learners and their classmates (My translation).⁵

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obedient and submissive, cannot develop self-reliance and self-esteem. On the contrary, they always feel dependent on the others such as their parents and the like.

More than that, Sidhu (2008) divides student indiscipline into two parts. He argues that "Student indiscipline can take the shape of group indiscipline or individual indiscipline" (p.206).

Group indiscipline is too difficult to deal with as it is responsible for many behavioural problems such as strikes, and gang-behaviour; aggression, fighting and quarrelling and rowdyism (Sidhu, 2008).

The second type of indiscipline is referred to as "individual indiscipline". This type of indiscipline can easily be dealt with. Unlike group indiscipline, individual indiscipline exhibits the following misconducts as indicated below (Sidhu, 2008:206-207):

- 1- Truancy, frequent absence, and late coming.
- 2- Lying, cheating, stealing, and damaging or spoiling anything.
- 3- Stubbornness, haughtiness, quarrelling, and selfishness.
- 4- Discourtesy, disrespect, and rudeness.
- 5- Making noise, and showing unruly behaviour.
- 6- Teasing, bullying and using indecent and abusive language.
- 7- Irresponsibility, withdrawing, and deliberately not doing the assigned work.
- 8- Deliberately not paying the fee in time and not coming in the school uniform.
- 9- Using unfair means in the examination.
- 10- Scribbling on walls, furniture, etc.
- 11- Vicious, sexually unacceptable conduct and making indecent remarks to the fair sex.

It is not exaggerating to note that learners usually feel frustrated and oppressed in the teacher-centred environment because they are overprotected and overcharged with 'DOS and DONTS'. Opting for disruptive misbehaviour in class is just a form of expression that is within reach of students. Thus, it is pointless and useless to inflict mass punishment against mass indiscipline.

Statistics, released in 2009 by the Ministry of National Education, indicate that student misconduct tends to increase at an alarming pace. In 2007-2008, for instance, some 47,000 disciplinary cases were reported in schools. 24,000 cases were perpetrated

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7. The Impact of the Teacher-centred Approach on Student Discipline

Discipline in Algeria and elsewhere is of major concern to teachers, parents and stakeholders. According to many educationalists, and field researchers (Wood, Nicholson and Findley,1985; Durand,1990 ; Sonn,1999; Bean,1999) discipline is essential to effective learning and teaching as well. This means that discipline maximizes learning, enhances teaching and results in high academic achievements. According to Lorenz (1986:2),

“orderliness, guidance and effective discipline plays a significant role in giving learners direction so as to reach or achieve the expected goals and objectives in their formal schooling. The targeted academic achievement is easily achieved if there is good discipline at school” (Lorenz 1986:2, as cited in Khuluse 2009).

When discipline is embraced but not imposed, education prospers, misbehaviour is curbed, schools are safe and responsibility is assumed and becomes more effective but when it is imposed, Indiscipline will be inevitable and classes become unmanageable.

Furthermore, imposed discipline widens the gap between the teachers and the learners who are underestimated and shamelessly seen as subjects and not as individuals with different learning styles and with personal attributes influenced by their home and social backgrounds (Lubart 2004). Therefore, it is no wonder if the learners show no interest in this traditional teacher-dominated approach.

Similarly, researchers (Steinberg, Dornbusch, & Brown, 1992) indicate that teacher-centred learners suffer from overprotection. That is why they tend to develop an inferior personality which in the future will cause many problems. Moreover, they have difficulty in social situations, tend to develop fear, shyness, and low self-esteem, and associate obedience with love

It is important to note that parent-dominated children exhibit the same behaviour as teacher-dominated learners because the school environment does not differ from the home environment. Besides, parents and teachers do share the same role. Both of them are authoritarians and autocrats.

It is now a common fact that parent-dominated children and teacher-dominated learners are expected to be disruptive, dependent, obedient and submissive because of overprotection. Those who become disruptive tend to develop disruptive behaviours (Graber, Nichols, Lynne, Brooks-Gunn,& Botvin, 2006) while the others, who are more

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5. Role of the Learner in the Teacher-centred Environment

In the teacher-centred Environment, the learner is in passive role. Unlike the teacher, the learner listens more than he speaks. He relies on memorizing facts and reciting them to the teacher.

Moreover, misbehaviour is not tolerated at all. Any interaction without the teacher's permission is regarded as misbehaviour and is immediately curbed. Therefore, neither pair work nor group work is allowed in teacher-oriented environment. Apart from that, students are supposed to work individually and independently without relying on the teacher's or classmate's help. The teacher walks around only to make sure that everybody is working independently and not relying on one another. Any help from a classmate is considered as malpractice and leads to different forms of punishment: admonishment, corporal punishment and short or long exclusion.

6. The impact of the Teacher-centred Pedagogy on the Learner

Frankly speaking, the teacher-centred pedagogy is responsible for what is happening in our educational institutions simply because its impact on learning and teaching was, at all levels, negative and ineffective as well.

An official study conducted during the school year 1988-1989 by the Algerian Ministry of National Education revealed that only 25% had finished the compulsory period of 9 years, 25% had repeated at least one year and more than 32% had dropped out before completing the cycle (MEN, 1997, as cited in Thomas 2002:139).

Furthermore, secondary education could not avoid the crisis either. "The rate of wastage is even higher in secondary education, as less than 20% succeeded in the baccalaureate" (Thomas 2002:2). This means that urgent reforms must take place in order to improve learning, enhance teaching, and curb indiscipline.

As can be seen, the Algerian educational system began to disintegrate in 20th century. That is why it was unable to achieve the ultimate goals of the society and the individual. Much time is needed to help our educational system stand on its own feet again due to the negative impact of the teacher-centred pedagogy on learning, teaching and discipline.

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It is worth noting that this paradigm enables the teacher to play very important roles by giving him/her strong power and full authority.

4. Role of the Teacher in the Teacher-centred Environment

In the teacher-centred environment, the teacher is placed at the centre of the learning process. In other words, under the influence of this approach, the teacher is the architect of student discipline and passive learning based on “the traditional pedagogic model, with its emphasis on passive, rote, non-social, non-contextual learning from an authoritarian type of instructor whose primary means of student motivation is the grade”(Leonard, 2002:8). This means this teaching is linear and teacher-dominated as figure 01 shows.

Yes, the teacher tends to monopolize information, authority and power. He selects what to teach his students as he is the only source of knowledge. He is also the only disciplinarian in class. All in all, “The teacher is the authority; she or he knows things that the students do not know, and is (ideally) attempting to enhance the students' bodies of knowledge. There tends to be, then, some deference on the part of students”, (Budd, 2009:76).

Similarly, Glasser (1988) maintains that “these teachers are referred to as “boss teachers”. Boss teachers are old-fashioned, act in an autocratic way, unlikely to involve the learner in planning instructional activities or developing class code of conduct”. (Glasser 1998, as cited in Ming-tack and Wai-shing, 2008:58). Such teachers regard their learners as no more than consumers of knowledge (see figure 01).

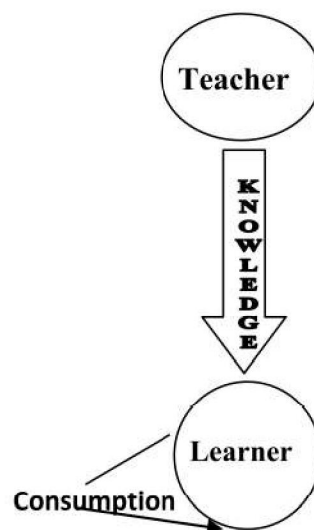


Figure 01: Yesterday's teaching (Stefani, et al. , 2006)

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3. Causes of the Educational Decline

Speaking in terms of literacy, Algeria is apparently able to defeat the ghost of illiteracy thanks to the government which regularly spends nearly a quarter of its annual budget on education as stated below:

“Since its independence, Algeria has allocated an average of 25% of its annual budget to national education. The country's literacy rate (98.4% in 2014) is among the highest in the world.”¹

Although the country's literacy rate is high (98.4% in 2014), education in Algeria is far below the expected level for the following reasons:

3.1. Behaviourist Beliefs

It is worth mentioning that despite the huge amounts of expenditures in the field of education, our educational system is still going through a crisis that is deeply rooted in behaviourism which perceives the learner as no more than an empty container waiting to be filled with information. In other words, the teacher as the content expert has knowledge and passes it on to the learner.

Behaviourist approaches tend to focus on learners' efforts to collect knowledge of the natural world and on teachers' efforts to transmit it. That is why they depend on a transmission that is largely passive, teacher-oriented and controlled.

More than that, Von Glasersfeld (1992a:4), a rather strong opponent of behaviourism, criticizes this mindset, claiming:

“For 50 years in this century we have suffered the virtually undisputed domination of mindless behaviourism. The behaviourists succeeded in eliminating the distinction between training (for performance) and teaching that aims at the generation of understanding. All learning was reduced to a model that had been derived from experiments with captive pigeons and rats... For education, this learning theory (...) has tended to focus attention on student's performance rather than on the reasons that prompt them to respond or act in a particular way”.

(Von Glasersfeld
1992a:4)

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1. Introduction

Education in Algeria is a constitutional right but it is stumbling. Many commentators agree that the Algerian educational system is fluctuating up and down and needs urgent reforms. Poor attainment, unmanageable student behaviour, repetitions and high dropout rates among the school population are on the rise. In support of all this, Thomas (2002:139) believes that "Education in Algeria is far below the standard required. Hence, education is far from achieving the ultimate goals of individual and social development". This means that neither learning nor teaching is taking place as expected due to the so called teacher-centred pedagogy. Although this old-fashioned paradigm is believed to be responsible for what is going on in Algerian schools, it is still in use simply because it is autocracy-based and teacher-dominated.

2. The Origin of the Teacher-centred Pedagogy

This pedagogy can be linked with the behaviourist approaches which rely heavily on the teacher as content expert who is supposed to teach and test learners as a process for learning the course materials. Recent studies (UNESCO 2005:172) on the theme of pedagogical renewal and teacher development in sub-Saharan Africa reveal that,

"Undesirable teaching practices persist. They can be described as following: a rigid, chalk-and-talk, teacher centred/dominated, lecture-driven pedagogy or rote learning (...). It is also reflected in classroom assessment practices; such teaching practices are the norm in the vast majority of classrooms in sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere, even in the most affluent countries"

(UNESCO 2005:172, as cited in Anderson & Wiseman,
2014:250)

Furthermore, this approach cannot be applied for learning without relying on punishment or reinforcement, making schools or classrooms look like a military camp where any student who misbehaves is subject to severe punishment. Therefore, students tend to be calm, silent and polite in class out of fear, and not out of respect. Many learners have the feeling that teachers become funny living creatures when they resort to punishment. In their eyes, teachers are like prophets and messengers of god and should ill-treat their disciples.

It is worth mentioning that schools are sacred places where students should not be treated with cruelty and brutality. Unluckily such acts are frequent in the teacher-centred environment.

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Résumé

La pédagogie centrée sur l'enseignant est toujours utilisée dans les écoles algériennes bien que la plupart des apprenants d'aujourd'hui tendent à la rejeter, intentionnellement ou non, parce qu'elle est linéaire et autocratique et représente la pédagogie de l'opresseur et l'autocrate. En outre, cette pédagogie est contre la nature humaine qui rejette toutes sortes d'oppression et d'autocratie. Il est dommage que cette pédagogie soit toujours appliquée dans nos établissements d'enseignement. Le présent article tente de discuter de l'impact de cette pédagogie archaïque sur les étudiants actuels en utilisant notre système éducatif comme référence et en invitant tous les enseignants en général et les enseignants algériens en particulier à mettre de côté leurs anciennes pratiques liées au pédagogie d'hier et à embrasser la pédagogie actuelle afin de créer un environnement propice à un bon apprentissage où les étudiants peuvent répondre à leurs besoins et atteindre un rendement scolaire élevé.

Mots-clés: Ecoles algériennes, Pédagogie centrée sur l'apprenant, pédagogie centrée sur l'enseignant.

Abstract

The teacher-centred pedagogy is still in use in Algerian schools although most of today's learners tend to reject it, whether intentionally or unintentionally, because it is linear autocracy-based, and represents the pedagogy of the oppressor, and the autocrat. In addition, this pedagogy is against human nature that rejects all kinds of oppression and autocracy. It is a pity that this autocracy-based pedagogy is still implemented in our educational institutions. The present paper attempts to discuss the impact of this old-fashioned pedagogy on today's students with reference to our educational system and invites all teachers in general and Algerian teachers in particular to put aside all their old practices related to yesterday's pedagogy and embrace today's democracy-based pedagogy which creates an environment conducive to effective learning where students can meet their needs.

Keywords: Teacher-centred, Algerian Schools, Learner-centred, autocracy-based pedagogy, democracy-based pedagogy.