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Promoting Intellectual Skills: Teachers' Practices and Attitudes

A cognitive Study: An Evaluation of the English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book Used at Modern Languages School of Tizi-Ouzou

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Dedications

I dedicate this dissertation to the people who have meant and continue to mean so much to me:

To my grandparents who although are no longer of this world, their memories continue to regulate my life.

To my dear parents whose care and love know no bounds. Words cannot give enough credit to their support to complete this investigation.

To my beloved sisters and brothers: Bicky, Elena, Mira, Jimy, Hendi and Mimich who stand by me when things look bleak, and who have always been by my side in failure as in success.

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Abstract

The present study seeks at evaluating the activities implemented in the English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book used in Modern Languages School of Tizi-Ouzou in promoting learners' intellectual skills. To investigate this issue, three main objectives have been set respectively. The first objective is to determine whether the upper-intermediate textbook activities engage MLS EFL learners in significant learning experience. The second objective is to see whether these same activities foster learners' cognition. Then, the third objective is to find out MLS English teachers' views towards the effectiveness of the textbook activities intended for upper-intermediate learners in enhancing their intellectual skills. The corpus of the current research consists of twenty randomly selected activities analyzed on the basis of the Significant Learning Taxonomy developed by DEE Fink in 2003. This set of data has been supplemented by a semi-structured questionnaire addressed to five MLS teachers teaching English to upper-intermediate EFL classes to figure out and measure the attitudes they hold towards the issue under study. A mixed method approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods, has been adopted to process the obtained data. The quantitative part has been devoted to process the different numerical data and percentages using the rule of three, while the qualitative part has concerned the interpretation of the open-ended questions through the Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA). The results sorted out from the textbook evaluation have revealed that EFL upper-intermediate learners at Modern Languages School are actively engaged in significant learning experiences and that the activities are of significant importance in fostering their cognitive faculties along the target language. These same results have also shown that DEE Fink's Taxonomy is partly reflected throughout the textbook since only the four first learning dimensions are emphasized. Moreover, the answers provided by the teachers to the questionnaire have indicated their positive attitudes concerning the importance of the English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book activities relied on in MLS in developing learners' intellectual skill. Finally, the research has provided some recommendations for further research in the field of intellectual skill development.

Key Terminology: *Intellectual skills, Significant Learning Experience, Fink's Taxonomy, English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book.*

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

H: Hypothesis.

MLS: Modern Languages School.

Q: Question.

QCA: Qualitative Content Analysis.

List of symbols

%: Percent

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Most difficulties are found in the process of learning and teaching because the process consists of the development of new and important skills that can allow students to communicate effectively both inside and outside the classroom. Approaches, techniques and textbook designs are created to make the learning process easier both for teachers and learners.

Success in EFL classes calls for using English as a foreign language in effective activities that propel learners to practise skills of that language properly inside, as well as outside classrooms. As learners develop new knowledge, they also need support in using English in new ways. This offers insights into the challenges and affordances of developing academic English.

The acquisition of academic English is *"probably one of the ways to attain success. Learners cannot function in school setting effectively without it"* (Cummins, 1984: 7). Academic English entails mastery of a writing system, as well as proficiency in reading, speaking, and listening. However, this variety of English entails not just the linguistic dimension, but also cognition. It involves knowing an increased number of language structures and functions as well as promoting learners' cognitive faculties. For instance, learners may think about text in order to interpret it. Teachers in EFL setting make efforts to widen the scope of Academic English by extending the focus of this concept to include helping learners promote a set of language competencies and intellectual skills.

For half a century, teachers have used Bloom's Taxonomy to attain learning goals beyond understanding and remembering. Certainly, this taxonomy has been of great help, yet it does not account for the new types of learning educators today believe are needed. According to DEE Fink, it was this thought that gave birth to a new taxonomy of learning, one that is called a 'Taxonomy of Significant Learning'. In the process of constructing this latter, DEE Fink has defined learning in terms of *"change"* (Fink, 2013: 6). That is, for

learning to take place there must be some kind of change in the learners. *"Significant learning is learning that makes a difference in how people live"* (Fink, 2013: 7). The proposed concept is constituted of six levels of significant learning, which are by no means hierarchical but rather relational and interactive.

In EFL classes, teachers are responsible for promoting intellectual skills in the learners rather than helping them with knowledge acquisition and go from one educational level to the next (Lipman, 2003). Indeed, one of the main responsibilities of EFL teachers is to help learners acquire and develop cognitive skills while learning English. As Mahyuddin et al. (2004: 36) assert that *"there is plenty of room for improvement in incorporating the thinking skills into curricula"*. Accordingly, EFL textbook designers are required to implement textbooks activities that promote intellectual skills.

As defined by Bloom (1956), intellectual skills are the methods an individual can use to evaluate or organize information and data. On the contrary, Gagné (1985: 17) claims that *"intellectual skills involve the procedural knowledge subdivided into different levels of learning"*. That is, he believes it is important to categorize *"humans' learned capabilities that lead to different classes of performance"*. The significance of these classifications is that each level requires specific types of instruction. Also, he suggests that learning tasks for Intellectual Skills, or what he names as *"Procedural Skills"*, can be organized in a hierarchy according to complexity. Gagné (ibid.).

Intellectual skills development is considered as an essential need in English as foreign language settings. Therefore, the use of teaching strategies and practices that positively contribute to the amelioration process of the cognitive faculties is very important and crucial for EFL teachers. However, it is worth mentioning that in the Algerian context, this issue has received little interest, and is mainly limited to the application of Bloom's Taxonomy in developing English learners' critical thinking.

In line with this, works conducted by Alavian, S.J (2013) *The Impact Of Iranian EFL Classroom Activities on the Development of Desired Thinking Process as Suggested by Bloom's Taxonomy*, and Genal Hove (may, 2011) *Developing Critical Thinking Skills in the High English Classrooms*, both reveal the theoretical and pedagogical implications of Bloom's categories as directly manifested in improving critical thinking level of learners. That is, Bloom's Taxonomy levels are practically at the mercy of the cognitive characteristics of the language learners. Moreover, the activities assigned by teachers in EFL classes should nurture and activate students' cognitive abilities.

Alavian's study aimed at examining the quality of the language learning activities present in Iranian English classes via Bloom's Taxonomy of educational objectives. After the analysis of the data obtained through questionnaire and classroom observation data collection tools, the findings have shown a difference between what actually happened in classes and what instructors acclaimed in their answers. That is, they have rarely employed activities at critical thinking levels in EFL classes; what have greatly affected the development of the learners' intellectual processes.

Hove's study was quasi-experimental. It has attempted to examine strategies for enhancing critical thinking skills in high school-ages students. The results have revealed that students of the experimental group were better able to demonstrate critical thinking after having received specific thinking instructions and practices on the basis of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Statement of the Problem

In EFL environment, merely communicating through the target language and mastering that language structures are not enough. Learners are required to resort to their cognitive abilities to expand their learning and make their learning experience meaningful, and more effective.

Developing cognitive skills among learners has been a continuous issue. Despite the role of intellectual skills in language learning and teachers' interests in their development at the level of EFL classrooms, there is only a modest contribution in this context. Hence, there is a dire need for further works on this topic.

Based on researchers' experience such as Smith, and Rebolledo (2018) in teaching English as a foreign language field, they have noticed that most of the instructional activities in which learners are being engaged give prominence mainly to the content knowledge of the target language, while these same activities fail to foster learners' cognitive skills.

Aims and Significance of the Study

The present work intends to evaluate the English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book used at Modern Languages School in relation to intellectual skills development. In order to fulfill the overall aim of the current research, three main objectives have been set respectively. The first objective is to determine whether the upper-intermediate textbook activities engage MLS EFL learners in significant learning experience. The second objective is to see whether these same activities foster learners' cognition. Then, the third objective is to find out MLS English teachers' views towards the effectiveness of the textbook activities intended for upper-intermediate learners in enhancing their intellectual skills.

Systematic implementation and practice of intellectual skills help EFL learners develop habits of mind. Repeated exposure to activities that foster learners' cognition assists them in all academic disciplines and, in the English language learning in particular. Therefore, it is important to design activities that give students opportunities to develop, practice and apply thinking skills on a continuous basis; preferably in a way that starts with small steps and leads actually to larger ones (Fisher, R. 2001). Still, this will not happen easily, but needs to be an integral part of any learning environment and of EFL setting in particular.

Undoubtedly, devoting our study to evaluate textbook strategies used by teachers of English to promote learners' intellectual skills through a divergent taxonomic perspective in Modern Languages School of Tizi-Ouzou would be of great significance. In other words, our research is devoted to scrutinize the classroom activities implemented by MLS teachers so that to develop English upper-intermediate learners' cognitive faculties making use of the Significant Learning Taxonomy proposed by DEE Fink in 2003.

The present study is different from the previously cited ones. It is significant because it is centered on a textbook evaluation. Evaluation is a parcel and a part of education since it provides data that help teachers to identify important educational problems. In any teaching and learning context, textbooks constitute essential material components because of the structure and cohesion they bring to the teaching and learning processes. In fact, textbooks are used in many educational disciplines, and in EFL classes, and have become a vital part in the everyday job of teachers and learners. Therefore, the evaluation of EFL textbooks can be a determining factor in teachers' professional development and educational growth.

In addition, this research is original because it deals with intellectual skills development which is a very important issue mainly in the Algerian spheres. Intellectual skills must be made compulsory in the Algerian education system as without learning these latter, learners may struggle when it comes to real-life responsibilities. It is thus a process which helps learners to build stronger foundations as future academics and professionals. One more advantage of fostering cognitive skills is that it is a basic part of being able to address the difficulties of a regular day to day existence. As the Algerian context is concerned, the dramatic societal and economic changes that occur necessitate the promotion of learners' intellectual processes along their education learning process so that to cope up with the increasing pace and modifications of present-day life.

It is also worth mentioning that few studies, if any have already been conducted, at least, in the English Department of the University of Tizi-Ouzou in the context of intellectual skills development among MLS English learners using DEE Fink's Taxonomy of Significant Learning.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

On the work at hand to have clearly determined objectives; research questions are needed to guide the researcher and rational hypotheses should be suggested. Due to the complexity of the linguistic situation and the growing interests of learning and teaching the English language in Algerian areas, the current study raises three fundamental questions as following:

Q1: Do upper-intermediate textbook activities engage MLS learners in significant learning experience?

Q2: Do EFL activities implemented in English File Upper-intermediate textbook promote learners' cognitive faculties?

Q3: What attitudes do MLS English language teachers hold towards the effectiveness of the upper-intermediate textbook activities in enhancing learners' intellectual skills?

In the attempt to provide answers to the above questions, a number of hypotheses are to be advanced respectively:

H1: The upper-intermediate textbook activities engage MLS learners in significant learning experience.

H2: The activities implemented in upper-intermediate English textbook promote learners' cognitive faculties.

H3: The English teachers support that textbook activities intended for upper-intermediate levels enhance learners' intellectual skills.

Research Techniques and Methodology

Throughout this research, a mixed method approach has been adopted. Questionnaires have been administered to five MLS teachers teaching English to upper-intermediate level. In addition, upper-intermediate English textbook activities have been examined within the same school on the basis of DEE Fink's Taxonomy Verbs. Questionnaires have been designed around the six Significant Learning levels: Foundational Knowledge, Application, Integration, Human Dimension, Caring, and Learning How to Learn. They were then distributed to the targeted English teachers who were explained the aim of collecting information. Respondents were also informed that it was an anonymous questionnaire and most important of all, they were assured that the data would only serve academic purposes.

The quantitative part has been devoted on one hand to process the close-ended questions of the questionnaire and to calculate the percentages of the number of English upper-intermediate textbook activities associated with each of the six significant learning levels using the rule of three. On the other hand, the Taxonomy of Significant Learning was used for the analysis of the English upper-intermediate textbook activities. While the qualitative part, has concerned the interpretation of the open-ended questions through the Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA).

Structure of the Dissertation

The overall structure of this dissertation follows the IMRAD framework, also known as the traditional simple structure. Thus, it consists of a general introduction, four chapters and a general conclusion.

The General Introduction gives the reader an insight about the content and topic of the work. It is followed by a chapter labeled Literature Review in which previous works relating to our topic are reviewed and the theoretical framework presented in details. The second chapter named Research Design describes and explains the methodological procedures of data

collection and data analysis. The Presentation of the Findings is where the results are presented using different tables and pie charts. The fourth chapter is entitled Discussion of the Findings whose aim is to discuss the findings of the investigation so that to check the validity of the suggested hypotheses and give answers to the research questions previously raised.

Finally, this dissertation ends with a General Conclusion. It provides a summary of the different points tackled throughout the research; then hopefully suggests the limitations of the study as well as recommendations for further research within to the same research area.

Introduction

The present chapter intends to present the theoretical foundations of the present research by reviewing the key concepts that will be introduced throughout the dissertation. In addition, the chapter discusses the Significant Learning Taxonomy developed by DEE Fink in 2003.

Seven sections make up the present chapter. The first section explains the value of the English language learning and teaching in the Algerian spheres. The second section introduces the concept of intellectual skills development in EFL classes. Then, the coming section explores the classroom activities that promote intellectual skills among EFL learners. The fourth section consists of an overview of Bloom's Taxonomy as it is the foundation of DEE Fink's Taxonomy. The fifth section tackles the theoretical framework consisting in DEE Fink's Taxonomy. Section six discusses previous works relative to the present research. As for the last section, basic concepts related to evaluation are being dealt with.

1-Importance of English Teaching and Learning in Algerian Spheres

Nowadays, the necessity to know languages is increasingly recognized, as the world joins together in a 'global village'. The role of English is becoming increasingly important. According to Tiersky (2001), English is spoken by about two billion people and is the language of international communication in business, diplomacy, technology, sports, travel and entertainment. Therefore, the teaching of English is becoming a vital part of education all over the world.

In the case of Algeria, the recognition of the growing importance which English, nowadays plays in the world, can be noticed. In 2001, the Ministry of Education declared English teaching as a compulsory course starting from the first year middle school. Yet, being a second foreign language in the Algerian Educational system and due to historical and social reasons, English is primarily learned for educational purposes. It is mostly used in the formal

classroom environment and there are few opportunities, other than in school, to practice it for daily communicative purposes (Bougada, 2016).

The main objective of teaching foreign languages in general, and English in particular is to enable communication in all its forms by developing learners' competencies and skills. The English language has imposed itself as a major means of access to anything that happens around the world, and in every field. Algeria, just like the other countries, considers English *"as a means for knowledge acquisition, scientific progress, and as an opening to the people and culture this foreign language represents"* (Allwright& Bailey, 1991:30). For this reason the two main poles engaged in the teaching and learning process: the teacher and the learner work hand in hand to achieve the required effectiveness.

2- Intellectual Skills Development in EFL Classes

Foreign language learning is *"a different process than acquiring a first language"* (Ur, 1991: 60). Developing the English language proficiency of students helps them achieve high academic outcomes at *"cognitively complex and abstract levels"* (ibid.). Understanding the relationship among concepts helps them grasp more quickly and efficiently perform *"demanding cognitive tasks"* about the content they are learning (ibid.).

Nowadays different methods of teaching are being applied to develop learners' intellectual abilities along with enhancing their English language skills (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). As a result, teachers engage learners in a range of practical activities so that to become aware of their language potential and to improve their cognitive faculties.

EFL learners' intellectual skills are much better promoted in an active classroom environment where *"teachers actually teach them directly and explicitly how to better apply high cognitive skills"* (Chamot, 1995: 16).In fact, providing a learning environment that facilitates the promotion of such skills can be regarded as a crucial aim of education.

Earlier, teachers were at the center of the process and simply transmit their knowledge to students. Today, in contrast, learners are put at the center and the focus is on how *"to develop their different abilities essential for their academic and social success"* (Ennis, 2011:4).

Researchers of the American foundation for Intellectual skills in 2010 argue that *"cognitive processes are not as nature skills as speaking or running. They are a deliberately developed complex set of skills and features which takes years to acquire"* (American Foundation for Intellectual skills, 2010).Similarly, foreign language learning needs years of *"persistent training"* (ibid.). So, practicing both simultaneously saves time and provides a synergy effect: developing the former improves the latter and vice versa.

The application of cognitive skills, results in a well organized communication (Kennedy, Fisher, Ennis, 1991). The promotion of these latter is considered as an essential need for ESL/EFL settings and conducive to the improvement of language learning positive outcomes (Chamot.A, 1995). Thus, the application of teaching methods and techniques that positively contribute to language learners is indispensable for English teachers. That is, teachers need to make use of appropriate classroom strategies so that to facilitate both language learning and foster learners' cognitive skills.

In an article published in Pearson English Journal (2016), Zazulak. S reveals that learning a language makes the brain function better by improving connections among its various parts, which can result in a better assimilation, analysis, and application of new knowledge and facts to solve problems. In this context she declared that *"despite the fact that most learners begin their journey with a new language for tangible and practical benefits, there is a set of significant and pervasive cognitive benefits of language learning"*.

Learning a foreign language plays a principal role in the development of cognitive abilities. It makes EFL learners get out of their comfort zone and challenge their own

perception. Paraphrasing the view of Clark (2004) and Andrea (2012), learners attain language from interaction with other learners and adults, and that language development requires the learning of categories, identification, sorting and memory. *"Knowing more than one language exposes learners to having wider knowledge as every language has something special to offer"* (Schmitt, 2010:15). Hence, second or foreign language learning is strongly interwoven with intellectual skills development (ibid.).

2.1- Concept of Intellectual Skills

Teachers, learners, and people in general have tendency to believe that learning a foreign language is mainly restricted to the mastery of language structure. But *"this simplistic way of addressing such a complex phenomenon as human language learning, fails to recognize the cognitive implications"* (Clark, 2010:2). Developing intellectual skills among EFL learners is knowingly hard and takes time. As emphasized by Benjamin Bloom in his Taxonomy of educational objectives: the classification of educational goals published in 1956, developing cognitive faculties must be seen as a process, moving from simplest activities to more complex assignments.

Intellectual skills refer to an individual's ability to gain meaning from their experiences. They involve the capacity to think, recall and process information, solve problems, and understand the world around them. Intellectual skills are associated with quality thinking and, if sufficiently developed, provide learners with a more skillful way of communicating with other people, acquiring knowledge, and processing data.

The concept of Intellectual skills is merely associated to the six categories of cognitive domain which require both convergent thinking (low order thinking) and divergent thinking (high order thinking). *"Students need all of these Intellectual Skills to acquire and apply both general and specialized knowledge"* (Lumina Foundation, 2011:8).

3- Classroom Activities

In order to achieve positive educational objectives, classroom activities are the paramount part of teaching. The active role of both teachers and learners in conducting these latter is vital. Classroom activities may be of various types and may require students to receive or produce messages (Chastain, 1988). Learning requires both teacher and peer interactions in promoting the level of the classroom activities. For instance, instead of a simple memorization of sample conversation, learners may try to create a conversation themselves and perform it in peers/ small/ large groups.

Classroom activities are the teaching strategies which prepare learners to successfully complete the assessment of the learning process. According to DEE Fink (2002) classroom activities should be directed to stimulate active learning such as discussion, or problem solving, which promote analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of class content. To Chastain (1988), activities related to learners' lives open better opportunities and enhance their classroom engagement. That is, teachers are recommended to select activities which best reflect what learners are interested in learning about and how they wish to learn. The idea is that *"if learners fail to see the relationship between the activity and the world they live in, then the point of the activity is likely to be lost on them"* (Chambers, 1999: 37).

Implementing activities to reach significant learning objectives requires a change in students' roles. DEE Fink (2002) refers to significant activities as those in which learners are actively involved in getting information from different sources, exploring the content and language, and reflecting on the learning process so that to reach the intended learning goals. In 1999, DEE Fink offered a model of active learning which suggests that all learning activities involve some kind of experience or some kind of dialogue. The two main kinds of dialogue are 'dialogue with the self' and 'dialogue with others'. The two main kinds of experience are 'observing' and 'doing'. Active learning involves students in course material

through carefully constructed activities. It is about learning through doing, performing, and taking action. *"With meaningful topics and activities, students can interact, exchange, and negotiate messages while working together and learning about each other"* (Hudelson, 1991, as cited in Bourke, 2006: 279).

Moreover, Williams and Burden (1997) highlight collaboration, interaction and discussion as authentic activities since students' ideas and opinions arise from real-life contexts and can be transferred to new learning situations. So, for significant learning experiences, the key is integrating learning to the students' context and letting them apply what they learn to other situations. This opinion coincides with DEE Fink (2003) in that together teachers help learners develop awareness of the learning experiences purposes beyond the classroom and of themselves.

Therefore, intellectual skills within EFL classes can be promoted by teachers and learners performing classroom activities implemented during the teaching and learning process.

4- Learning Taxonomies

4.1- Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives

This is the most common and earliest taxonomy originally proposed by Benjamin Bloom in 1956. The taxonomy has three main domains: affective, psychomotor, and cognitive which has received most attention.

This taxonomy is composed of six hierarchical categories that capture the process of learning: Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation.

4.1.1- Bloom's Taxonomy Revised

The original version of the Educational Objectives Taxonomy was adapted by Anderson et al. in 2001 to reflect contemporary understanding of how students learn. The revisions they made appear fairly minor, but have great impact on how people use the

Taxonomy. It comprises: Remembering, Understanding, Applying, Analyzing, Evaluating, and Creating Levels.

4.1.2- Bloom's Taxonomy in Education as the Foundation of DEE Fink's Taxonomy

Bloom's taxonomy is extremely important in the context of education. It is significant because it lays out a framework for understanding the different levels of learning. According to Bloom (1956) students must master lower levels of learning before they can attempt more complicated tasks. For example, before teachers engage students in the application of some facts, they need to make them gain knowledge and understanding of a given idea. In other words, Bloom's Taxonomy shows the order in which teachers must teach students so that they can reach the high levels of thinking they want them to achieve.

Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) is the inaugural Taxonomy which has shown how educational outcomes rise through six different ordered levels of learning ranging from simple to complex by the aim of creating effective and engaging learning experiences (DEE Fink 2013). This Taxonomy has been used for so long, and has been greatly influential to the elaboration of other learning Taxonomies.

DEE Fink (2003) has elaborated the Taxonomy of Significant Learning Experience to go beyond Bloom's cognitive aspect and include other aims of teaching. Both taxonomies have started with the foundational knowledge necessary for deeper learning, and which allows teachers to determine the type of thinking they want students to be doing, yet DEE Fink (2013:34) claims that

> Individuals and organizations involved in higher education are expressing a need for important kinds of learning that do not emerge easily from the Bloom Taxonomy...kinds that go well beyond the cognitive domain of Bloom's Taxonomy.

4.2- DEE Fink's Taxonomy

DEE Fink Taxonomy includes six kinds of Significant Learning: Foundational Knowledge, Application, Integration, Human Dimension, Caring, Learning to Learn.

▪ This Taxonomy will be explored in details in the coming section.

5- Theoretical Framework

There is no question about the value of what Bloom and his associates accomplished by creating the Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. However, individuals and organizations involved in higher education are expressing a need for important kinds of learning that do not emerge from Bloom's Taxonomy. This suggests that the time may have assisted to establish a new and broader Taxonomy of Significant Learning (DEE Fink, 2013).

DEE Fink's Taxonomy, also known as the Taxonomy of Significant Learning, is not hierarchical but interactive. DE Fink (2013) explains that each kind of learning can stimulate other kinds of learning. Additionally, it goes beyond cognitive processes and includes other goals of teaching. Significant Learning Taxonomy includes six kinds of significant learning, each of which contains a number of more specific kinds of learning that are related in some way and has a distinct value for the learner.

Significant Learning is any learning of one or more of the following kinds of learning. And the more these kinds of learning occur, the more significant the learning experience is (DEE Fink, 2013). In fact, the most significant kind of learning experience is one in which learners achieve all six kinds of significant learning, respectively:

▪ **Foundational Knowledge:** this level focuses on the ability to understand and remember specific information and ideas. The objective of this first kind of learning is to have the learners understand and remember important concepts, facts, terminology, and principles for example about science, history, literature, and others. *"It provides the basic foundation that is necessary for other kinds of learning, since it encompasses all of the content and*

information that teachers want learners to know and acquire" (DEE Fink, 2013:34-35).

Application: this level determines if the learners can apply what they have learned. It includes developing certain skills and/or learning how to process complex tasks and assignments. That is *"it helps students to engage in some kinds of action, which may be Intellectual, physical, or social"* (DEE Fink, 2013:35). Application includes useful skills instructors believe learners should develop, mainly how to engage in various kinds of thinking including: practical thinking, critical thinking, and creative thinking, *"developing certain skills such as communication or playing the piano, or learning how to manage complex projects"* (ibid.).

- **Practical thinking:** students apply what they have learned in answering questions, making decisions, and solving problems. For example, when teachers say, *"Here is a common situation in which you have these choices. What choice or decision should you make?" they are asking students to engage in practical thinking"* (DEE Fink, 2013:48);

- **Critical thinking:** refers to the process of analyzing and evaluating something. Teachers expect their learners to engage in and improve their ability to assess, explain, interpret and predict. For example, *"when Literature teachers ask students to interpret a novel, they want them to analyze and evaluate the novel in terms of various aspects: plot development, the portrayal of characters, the climax, and so on"* (DEE Fink, 2013:46);

- **Creative thinking:** occurs when a learner imagines and creates new ideas, design or product. *"Teachers help learners to think outside the box to develop new perspectives or to devise new solutions to old problems"*. For instance, *"teachers who teach humanities encourage students to find new forms and styles for expressing themselves in painting, writing, music, and other media. When this happens, they are encouraging their students to engage in creative thinking"* (DEE Fink, 2013:48).

- **Integration:** allows learners to develop intellectual power because they are able to understand the connections between two or more concepts and ideas. It is also about making links between various learning experiences: *"between courses or whole disciplines, between school and work, or between school and everyday life"* (DEE Fink, 2013:36).

- **Human Dimension:** this latter is about establishing effective working relationships with others. It entails two concepts:

  - **Personal Dimension (self):** gives opportunities to students to learn something important about themselves so that to have a better understanding of their own self. It enables them *"to function and interact more effectively"* (DEE Fink, 2013: 36);

  - **Social Dimension (others):** this helps learners to better understand and interact with others either in the classroom environment or in real-life environment. They discover the social implications of what they have learned. For example, *"how and why others act the way they do or how to interact more effectively with others"* (DEE Fink, 2013: 36). In other words, learners have to be aware of the human significance of what they are learning.

- **Caring:** the aim of this level is to change the degree to which learners care about something. This may be reflected in the development of new feelings, interests or values after a learning experience. It helps students achieve high standards for themselves since *"they have the energy they need for learning more and make it part of their lives"* (DEE Fink, 2013: 36).

- **Learning How to Learn:** This level enables them to learn something about the process of learning itself and how to become more effective in learning situations. That is, learners learn how to be self-regulated (disciplined) learners. This last kind of learning gives

learners chances *"on how to become better students, how to engage in a particular kind of inquiry such as the scientific method"* (DEE Fink, 2013: 36).

5.1- DEE Fink's Taxonomy Verbs for the Aspects of Learning

There are action verbs associated with different types of learning relating to the six aspects of learning from DEE Fink's Taxonomy. Learning outcomes should be formulated with verbs that are related to the different types of learning EFL teachers want their learners to achieve.

The table bellow contains two columns: the first column lists the six Dimensions of Learning developed by DEE Fink in his Taxonomy of Significant Learning (2003), while the second column contains Action Verbs for each level.

Learning Dimensions	Action Verbs
Foundational Knowledge	Associate- compare- define- describe- contrast- explain- repeat- illustrate- recite- tell- restate- name- give examples- remember.
Application	Analyze- assess- classify- deduce- examine- infer distinguish- interpret- organize- determine- discuss- hypothesize- predict- answer- advise- choose- circle- evaluate- justify- solve- suggest- debate- test- propose- diagnose- prove- judge- give evidence- decide- check- describe- adapt- create- compose- construct- discover- design- fabricate- imagine- refine- reform- experiment- write- theorize- think.
Integration	Combine- connect- integrate- correlate- link- relate- synthesize- join- associate- match- complete- concept map.
Human Dimension	Behave- collaborate- communicate- cooperate- initiate- help- express- involve- reflect- share- negotiate- respond- inspire- interact- mediate.
Caring	Agree to- develop- discover- explore- value- demonstrate- state- renew interest- take time to- recognize.
Learning How to Learn	Construct knowledge about- develop a learning plan- inquire- research- self-assess- identify sources and resources- construct knowledge about.

5.2- Teaching and Learning Strategies for Each Learning Dimension

DEE Fink (2013) encouraged teachers to create learning goals based on his taxonomy of Significant Learning Experience. It is crucial for teachers to communicate effectively about educational objectives to learners, colleagues, and others in education. When teachers identify

and communicate clear learning objectives, they explicitly communicate that there is a focus for the learning activities to come. This reassures students that there is a reason for learning and provides teachers with a main point for planning instruction (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

Significant Learning Taxonomy enables the design of a course based on objectives as well as measurement of changes in domains of advanced learning. Therefore, to consider and extend academic outcomes, it is important to keep classroom activities aligned with the general model provided by DEE Fink for each of the six Significant Learning types established within his Taxonomy.

As explained in the previous sections classroom activities are very beneficial and vital for the development of learners' intellectual skills and effective promotion of their academic outcomes. In the table bellow a list of useful classroom activities is presented on the basis of DEE Fink's Taxonomy.

The type of Significant Learning	Suggested Classroom Strategies
Foundational Knowledge	Presentations-pair/small/large group discussions- games- reading for details- teaching others- choral repetitions.
Application	Video demonstration- role-play- Problem-solving- brainstorming- projects- guided-practices- decision making.
Integration	Multiple examples within and cross contexts- comparisons and contrasts- what if…- model building -question-answers.
Human Dimension	Case study- authentic project presentations- group projects- debates- journal clubs (using ethics, articles)- working in groups- reflective writing.
Caring	Role modeling- self-selection activity- critical reviews.
Learning How to Learn	Self-assessments- self/peer feedback- formative assessments.

6- Reporting on Previous Works

The increasing complexity of work and social life demands that people possess conceptual understanding and intellectual skills in order to gain the desired level of competence. Unfortunately, the development of intellectual skills is a complex task that has not been sufficiently addressed in education (Johnson, 1997). This section reports the different studies that have been conducted by the purpose of examining the effectiveness of

promoting learners' intellectual skills within foreign or second language learning setting. All of the following works have attempted to bridge the gap between learning English as a foreign or second language and the development of learners' cognitive processes.

Intellectual Skills in Higher Education is one of the prominent writings that contributed a lot to the issue of the importance of intellectual skills development. This article has been written by Janet G. Donald in the Canadian Journal of High Education in 1985. Throughout this article, Janet has targeted the issue of how the process of thinking and Intellectual skills are taught and learned in post secondary institutions. To get reliable results, she has analyzed and compared different meta-cognitive and cognitive approaches to Intellectual skills in EFL environment.

The research has uncovered the learning tasks and the kind of learning students would need to be successful in different courses. Moreover, the study has allowed finding out that both thinking and intellectual skills could be taught in terms of representative set of elements and relations, implementing appropriate classroom tasks, and making learners engaged in effective assignments that demand cognitive operations. For example, the knowledge structure of a course not only reveals the elements that are necessary for the intellectual skills of comprehension and analysis, but also suggests what kind of categories or inferences must be learned in order to process this knowledge. Indeed, considering students as active poles rather than passive information storers is vital in increasing the level of effectiveness in colleges and universities (Bonwell&Eison, 1991).

In addition, in 1961 Furth, H.G published an article in the Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, under the title of *The Influence of Language on the Development of Concept Formation in Deaf Children.* In his work, Furth has attempted to isolate the effect of language development on the development of thinking by the purpose of finding out the correlation between language and Intellectual skills promotion. Children between seven and

twelve years old, who have been deaf since an early age, have been assessed with three tasks on conceptual functioning. Their results have then been compared to that of comparable group of 'hearers'. The results have indicated that the inability to verbalize interfere with the effective processing of cognitive faculties. In this regard, it is important to consider language competencies as one of the most significant and influential parameters in developing students' intellectual skills in their educational process. That is, language and cognition are interwoven since along the learning process, schools foster learners' cognitive development. In fact, teachers do not just teach learners a list of facts; they also teach them how to process these latter. Therefore, the interactions and talks that take place in EFL classrooms are the raw material for learners' brains.

There are many academic benefits of learning a foreign or second language; also it provides intellectual outcomes to learners. Indeed, learners of a second language are likely to be expert problem-solvers and creative thinkers. Their brains experience a constant mental workout as they sort out through more than one language which one to communicate with and when. Researchers in the 20th century have found that in addition to this, bilingual learners are better at planning, concentrating, and multi-tasking (ERTHEO Journal, 2020).Bilingual learners have better chances to develop coping strategies that accelerate cognitive development. In line with this, a study conducted by Ben-Zeer. S in 1977, _Learning a Second Language May Improve cognitive Development and Abilities,_ has revealed despite the fact that second or foreign language learners' had a lower vocabulary, they demonstrated advanced processing ability. That is, there is a positive interrelation between proficiency in a foreign or second language and cognitive performance. Peal and Lambert (1962) have provided evidence that bilingualism could have a positive effect on cognitive processes. They demonstrated that bilinguals generally delivered significant superior performance relative to monolingual on both verbal and non-verbal tasks. They have argued that bilinguals develop

superior flexibility and concept formation abilities in order to switch between languages, and that these well-developed abilities then serve to an increase in various cognitive abilities (Bain, 1974; Kharkhurin, 2008).

Moreover, there is a great distinction between teachers' and students' perspectives on what the important skills are for foreign language learning. This has motivated Ikuko Yoshida in 2010 to investigate on the question. In his research paper *Teacher vs. Student: the Perspectives on Cognitive Skills in Foreign Language Learning,* Yoshida has discussed the importance of cognitive skills in foreign language learning. Furthermore, he has provides a modal to guide students develop intellectual skills while learning Japanese by giving sample lesson plans from a Japanese course. The study has revealed an enormous gap between students' and teachers' perspectives on the skills in order to effectively acquire a second language. Another interesting finding was that students differentiate between the skills which are essential to improve foreign language learning, and the skills to succeed in other disciplines.

Several other studies have attempted to provide answers to the question of the importance of promoting cognitive skills along with students' language skills in foreign or second language learning environment. Yet, the urge behind the current study is to argue for the strategies that develop intellectual skills in EFL classes.

7- Evaluation Defined

Evaluation plays an important role in the teaching-learning process. It helps both poles: teachers and learners to improve in the teaching and learning process since it is considered as *"the systematic collection and interpretation of evidence leading as a part of process to a judgment of value with a view of action"* (Beeby, 1977: 19). In teaching, it is concerned with assessing the effectiveness of teaching strategies, techniques, and methods. As

long as learning is concerned, evaluation contributes to formulating educational objectives, designing learning experiences, and assessing learners' performances.

Evaluation is an essential component of teaching and learning in general and of EFL in particular. It is a procedure or method of knowing whether or not the teaching and learning processes have been done effectively and properly by determining whether the materials, the teaching and learning strategies and techniques are in line with the desired objectives.

Evaluation is the process of examining a program or a process so that to figure out what is working and what is not. It determines *"the value of learning and training programs and acts as blueprints for judgment and improvement."* (Rossett & Sheldon, 2001: 67).

Moreover, Richards (2002:77) considers evaluation as

> The systematic collection and analysis of all relevant information is necessary to promote the improvement of a curriculum, and assess its effectiveness and efficiency, as well as the participants' attitudes within the context of the particular institution involved.

Therefore, it can be taken that the primary focus of an evaluation is to determine whether the goals and objectives of a curriculum language program, for example, are being achieved. That is whether the program is effective. In addition, evaluation is concerned with how teachers and learners perceive that program.

- **Types of Evaluation**

Evaluation can be classified into five categories according to the purposes for evaluating:

- **Formative Evaluation:** is a method for judging the worth of a program. It is intended to gather information that can be used to foster development and improvement within an ongoing activity. It helps determine the modifications that are to be made in order to allow learners to successfully acquire the planned skills and knowledge, and attain the desired learning outcomes (Patricks. K, 2018).

- **Summative Evaluation:** is used to assess whether the results of the object being evaluated meet the stated goals. It occurs at the end of a program to provide an overall

assessment of its effectiveness. That is, summative evaluation seeks to determine whether the program is to be continued, replicated or curtailed (Clark, 2015).

- **Process Evaluation:** determines whether a training program and its activities have been implemented as set. This type of evaluation is as the name implies, about the processes involved in delivering the program. It focuses on how this latter (program) actually functions and assesses its materials and activities (TSNE MissionWorks, 2018).

- **Outcome Evaluation:** measures a program effects on learning by assessing the learning objectives (outcome) that the program was intended to achieve. Essentially, they determine what the participants were able to do as a result of the training. Outcome evaluation focuses on the changes in knowledge, attitude, and behaviors that resulted from program's activities (TSNE MissionWorks, 2018).

- **Impact Evaluation:** provides information about the impacts (positive/negative; direct/indirect) produced by a given program. This means that, an impact evaluation establishes what has been the impact's cause of the program being evaluated (Peersman, 2015).

- **Textbook Evaluation**

Textbook are the main sources that can convey knowledge and information to learners in an easy and organized way. It has been agreed that textbooks are of great value in the process of teaching and learning. Sheldon, (1988: 237) claim that textbooks *"represent the visible heart of any EFL program."* This view stresses the importance of judicious selection and evaluation of textbooks.

Textbook evaluation is very important in the teaching, and learning processes in general and in the teaching of English, because it not only provides useful information for teachers, but also plans learning settings for learners. In line with this, Hutchinson and Waters (1987: 37-38) writes that

> Material evaluation plays such an important role in language teaching that its potential for influencing the way teachers operate is considerable. Material evaluation can and should be a two-way process which enables teachers not just to select a textbook, but also to develop their awareness of their own teaching and learning situations.

Tomlinson (2003: 15) defines textbook evaluation as *"a procedure that involves measuring the value of a set of learning materials".* Moreover, Hutchinson and Waters (1987: 97) consider textbook evaluation as *"a basically straightforward analytical matching: matching needs to available solutions."*

As a matter of fact, the study on hand aims at outcome evaluating the activities implemented in the English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book in term of EFL upper-intermediate learners' cognitive skills development.

As this textbook evaluation is concerned, the outcome evaluation in relied on so that to shed light upon the role of the textbook activities under study in developing intellectual skills among MLS upper-intermediate learners. In other words, how these activities make essential changes in learners' cognitive processes in relation to DEE Fink's Significant Learning Levels.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the theoretical foundations of the present study have been presented. It has encompassed seven sections. The first section has explained the value of the English language learning and teaching in the Algerian spheres. The second section has introduced the concept of intellectual skills development in EFL classes. Then, the third section has explored the classroom activities that help the promotion of intellectual skills among EFL learners. The fourth section has been devoted to an overview of Bloom's Taxonomy. The fifth section has presented devoted the theoretical framework consisting in DEE Fink's Taxonomy. The sixth section has discussed previous works in the research area. Finally, the last section has tackled basic concepts related to evaluation.

Chapter II: Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the methodology that has been used in this study. It describes the techniques and procedures of data collection and data analysis. It is divided into four sections. The first section is entitled Procedures of Data Collection. It provides the type of research methods used in this research; followed by the description of the context and sample population. The second section is named Procedures of Data Analysis. It offers an overview on the methods used in data processing. The third section concerns the content and structure of the upper-intermediate English textbook. As for the last section, it concerns the limitations that have been encountered during the investigation.

1-Procedures of Data Collection

1.1-Data Gathering Tool

The current research has adopted a mixed method research so that to provide answers to the questions and to confirm the hypotheses raised in the introduction. Two data gathering tools were relied on: content analysis of English File Upper-Intermediate Students' Book activities and teachers' questionnaire. The objective of choosing these instruments depends on the overall aim of the research which is evaluating the activities implemented in upper-intermediate English textbook in developing learners' intellectual skills, besides of the teachers' attitudes towards these latter.

1.1.1-Content Analysis

In this section, some explanations have been provided about the research technique that has been used of which is content analysis. The latter is defined by Holsti as *"an objective, systematic, and quantitative way of describing any type of content. The content can be categorized into statistical data which in turn are summarized and compared so as to provide answers to research questions"* (Holsti, 1969:2-3). Also, ibid. (ibid: 4-5) claims that *"content analysis is required to follow three qualities which are: objectivity, systemacity, and*

generality". The first quality means the steps which the researcher formulated should be explicit so that the obtained data or findings reduce the researcher's subjective opinions. By following these norms, other codes will help to reach the same results or conclusions. The second quality concerns the researcher's focus on rules and procedures. The final quality, which is generality, is about the relevance of the theoretical studies. Moreover, Weber (1990) suggests that content analysis involves an important step which is the categorization and classification process through which the investigator transforms the text into numerical data under different categories.

In an attempt to explore the effectiveness of the upper-intermediate English textbook used in Modern Languages School in Algeria in promoting learners' Intellectual skills, a content analysis has been conducted on the activities implemented in this same book on the basis of DEE Fink's Significant Learning Taxonomy in 2003. In other words, this research examines twenty activities selected randomly within the ten teaching units of the EFL textbook English File Upper-Intermediate Students' Book so that to figure out how these latter help develop learners' cognitive processes in EFL classrooms.

1.1.2-Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a set of systematically structured questions used by the researcher to gather both qualitative and quantitative data. According to Wallace (1998:59) a questionnaire *"is a set of questions to be answered by a number of people so that information about these people which is of interest to the researcher can be discovered. Questionnaires are usually answered in writing, but may also be answered in interaction"*. Questionnaires are important data collection instruments, they consist in a set of questions or items, which allow researchers to elicit answers from their participants, thus to collect considerable amounts of data in a short period of time (Dorney, 2003). Furthermore, according to Brown (2001: 6) *"questionnaires are series of written questions or statements, to which respondents*

react either by answering in their own words, by yes or no or by selecting from possibilities provided by the researcher". There are three types of questionnaires which are: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured. The structured questionnaire includes questions where the respondents are not free to answer. In the unstructured one, they are not controlled and are provided with open-ended questions. The semi-structured questionnaire involves both open-ended and close-ended questions. It is the one that has been relied on in this research.

In order to collect further data on the issue addressed in this investigation and achieve its purpose, a semi-structured questionnaire as an instrument to collect information has been designed around the six Significant Learning levels: Foundational Knowledge, Application, Integration, Human Dimension, Caring, and Learning How to Learn. The questionnaire entails fifteen questions which are of different types; true/false, yes/no, open-ended, and multiple choice arranged in two sections. The first section is entitled **"Profile of the Participants"**; it includes three questions targeting information about the MLS English teachers. As for the second section, it is called **"Teachers' attitudes towards English File Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities"**. It is made up of twelve questions. The questionnaire has been administered to five teachers who teach English to upper-intermediate level at MLS so that to gather data about the effective role the activities implemented in English File Upper-intermediate textbook play in developing learners' cognitive faculties.

▪ **Setting and Participants**

The study on hand has been conducted in Modern Languages School which is a private language school at Rue des Frères Belhadj, Quartier 'B' Nouvelle-Ville, Tizi-Ouzou. The subjects have consisted of five teachers of English of different ages who teach or have taught the upper-intermediate level within this school.

2-Procedures of Data Analysis

The collected data in the present research have been analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative part has been devoted on one hand to process the close-ended questions of the questionnaire and to calculate the percentages of the textbook activities as well as the percentages of the teaching and learning strategies, and taxonomy verbs associated with each of the six significant learning levels using the rule of three. On the other hand, the Taxonomy of Significant Learning (2003) was used for the analysis of the English upper-intermediate textbook activities on the basis of DEE Fink's Teaching and Learning Strategies, and Taxonomy Verbs. The qualitative part has concerned the interpretation of the open-ended questions of the questionnaire through the Qualitative Content Analysis. QCA has received many definitions; Hsieh and Shannon have described it as *"a research method for subjective interpretation of the content of the text data through systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns"* (2005:2). Accordingly, QCA has been adopted in this research in order to categorize correspondents' answers to the open-ended questions of the questionnaire so that to interpret MLS teachers' attitudes towards English File Upper-intermediate textbook activities in promoting learners' intellectual skills.

3-Description of the Upper-intermediate English Textbook

English File Upper-intermediate Student's Book Third Edition, provides a package for students to use both inside and outside of the classroom. The course follows a four-skills syllabus, and provide learners opportunities to be engaged with English language and culture. English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book offers support for teachers and students, and gives them a 21st century learning experience: clearly presented language input; motivating topics; contextualized activities and exercises that practice language.

3.1-Details of the Textbook

- **Format:** Mixed media product/167pages ;

- **Dimensions:** 221x276x10mm/484g;

- **Publication date:** February 26, 2015;

- **Publisher:** Oxford University Press;

- **Publication City/Country:** Oxford, UK;

- **Language:** English;

- **Edition Statement:** 3rdEd.

3.2-Key features of the Textbook

- **Super-flexible package** provides everything needed for both inside and outside the classroom.

- Improved texts and listening that **motivate students to talk.**

- **Four-skills syllabus** with a clear focus on **pronunciation,** Grammar Bank exercises for practice and activation of **Grammar.**

- **'Real-world'** listening and videos filmed on location (London, New York)

- **Oxford Online Skills Program** offers students targeted and motivating practice to improve the four language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking)

- **Progress tests** for each File with clear signposting to additional related practice and reference.

3.3-Structure and Content of the Textbook

English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book Third Edition has been published in 2014 by the Oxford University Press, UK. The format of the front cover falls under two types combining both the linguistic and visual components. It consists of the title 'English File Upper-intermediate Student's Book' which is written in bold form and it also contains other related information about the textbook. While the back cover is all in white.

English File Upper-intermediate textbook comprises 167 pages. The first page consists of the title, the names of the designers and the publisher. Pages two and three show the *'contents'* with distinct teaching units. Pages 104-112 are entitled *'Communication'* which consists of extra activities so that to get students talks. Pages 113-119 are advocated mainly to the writing skill. Pages 120-131 are named *'Listening'*. This part summarizes the listening passages that are comprised in the textbook. Pages: 132- 151; 152-163; 164-167 consist of *'Grammar Bank'*; *'Vocabulary Bank'*; and *'Irregular verbs* and *Sound Bank'*. These parts present a summary of the grammar; the terminology; and the English sounds that have been taught in the syllabus.

English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book is composed of ten (10) units which revolve around specific themes. Each unit consists of two parts 'A' and 'B' respectively: 1.A. Questions and Answers, 1.B. Do you believe in it; 2.A.Call the doctor, 2.B. Older and wiser; 3.A. The truth about air travel; 3.B. Incredibly short stories; 4.A. Eco-guilt, 4.B. Are you a risk taker; 5.A. The survivors' club; 5.B. It drives me mad; 6.A. Music and emotion, 6.B. Sleeping beauty; 7.A. Don't argue, 7.B. Actors acting; 8.A. Beat the robbers…and the burglars, 8.B. Breaking news; 9.A. Truth and lies, 9.B. Megacities; 10.A. The dark side of the moon; 10.B. The power of words.

Each 'English File Upper-intermediate' teaching unit covers reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills with a clear focus on pronunciation and grammar. Also, each two units are followed by Colloquial English which discusses different topics and Revise and Check sequences. Furthermore, the textbook is full of attractive captions, drawings, and pictures.

4-Limitations

It is worth mentioning that a number of hardships have been encountered while conducting this investigation. First, there have been some factors beyond the will of the

researcher that shaped the choice of the data collection instruments. Classroom observations were to be conducted instead of the content analysis so that to collect information on the issue under study. Also, the circumstances the country has gone through because of the spreading of the pandemic 'Covid-19' (Corona Virus) have made the administration of the questionnaires difficult to the teachers who were unreachable online. These latter may have affected the reliability of the results obtained within the present study since the reliance has been mainly on participants' sayings, not on what really has taken place in Modern Languages School Upper-intermediate EFL/ESL classes.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the methodology employed in the current investigation. First, it has described the procedures through which data have been collected. Then, the second section has introduced the data analysis tools that have been relied on in the data and corpus processing. The third section has dealt with the description of the English textbook used by upper-intermediate learners at Modern Languages School. The last section has been concerned with the limitations faced while conducting the research.

Introduction

The present chapter is concerned with the presentation of the findings of this research. It comprises two sections. The first section represents the results obtained from the analysis of the English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book activities according to the theoretical foundations used in the present investigation. The second section displays the results obtained from the respondents' answers to the questionnaire. The data have been collected and analyzed to investigate the effectiveness of the activities implemented in the English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book in promoting learners' intellectual skills, and to figure out MLS teachers' attitudes towards these latter.

1- Analysis of the English File Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities According to DEE Fink's Taxonomy (2003)

After having analyzed the twenty randomly selected activities within the upper-intermediate students' book used in Modern Languages School in Tizi-Ouzou, Algeria, the findings are displayed and classified in the form of tables in relation to DEE Fink's Significant Learning Experience (2003).

1.1-English File Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities in Relation to DEE Fink's Teaching and Learning Strategies, and Taxonomy Verbs

The type of Significant Learning Level	The English File Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities	DEE Fink's Teaching and Learning Strategies	Teaching and Learning Strategies Percentages	Taxonomy Verbs used within the Textbook Activities
Foundational Knowledge	**4f p9** Repeat the dialogue with a partner, copying the rhythm and intonation.	**Choral repetition:** students are asked to play out the dialogue in pairs, with a clear focus on rhythm and intonation (Pronunciation).	**10%**	**Repeat**

	1b p54 Listen then repeat the words?	**Choral repetition:** Students are individually asked to read out loud the words they have listened to so that to master their pronunciation.		**Repeat**
	5ap16 Look at the title of the article. How would you define a hypochondriac? What do you think a 'cyberchondriac' is?	**Reading for details:** Students are asked to define 'hypochondriac' using only the article's title, Then, they are asked to guess the definition of 'cyberchondriac' using this latter.	**10%**	**Define**
	5c p60 Read the newspaper article about Robert Wood. Remember any of the details about him?	**Reading for details:** Students are asked to read the article and memorize the specific details mentioned about the personality Robert Wood.		**Remember**
	1c p29 In groups, explain where the bold adverbs should go in these sentences?	**Group-discussion:** Students are asked to place the adverbs within each sentence in the right position.	**10%**	**Explain**
	5cp101 You are going to give a five-minute presentation to other students. Tell what you are	**Group-discussion:** In groups,students are asked to make a speech in front of other		**Tell**

	going to talk about?	students about a topic of their choice.		
Application	**1b p18** In pairs or small groups, discuss the questions 1, 2, 3 below?	**Problem-solving:** Students are asked to provide answers to the questions through pairs or small groups negotiation of meanings.	**10%**	**Discuss**
	1ap94 With a partner discuss the statements below: are they facts or myths?	**Problem-solving:** Students are asked to identify whether the statements are facts or myths through pairs negotiation of meanings.		**Discuss**
	3ap65 In your experience, determine what do couples typically argue about?	**Decision-making:** Students are asked to elaborate an essay in which they rely on their personal or others experiences so that to innumerate the reasons that make couples argue about.	**20%**	**Determine**
	1bp34 read the introduction to the article and check what 'eco-guilty' means?	**Decision-making:** Students are asked to define the term 'eco-guilt' relying on what they have read in the introduction of		**Check**

		the article.		
	1ap68 Read the introduction to Howard Schatz's book. Then choose a, b, or c.	**Decision-making:** students are asked to make use of the article's introduction in order to complete the activity and choose the appropriate answers.		**Choose**
	5ap91 Circle the correct form of the uncountable plural nouns in the sentences below?	**Decision-making:** students are asked to make use of the article's extract in order to choose appropriate answers from the suggested ones a, b, or c.		**Circle**
	6 p44 Write an article about how to keep safe?	**Guided-practice:** Students are asked to compose an article in which they argue about how people can keep safe in dangerous situations.	20%	**Write**
	2ap85 Look at the ad for mascara. The ad campaign for this product was withdrawn because it was misleading. Think about the reasons that have caused that?	**Guided-practice:** Students are asked to write an article in which they explain the reasons why the mascara campaign was misleading. This activity requires		**Think**

		on the part of students to brainstorm their brains.		
	1ap38 Imagine you had a dream where you were standing on the edge of a precipice. Tell what sort of dream would it be?	**Guided-practice:** Students are individually asked to produce a dissertation in which they describe their imaginary dreams.		**Imagine**
	4ap80 Read the extract from 24 Hours in Journalism. Choose the best options a, b, or c to complete the gaps.	**Guided-practice:** students are asked to make use of what they have learned about uncountable plural nouns in order to choose the appropriate form in each sentence.		**Choose**
	6ap26 Read a newspaper article about an incident that happened during a flight. Describe and act out what happened?	**Role-play:** Students are asked to read an article about a flight incident so that to give a detailed description and narration of the events which have occurred. Students are then asked to act out the scene.	05%	**Describe**
Integration	**1bp4** Read the interview and match question A-G with their answers.	**Question-answers:** Students are asked to choose appropriate answers to	10%	**Match**

		questions A-G from the suggested list of answers. **Question-answers:** Students are asked to combine each sentence to another sentence so that to get coherent ones.		**Match**
	5bp51 Match each sentence from (a) to a sentence below?			
Human Dimension	**1d p74** Negotiate about the questions below so that to make a coherent essay?	**Reflective writing:** Students are asked to provide answers to the questions through pairs or small groups negotiation of meanings.	**05%**	**Negotiate**
Caring	/	/	/	/
Learning How to Learn	/	/	/	/

Table 01: DEE Fink's Teaching and Learning Strategies, and Taxonomy Verbs Used in

English File Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities.

From table 01, it can be noticed that upper-intermediate learners are actively engaged in authentic activities so that to learn the desired course content and to be able to create significant learning experiences.

This table also shows that the activities implemented in the English File Upper-intermediate students' book make use of the different teaching and learning strategies as suggested by DEE Fink in his book Creating Significant Learning Experience (2013).

In addition, it displays a classification of the twenty randomly selected activities from the English File Upper-intermediate textbook used in Modern Languages School according

the action verbs associated with the six significant learning levels developed by DEE Fink in the Taxonomy of Significant Learning (2003).

Accordingly, it can be clearly noticed that the activities implemented in the upper-intermediate textbook put emphasis mainly on the four first dimensions of significant learning, namely: Foundational Knowledge, Application, Integration, and Human Dimension.

1.2- Textbook Activities Percentages for the Significant Learning Levels

The rule of three has permitted to calculate the percentages of the activities associated with each learning dimension. Table 02 below illustrates the distribution of the English File Upper-intermediate textbook activities regarding the six significant learning levels.

Learning Levels	Foundational Knowledge	Application	Integration	Human Dimension	Caring	Learning How to Learn	Totals
Number of Activities	06	11	02	01	/	/	20
Percentages %	30%	55%	10%	05%	/	/	100%

Table 02: Textbook Activities Percentages for the Significant Learning Level.

Table 02 above represents the percentages of the activities associated to each level of learning. Therefore, the statistics reveal that the application level is the most emphasized level throughout the English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book with 55% of the whole activities.

Moreover, 30% of the textbook activities serve the foundational knowledge level. Furthermore, 10% are directed to the integration level. Finally, only 05% concern the human dimension level. However, the two last levels of learning: caring and learning how to learn receive no concerns.

2- Results of Teachers' Answers to the Questionnaire

The questionnaire that have been designed for the present research aims at uncovering the respondents' views concerning the effectiveness on the activities implemented in English File Upper-intermediate textbook in developing learners' intellectual skills.

2.1- Profile of the Participants

Q1: Would you mention your degree?
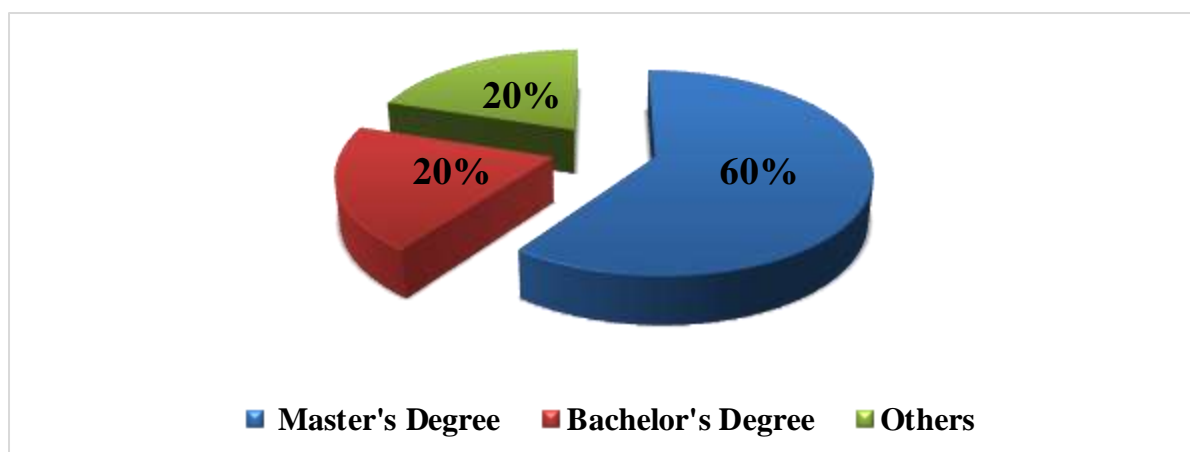
Pie chart 01: Participants' Degree

Pie chart 01 concerns the academic level of the MLS English teachers. The results show that 60% of the correspondents have got a Master's Degree; and 20% declared that they have a Bachelor's Degree. However, 20% that is only one teacher said having other qualifications which are respectively: TEFL, GCSE, NVQ, and SENCO Degrees.

Q2: How long have you been teaching English?

This question has been asked in order to know about the working experience of the participants as teachers of the English language. The answers differ from one teacher to another since the majority said to be teaching English for the last five years. The others respectively declared being in the field of education along the four and six last years. However, one of the respondents explained that being an English teacher has been their permanent occupation more than twenty-two years.

Q3: How long have you been working in the MLS?
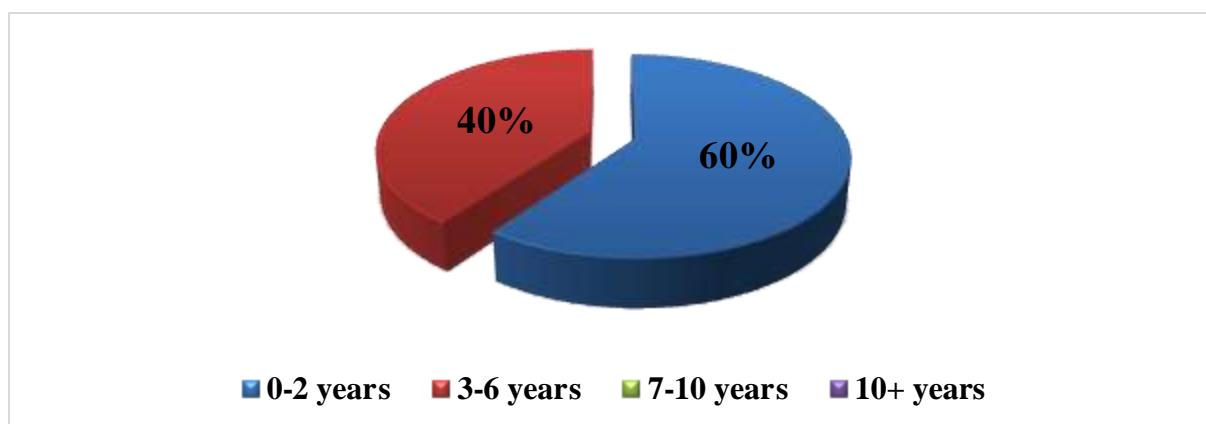
Pie chart 02: Participants' Period as English Teachers at MLS.

Pie chart 02 displays the results obtained from the participants to the third question of the questionnaire. It is clearly illustrated that 60% of the teachers have been working in the Modern Languages School for a period of 0-2 years. Yet, 40% have been teaching English in this same school along the 3-6 last years.

2.2: Teachers' Attitudes towards the English File Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities in Developing Learners' Intellectual Skills

Q4: Do the activities implemented in the Upper-intermediate student's textbook help developing learners' cognition?
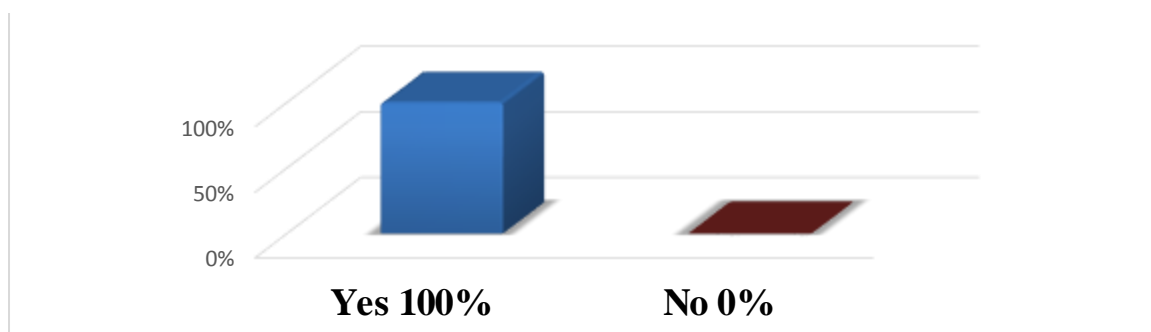
Diagram 01: Importance of Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities in Learners' Cognitive Development.

Diagram01 shows how important are the activities implemented in the English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book in promoting learners' cognitive processes. Indeed, 100%

of the teachers find that this textbook involve a variety of activities which allow better explore the cognition of upper-intermediate learners.

Q5: Do you feel that these same activities help learners construct more significant knowledge?
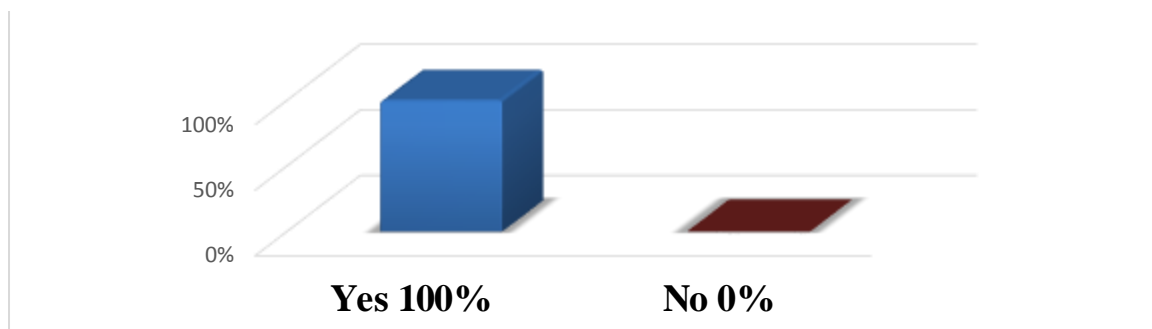
Diagram 02: Importance of Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities in Constructing more Significant Knowledge.

From diagram 02, it can be clearly noticed that 100% of the respondents believe that the activities addressed to upper-intermediate levels help learners to construct more significant knowledge.

Q6: Do the textbook activities facilitate the task to you to develop your learners' intellectual skills?
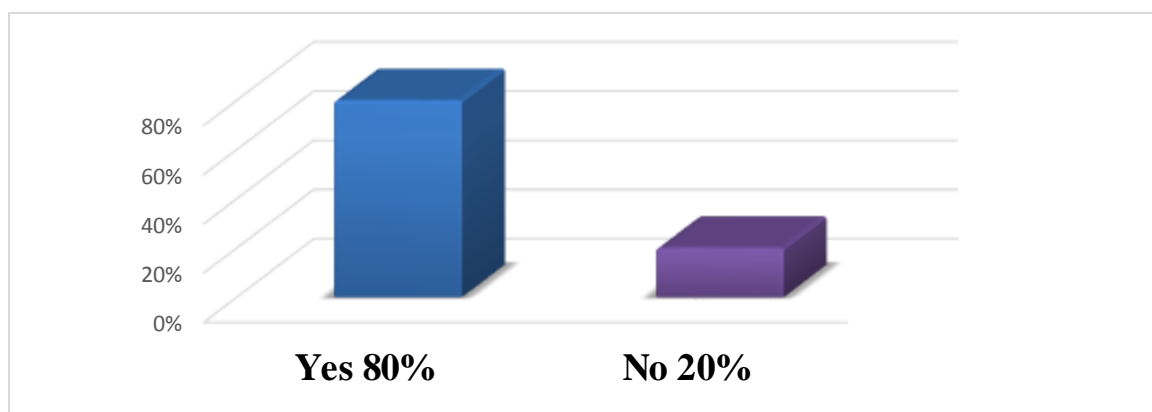
Diagram 03: Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities in Developing Learners' Intellectual Skills.

Diagram 03 displays the answers to question six of the questionnaire which aims at checking whether the activities implemented in the upper-intermediate textbook used in

Modern Languages School allow teachers to develop their learners' intellectual skills. 80% of the teachers find it easy to foster the intellectual skills of learners using the latter activities and 20% of the participants said "No". Then, teachers explained that the structure and the content of the book make students actively involved in discovering the new language items by themselves, this keeps them motivated to think rationally. Also, the activities are well elaborated so that to give teachers more flexibility to teach the target language.

Q7: In your opinion, do you think that the activities implemented in the English File Upper-intermediate textbook have a positive impact on learners' learning process?
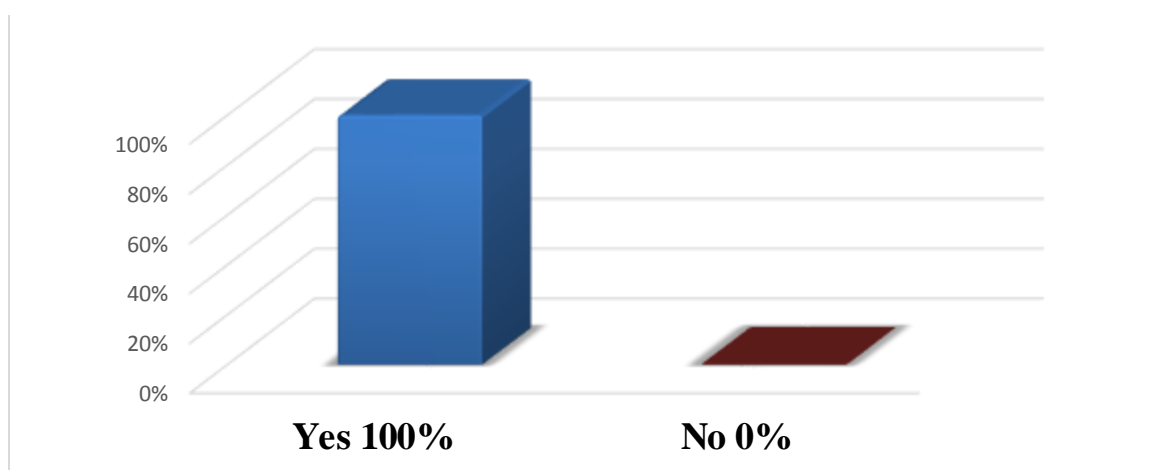
Diagram 04: Impact of English File Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities on

Learners' Learning Process.

As diagram 04 indicates, 100% of the participants opted for "Yes". That is, the activities involved in the upper-intermediate textbook are a good way to positively enrich the learning process.

Q8: Do you think the activities implemented in the English File Upper-intermediate textbook are graded from simple to complex?
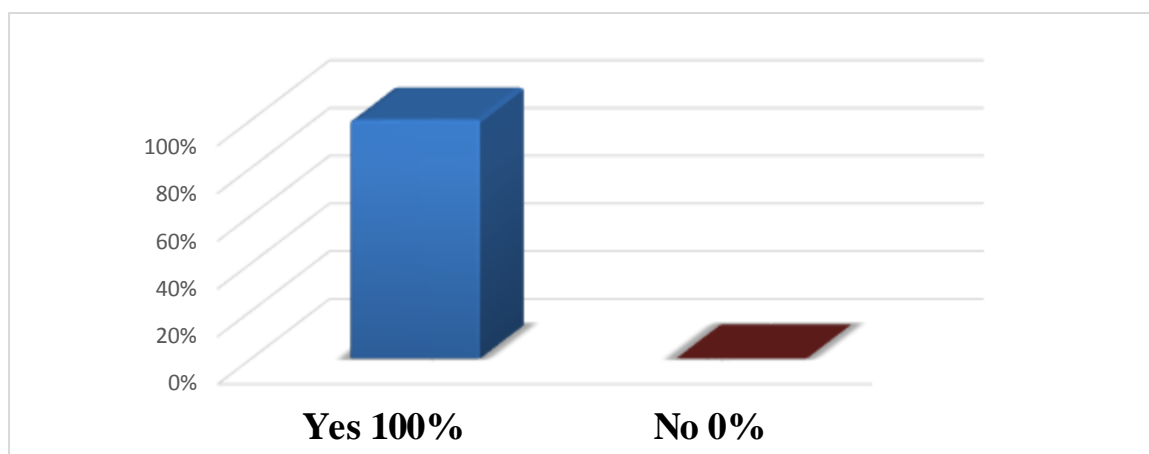
Diagram 05: English File Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities from Simple to

Complex.

According to teachers' answers, the activities of the English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book gradually increase in terms of complexity. That is, 100% of the correspondents said that these latter are graded from simple to complex.

Q9: How far do you agree with the following: *"Upper-intermediate textbook activities are of significant importance in the development of learners' Intellectual skills and creating significant learning experience"?*
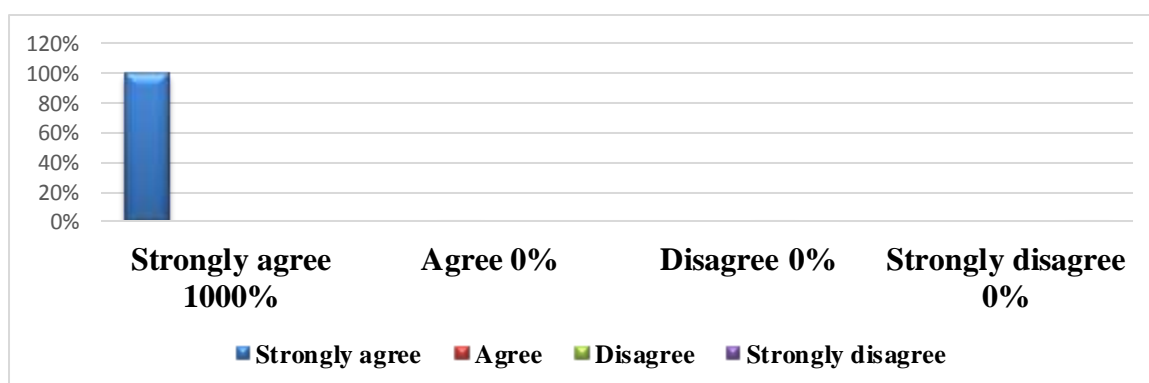
Diagram 06: Teachers' Agreement with the Statement.

Results shown in diagram 06 exhibit that 100% of English teachers working with the upper-intermediate levels at MLS "strongly agree" with the idea that upper-intermediate

textbook activities play a major role in developing learners' intellectual skills and creating a significant experience.

Q10: To what extent do the English File Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities emphasize the following cognitive processes?

a- Understanding and memorizing facts and specific information

b- Applying learned concepts in new situations to solve problems

c- Evaluating and interpreting different texts and tasks

d- Creating new ideas and new solutions to old problems

e- Understanding links between different ideas and concepts

Figure 07 represents the teachers' answers to question ten of the questionnaire that concerns the extent to which the classroom activities in which upper-intermediate learners are engaged emphasize the cognitive processes cited above.

From the same figure, it is clear that the answers vary mainly from "very much" to "quite a bit". 60% of the teachers find that throughout the activities, learners are to a great extent encouraged to complete a-, c-; while the remaining category favors the "quitea bit" option. As regards b-, d- and e- processes, the majority of teachers think that they are only emphasized to some extent.
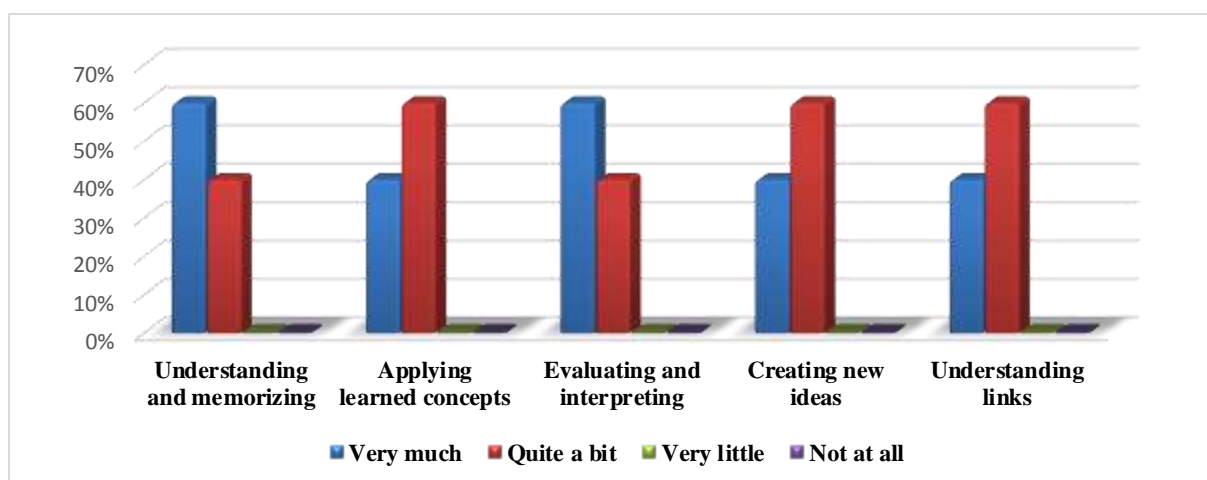
Diagram 07: English File Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities and the Cognitive Processes.

Q11: To what extent do the activities implemented in upper-intermediate textbook contribute to learners' personal and social development?

100%
50%
0%

60%   40%

Learners' personal and social development

■ **Very much 60%** ■ **Quite a bit 40%** ■ **Not at all 0%** ■ **Very little 0%**
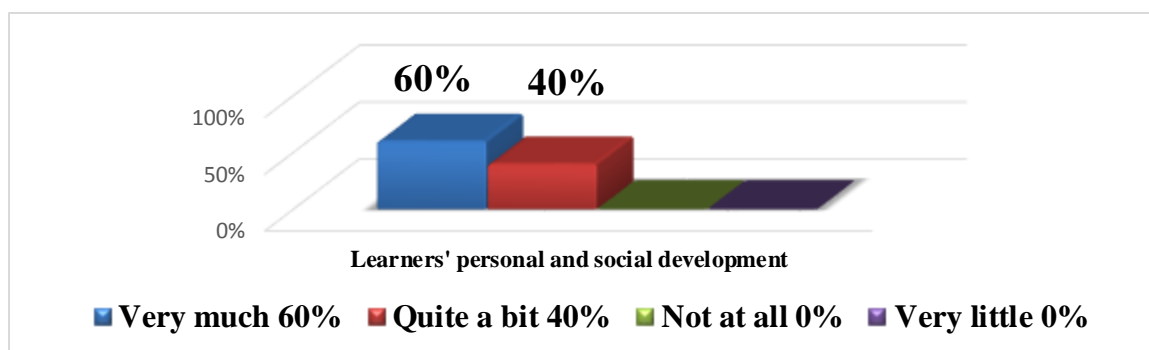
Diagram 08: English File Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities and Learners' Personal and Social Development.

60% of the teachers believe that the activities of the upper-intermediate textbook contribute very much in learners' personal and social developments. However, 40% do not emphasize the importance of these activities in the personal and social lives of students. Yet, none of the participants believe that the activities implemented in the English File Upper-intermediate textbook do not help or help at a very little extent the learners' personal and social development.

Q12: To what extent do these activities help learners develop interests and progress in learning how to learn?

100%
50%
0%

60%   40%

Developing interests and progress in learning how to learn

■ **Very good 60%** ■ **Good 0%** ■ **Fair 40%** ■ **poor 0%** ■ **Very poor 0%**
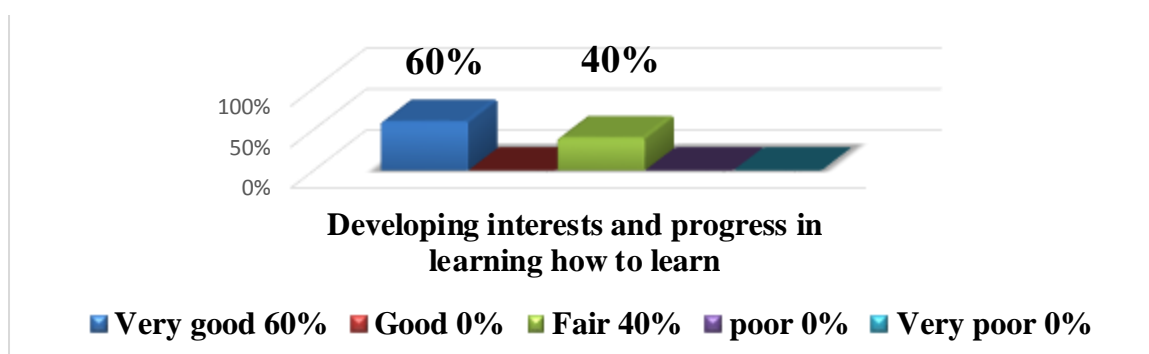
Diagram 09: Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities and Learners' Interests and Progress in Learning How to Learn.

Answers provided by the respondents to question twelve of the questionnaire reveal that 60% of them believe that the activities in which upper-intermediate learners are engaged help to a great extent becoming better learners. And 40% opted for "c- fair".

Q13: How far do you agree with the idea that the textbook activities designed for upper-intermediate level make a significant educational in learners' lives?
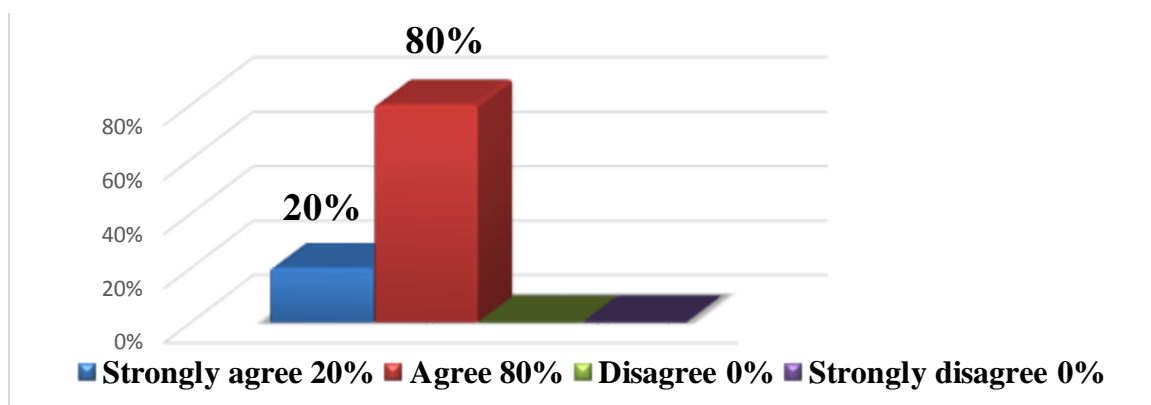
Diagram 10: Importance of the Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities in Making Significant Difference in Learners' Lives.

Results of diagram 10 demonstrate that 80% of the teachers agree with the fact that using the textbook activities within the upper-intermediate classrooms makes a significant difference in learners' lives since they are actively involved in tasks based on concrete and real life situations. While only 20% strongly agree.

Q14: How often do the following activities take place in the textbook?

a- Students are asked to remember specific information

b- Students are asked to complete complex tasks using their prior knowledge

c- Students are asked to evaluate their own work or learning

d- Students are encouraged to be creative learners

e- Students are asked to reflect upon connections of different concepts or ideas

f- Students are asked to conduct a research project in real social contexts
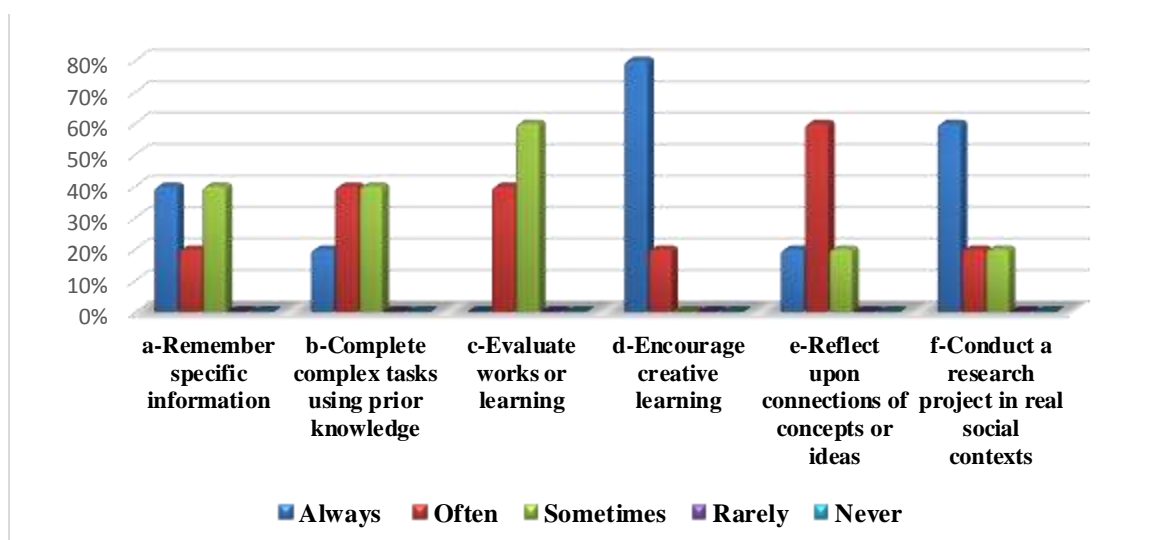
Diagram 11: Frequencies of the Activities throughout the Upper-intermediate Textbook.

Figure 11 displays the answers of the participants concerning the frequencies at which the activities (a- f-) take place through the upper-intermediate textbook activities. There is no doubt that the views differ among the teachers.

The statistics show that teachers' views are equally distributed between always (40%) and sometimes (40%) concerning the frequency at which learners are encouraged to remember specific information and fact. 20% think that activity (a-) takes place often in the classroom. As for the completion of complex tasks, both often and sometimes options receive 40%. The remaining 20% believe that this activity (b-) is always encouraged. As regards (c-), teachers' views vary from often with 40% and sometimes with 60%.

Moreover, 80% of the whole participants believe that upper-intermediate learners are always motivated to be creative. Yet, 20% think that (d-) happens often. Furthermore, 60% of the teachers assume that activity (e-) takes place often through the English File Upper-intermediate textbook activities. While both always and sometimes receive the percentage of 20% for each. Finally, 60% claim that the activities designed for upper-intermediate levels foster learners to conduct research projects in real social contexts (f-). Yet, both often and sometimes have got 20%. The two last options 'rarely' and 'never' receive no concerns for the whole activities (a- f-).

Q15: Please suggest any change you would like to make in the *English File Upper-intermediate* textbook activities to provide a better learning experience?

    a- Provide learners with more engaging activities

    b- Replace some activities with others of your own suggestions

    c- Change the order of the activities
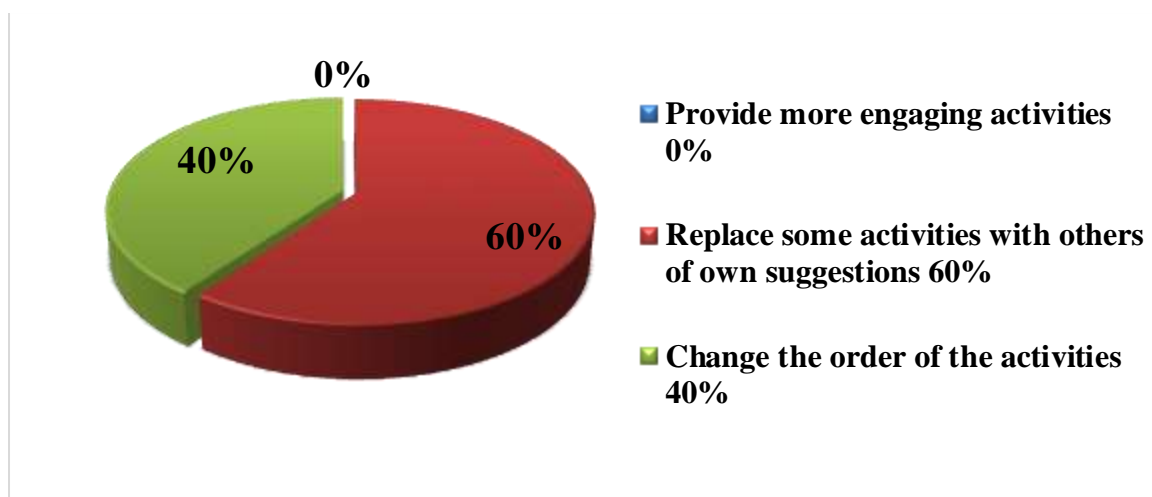
Pie chart 03: Teachers' Suggestions to Provide a Better Learning Experience to Upper-intermediate Learners.

    60% of MLS English teachers would like to replace some activities from the Upper-intermediate textbook by others of their own suggestions in order to provide learners with a better learning experience. The remaining 40% opted for changing the order of these activities.

Conclusion

    This chapter has presented findings obtained throughout this research. The first section has displayed the results of the English File Upper-intermediate textbook activities analysis using DEE Fink's learning and teaching strategies as well as the taxonomy verbs related to each learning level from the Significant Learning Experience Taxonomy (2003). The second section has dealt with the results obtained from the questionnaire addressed to MLS teachers who have taught or teach English to the upper-intermediate level. In this regard, the findings

have revealed that the activities implemented in the textbook under study effectively help promoting learners' cognitive capabilities. Also, the respondents of the questionnaire hold positive views towards these activities since they believe that they help the learners achieve a significant learning experience in EFL classrooms.

Chapter IV: Discussion of the Findings

Introduction

The present chapter is devoted to the discussion of the findings presented in the previous chapter. The results stem from the analysis of the corpus which consists of the activities implemented in <u>English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book</u>, in addition to the results of the questionnaire administered to MLS teachers of English so that to check the validity of the formulated hypotheses. This chapter also seeks to answer the research questions set in the General Introduction.

The chapter comprises three sections. The first section deals with the discussion of the findings obtained from the analysis of the corpus on the basis of DEE Fink's Significant Learning Taxonomy (2003). The second section tackles the results of the participants' answers to the questionnaire. The last section shows the limitations of this study and offers suggestions and recommendations for further research.

1-Discussion of the Results Obtained from the English File Upper-intermediate Textbook Analysis

1.1- DEE Fink's Teaching and Learning Strategies

Intellectual skill need to be enhanced among language learners due to their significance in developing effective language learning. Recently, intellectual skills have gained a high position in EFL settings so that promoting these latter is considered one of the foreign language teachers' tasks.

Different factors can affect learners' cognitive abilities such as the type of the teaching and learning strategies being used during the learning process in EFL classrooms. DEE Fink has proposed a list of different strategies related to the six learning dimensions, and has encouraged their application in foreign/ second language classes in order to keep learners actively engaged in the learning process and provide them with a rich learning experience.

Chapter IV: Discussion of the Findings

As it has been mentioned earlier, classroom activities are of significant importance in English as a foreign or second language setting in general, and in the promotion of learners' intellectual skills. It is believed that learners learn more effectively and retain information longer when being engaged in active classroom teaching and learning strategies.

Table 01 presented in the previous chapter has indicated that upper-intermediate learners at MLS are being involved in various practices that allow the development of their cognitive faculties along the language knowledge. Indeed, the activities implemented in English File Upper-intermediate textbook give learners the opportunity to process what they have learned as course material to become successful thinkers. Moreover, each activity aims at achieving different learning and cognitive outcomes throughout the Significant Learning Levels.

1-The Foundational Knowledge Level: 30% of the activities allow learners develop their ability to understand and remember important course contents. This could be achieved by many means including group-discussion, reading for details, and the choral repetition.

Results have shown that the group-discussion consists of 10% of the whole activities included in the Foundational Dimension. This strategy is a collaborative exchange of ideas among learners for the purpose of their learning and understanding. It helps learners to process information rather than to simply receive it. That is, maintaining a small or large group discussion enhances learners' capacity to understand and memorize precise information related to the course material.

Another way to make learners understand what they read is reading for details. It allows them remembers details about the topic under study so that to get a sense of the overall meaning. In the case of this research, findings have revealed that 10% of the whole activities involved in the first learning level are directed towards the latter strategy.

Last but not least, the choral repetition plays a key role in mastering the pronunciation of the target language with 10%. It contributes well to the learning and memorization of the correct pronunciation.

2-The Application Level: helps the promotion of the creative, application, and analysis skills within EFL settings. 55% of the textbook activities enable learners to apply what they learn in the course, different strategies are to be used such as guided-practices, role plays, problem solving, and decision making.

During the first strategy which is the Guided-practice, learners are more responsible for their learning since they apply what they have learned independently. 20% of the Application Dimension activities helps learners build confidence and contributes in a strong classroom community where the whole class is aware of and respects the strengths and contributions of every member.

Moreover, role play (5%) is used since it is a means which allows learners to explore realistic situations by interacting with other learners in a managed way. During such practice, EFL learners are given particular roles and instructions on how to play the conversation or other interactions. Role play is also a good strategy for making learners understand a situation from a different perspective, and giving them the opportunity to practise skills such as debating, reasoning, and negotiating in order to adapt to situations they might not normally find themselves in, forcing their creativity to be exerted.

Furthermore, in order to develop deep understanding of important concepts and principles, and to foster skills relevant to authentic future applications among EFL learners, 10% of the textbook activities rely on the problem solving strategy. In problem-solving activities, learners analyze, evaluate, and interpret information to solve situations they are not familiar with. In other words, learners make use of their critical and creative thinking skills to come up with appropriate solutions to problems.

In addition, decision making receives a percentage of 20% of the textbook activities classified in the second significant learning level. The latter strategy stimulates learners to make more thoughtful decisions by organizing relevant information. This is done through a critical thinking process which allows evaluating the evidence of the alternatives to finally select the alternative that seems to be the best.

3-At **the Integration Level:** learners are better able at making connections between different experiences, course contents, and so on. This can effectively be reached through activities involving question-answers (10%). This teaching and learning strategy empowers learners to think about and beyond the text they are reading in order to understand the links that exist between their own prior knowledge, the learning material, and the question.

4-Human Dimension: is the fourth level in Significant Learning Taxonomy. It seeks at enhancing learners' ability at establishing and maintaining effective relationships with other learners. The most used strategy in this level of learning is reflective writing with only 5%.

Reflective writing is an analytical practice in which learners describe real or imaginary scenes and add personal reflections on their meaning using their past experiences as learners or as individuals. Learners are encouraged to develop their understanding of their own self and establishing effective working relationships with other learners.

From the aforementioned strategies, it is clear that achieving a significant learning experience in upper-intermediate English classes is given importance. The teaching and learning strategies as proposed by Fink are sufficiently incorporated in the textbook so that to enable learners to move from one learning level to another and thus acquiring the cognitive faculties that allow them to make a step towards satisfactory and positive learning outcomes.

The most strategies relied on include a range of whole class, group, or individual practices to accommodate different learning styles, abilities, and skills that allow every learner to participate and achieve some degree of success. As Hudelson (1991: 5) contends

"with meaningful topics and activities, students can interact, exchange, and negotiate messages while working together." In other words, these activities help students recall prior knowledge, work collaboratively to learn from and share with others, develop problem-solving skills and thinking processes within a range of contexts.

The results obtained from corpus analysis have shown that upper-intermediate learners are given the opportunity to satisfy their communicative needs through the different strategies relied on in the activities implemented in their textbook. These practices offer learners a better chance to practice the English language in different real-life situations, since 55% of the whole activities under the scope of study are directed towards the Application Dimension. As a matter of fact, what makes these activities different from the traditional language practices, which is known as drills and repetitions, is the purpose they address. That is, learners shift from language form to language use where they pay more attention on the production and construction of meanings. Moreover, these strategies aim at developing learners' intellectual skills through interaction and negotiation while performing the target activities.

Different studies, as mentioned in the literature review chapter, have confirmed the role of intellectual skills in improving EFL learners become proficient language users. That is, learners are required to have reflections on their production of ideas. Language development and thinking are closely related, and the teaching of cognitive skills has become an integral part of a foreign language curriculum. As claimed by Chamot (1995), the development of intellectual skills is interwoven with EFL language teaching and learning, and is conducive to positive language learning outcomes.

Developing cognitive skills does not occur randomly or without efforts, it takes structured, deliberate, and repetitive exposure and practice for students to promote insightful thinking. Enhancing the ability to think is an essential life skill, it is also clear that practicing intellectual skills strategies should be a daily occurrence in EFL classes. Making a proper

selection and implementation of activities for the subject of English as a foreign language is a fundamental issue. In point of fact, the upper-intermediate textbook activities keep learners involved in a set of strategies aligned in accordance to the different significant learning levels that enable them to gradually acquire and enhance their intellectual faculties. That is, the activities of the different learning dimensions make learners perform and develop their cognitive processes.

As it has been previously discussed, learning a language is unique in a sense that teachers are not only teaching the content of the target subjects, but also help learners acquire and develop intellectual skills essential for successful foreign language learning. Choy and Cheah (2009: 198) claim that *"although students have a natural ability to think, it is important for teachers to guide them in order to refine their skills"*. The cognitive processes are better developed if they are not taught in *"isolation, but rather taught through examining and understanding of the content of what learners study"* (ibid.). That is, learners develop their cognitive faculties effectively once engaged in practices that seek to comprehend the course content and to practice the cognitive skills simultaneously.

Hayes and Devitt (2008: 66) emphasized *"the need to progressively push students to develop higher levels of thinking is only possible through the implementation of instructional activities that provide an opportunity for discussion related to topics, concepts, and intellectual skills"*. Moreover, Paul and Elder (2009: 29) claim that to foster *"the intellect requires developing intellectual processes, tools of mind that enable the thinker to reason well"*. The question of educators then, is how to go about incorporating strategies for cognitive faculties' development in EFL settings.

The teaching and learning strategies that have been mostly relied on in the English File Upper-intermediate textbook used in MLS are mainly associated to the four first significant learning levels from DEE Fink's Taxonomy, respectively: Foundational Knowledge,

Application, Integration and Human Dimension. The previously cited activities challenge learners to consider reading as a process. By reading a text more than once, learner are better able to determine the author's arguments, stylistic choices and structures. They also learn summarizing and descriptive outlining skills, crucial to making meaning for a text. According to Hayes and Devitt (2008: 66) *"regardless of the specific strategies being used when students engage in thinking evaluation of problem solving via classroom discussion their intellectual skills improve"*. Also, the intent of these different instructional activities is to make EFL upper-intermediate learners more aware of *"who they are, how they live, and their impact on the world"* so that to provide them with significant learning experiences (ibid.).

1.2- DEE Fink's Taxonomy Verbs

When designing learning courses for EFL classes, learning objectives should be formulated with action verbs that clearly indicate what learners will know and be able to do or better do with that knowledge at the completion of an activity, assignment, or course.

In the activities presented in the last chapter, it is clear that each instruction includes a given action verb from DEE Fink's Significant Learning Taxonomy Verbs. These verbs describe the cognitive behavior that learners are expected to exhibit, and that are observable in a variety of ways such as class discussions, interactive activities, or written works, in which learners are expected to demonstrate their learning.

Guidelines built around DEE Fink's assume that the verbs in each learning level describe a progressive development of cognitive skills. Verbs at lower levels describe acquisition of knowledge and facts. Whereas verbs at higher levels describe complex thinking skills, including application of learned knowledge to practical problem solving, establishment of links between divergent learned materials, and development of personal and social perspectives.

Chapter IV: Discussion of the Findings

The Taxonomy Verbs used in the twenty analyzed activities from the English File Upper-intermediate textbook are mainly categorized into the four first learning dimensions from Fink's Taxonomy namely: Foundational Knowledge (30%), Application (55%), Integration (10%), and Human Dimension (5%). The verbs used reflect precisely whether EFL teachers want their learners to remember intended factual information, distinguish among different concepts, apply rules/ principles, solve problems, and learn something about themselves and others.

As a matter of fact, 30% of the verbs involved in the analyzed activities are directed towards the Foundational Knowledge. This dimension is the lowest level of leaning. It focuses on the ability to understand, remember and retrieve previously learned materials. Verbs including repeat, define, explain, tell and remember are used in order to stimulate learners to assimilate and recall information and concepts related to the course content.

In addition, verbs such as discuss, determine, describe, check, choose, circle, write, think, and imagine foster MLS EFL upper-intermediate learners ability to use learned information in new ways or situations to solve problems. In other words, 55% of the instructional activities implemented in the English File Upper-intermediate textbook serve the Application dimension. The learning standards at this learning level ask the learners to apply the newly acquired knowledge in new situations or different ways from the original context. This application requires learners to engage in various kinds of thinking skills to be developed.

Moreover, the third learning level receives a percentage of 10% of the whole analyzed corpus. The Integration dimension implies the ability to make connections among different sorts of learned materials. The verb match, made use of throughout the activities, engage learners in finding links and connections between their own learning and real-life experiences or other forms of studies what expands heir intellectual power.

However, only 5% of the taxonomy verbs from DEE Fink's Significant Learning (2003) namely negotiate serves the Human Dimension. This level of learning deals with the learners' discovering something about themselves and their interactions with others. At this stage, learners are asked to consider learning in their own living contexts or others in order to interact effectively with people surrounding them so as to develop their vision about what they want to become and who they want to be.

The verbs used in the instructional activities analyzed from the English File Upper intermediate textbook used in MLS correspond to the levels from the Taxonomy of Significant Learning which the learners are expected to perform. The latter expectations should be expressed as different types of learning objectives since each expectation reflects a given type of learning from the Significant Learning Experience Taxonomy. DEE Fink (2003: 33) insists on the necessity to design a course with learning goals that go beyond simple content mastery and include the parts of his Taxonomy saying that *"If teachers use a combination of significant learning taxonomy it will be possible to create some interaction effects and synergy that greatly enhances the achievements of significant learning by students"*.

EFL teachers can help learners achieve significant learning experiences by formulating determined goals that reflect what they are interested in learning about, and how they wish to learn. Only after these learning outcomes are established that teachers start to think about what material to teach; how to teach it; and what methods to use.

Moreover, according to the results displayed in the previous chapter, it is clear that the activities used with MLS upper-intermediate learners reflect the four first levels of learning proposed by DEE Fink. These dimensions are graded from simple to complex, and each level becomes more challenging as learners move higher.

The use of the action verbs in activities designed for EFL learners is significant since they help determining what learning level is already reflected in EFL classrooms and what learning outcomes need to be attained. Moreover, these taxonomy verbs determine the type of thinking learners are required to act upon, or the concepts, facts, theories they are required to acquire. Or, the skills they are supposed to be able or better able to perform at a given level.

EFL teachers can use aspects of DEE Fink's Taxonomy to plan and sequence intended learning outcomes, and teaching and learning activities. Significant Learning Levels provide a useful vocabulary to articulate learning objectives in terms of demonstrable verbs, and also describe a progression in levels of complexity. Learners also experience a rich significant learning experience when engaged in such processes, and are more effective poles when they are engaged in higher order cognitive activities through active learning. Significant Learning is any learning which combines the different previously mentioned learning dimensions. And the more these learning levels occur in EFL settings; the more significant the learning experience is for the English learners (DEE Fink, 2013).

2- Discussion of the Results Obtained from Teachers' Answers to the Questionnaire

This section is concerned with the discussion of MLS English teachers' answers to the questionnaire.

2.1- Profile of the Participants

The results obtained from the first three questions (Q1, Q2, and Q3) of the questionnaire have confirmed that 60% of the teachers who teach English to upper-intermediate levels at MLS have got a master's degree and are sufficiently experienced as EFL teachers since the majority claim to be teaching English for a period of five years. In fact, teachers' educational degree and years of teaching experience correlate to their effectiveness in EFL classrooms. It is assumed that more experienced teachers are better ones

because observable teachers' characteristics such as certification, advanced degrees and years of experience frequently impact learners' motivation, engagement, attitudes, and academic achievements. Indeed, Sutton (2009: 712) claims that *"EFL classroom with more experienced and high graded teachers likely provide optimal grounds for overcoming obstacles and promoting positive development and achievements"*.

Moreover, the latter parameters have significant effects on instructions and hence on EFL learners' outcomes. That is, the more the teachers are experienced, the more the instructional activities they provide are challenging. The more the classroom activities are challenging, the more learners engage in intellectually high learning. In line with this, Jepsen (2009:241) believes that *"teachers with longer experience are better acquainted with students' abilities and needs, and they are better equipped to facilitate learners' academic success and intellectual abilities"*. This means that, the more professional knowledge teachers have the higher levels of cognitive faculties learners reach.

Furthermore, teachers' years of work influence their effectiveness. There is little doubt that EFL teachers' academic degrees and years of experience impact learners' performances. Also, teachers' effectiveness is measured by learners' effectiveness. In this context, Darling-Hammond (2003:2) claims that *"probably the most important thing a school administrators can do to improve students' achievements is to attract, retain, and support the continued learning of well-prepared and committed teacher"*.

Having a long term teaching experience in the same educational institution for a long period of time helps teachers gain valuable experience since they are better allowed to reflect upon and practice different teaching methods and styles so that to improve. It also increases learners' learning proficiency and outcomes because the skills that address their major challenges are better focused. As it is the case within this research, 40% of the participants respectively declare to be teaching English in MLS for a period of 3-6 years. As a matter of

fact, they are better experienced in writing good lesson plans, establishing achievable learning objectives and orienting classroom activities in a way to develop learners' competencies and skills. They learn and solve problems to ensure all students achieve success and gain significant learning experiences throughout their foreign or second language learning process.

2.2- Teachers' Attitudes towards English File Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities in Developing Learners' Intellectual Skills

    2.2.1- Importance of the English File Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities in Developing Learners' Cognition

Effective teaching and learning emerge from psychological, sociological, cognitive, and educational parameters that integrate lessons' contents with effective classroom activities so that to achieve the determined leaning goals.

Within the context of this study, 100% of MLS teachers of English have revealed that the activities implemented in the upper intermediate textbook help to a significant extent developing learners' cognition. Indeed, these latter facilitate the participants' tasks to enhance their learners' intellectual faculties. Teachers have shown their belief that, when used in the classroom, the activities involved in the English File Upper-intermediate textbook help learners perform different cognitive tasks what makes the acquisition and consolidation of their knowledge easier and significant. In other word these activities give learners the opportunity to process and apply what they learn during lessons in different problem solving contexts.

In addition to the overall information about the importance the activities under study play in learners' intellectual skills development at the upper-intermediate level, 80% of the MLS English teachers have expressed their views concerning the way that they are elaborated and organized in helping developing learners' intellectual skills. In other words, the majority of the respondents have claimed that *"the way the textbook activities are structured facilitates*

the tasks to learners think, explore and develop ideas rationally". This provides evidence that the organization of the English File Upper-intermediate textbook *"offers teachers more flexibility to teach their target as well as it allows learners applying the learned knowledge at different levels so that to gradually and effectively develop their cognitive skills"*. Of all, significant learning requires the process of teaching and learning to be facilitated in the way that learners remember, understand, apply, and interact what they learn in the classroom in other situations.

"The way this textbook makes upper-intermediate learners active by making them discover the target language items by themselves which is called a problem solving situation. The textbook is based on concrete and real life situations which make learners more motivated to get involved in the learning process and to practice more", says one of the teachers.

When it comes to developing intellectual skills, learners need a plenty of practice ranged from simple to complex. This organization permits them acquire and apply knowledge and skills that are accurately and meaningfully organized. In fact, 100% of the whole participants declare that the activities used with upper-intermediate levels at MLS gradually increase in complexity to address students' concerns so that to permit overcoming different cognitive challenges. In short, the findings of this study reveal that the activities are geared towards fostering learners' cognition through different problem situation.

Promoting intellectual skills among EFL learners is done through various complementary levels or steps. Each level provides further elaboration on the learning process than the previous levels. Different scholars (Bransford, Brown, and Cocking, 1999) contend that learners achieve meaningful leaning by the help of this simple to complex sequencing since they are brought to relating new information to prior knowledge and understanding the interrelation between various learning components. When instructional activities are

organized in a simple to complex way, EFL learners' cognitive power increases and thus they are better equipped to achieving significant learning outcomes.

2.2.2- Reflection of DEE Fink's Significant Learning Levels through the English File Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities

The data obtained from question nine (Q9) have confirmed that 100% of the teachers working with the upper-intermediate level at MLS strongly agreed with the idea that the activities implemented in the English File Upper-intermediate textbook are of significant importance in the development of learners' intellectual skills and thus favor their use in providing them with significant learning experiences along their EFL/ESL learning process.

As for questions ten and eleven (Q10 and Q11), 60% of the findings have indicated that the activities involved in the upper-intermediate textbook emphasize to a great extent the different cognitive processes in accordance to the different learning levels from DEE Fink's Taxonomy. The participants clarified that the activities in which upper-intermediate learners are engaged enable them better explore their cognitive competencies and performances. Also, these same activities are effectively distributed along the four first learning dimensions so that to better enable learners to remember information, provide new applications, connect concepts and experiences, and contribute to their personal and social development. As it is the case with this research, MLS teachers' answers have provided evidence that the latter cognitive processes are effectively and sufficiently focused through the instructional activities under study. On this basis, activities that are included in foundational knowledge dimension ask learners to recall previously learned information in order to check if they are comprehending lessons. Applying, evaluating, and creating activities directly evolve learners in applying knowledge and skills, analyzing information and making judgments, adapting and constructing new ideas to solve problems. The integration level aims at getting learners interpret and recognize the links between various ideas and concerts. In human dimension, the

findings have shown that learners are more aware of their learning and the effectiveness of interaction with others. It is important that they are capable to learn and develop their vision and future about oneself and others.

As for the two last dimensions, caring and learning how to learn, teachers' answers have displayed divergent views. The majority of the participants, representing 60%, believed that the activities contribute to a very good extent in students' want to develop their learning into higher level on interests. The last dimension which consists of learners' expectations to be better learners, 80% of the teachers agreed that it is emphasized to a very little extent through the English File Upper-intermediate textbook activities.

As far as question fourteen (Q14) is concerned, teachers' expressed different points of view about the frequencies at which the cognitive operations related to the four first learning levels from DEE Fink's Taxonomy take place throughout the activities implemented in the textbook which are intended for upper-intermediate learners. The MLS teachers' of English views have been equally distributed between always and sometimes with 40% to each concerning the level of foundational knowledge. This latter provides a basic understanding and remembering basic information that learners need from their learning. As regards the application level, 40% of the participants have chosen sometimes as an answer. The data have reflected that learners are given opportunities to apply what they have learned. This task requires engaging in critical, practical, and creative thinking skills. As for integration level, 60% of the participants' answers have shown that upper-intermediate English learners are always engaged in activities which help to develop their ability in making connections between their learning and experiences or other forms of studies. The last concerned level which is the human dimension, most participants (60%) have declared that the English File Upper-intermediate textbook activities always allow learners to consider learning in their own

living contexts or others, and are motivated to learn about self and factors for interacting effectively with people surrounding them.

Finally, drawing on the data sorted out from answers commented in the results of question fifteen (Q15), 60% of the teachers have selected the option of replacing some activities from the English File Upper-intermediate textbook by others of their own suggestions so that to provide better learning experience in EFL classrooms. The remaining 40% have opted for changing the order of these activities.

2.2.3- Teachers' Attitudes towards the English File Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities in Promoting Learners' Intellectual Skills

Teachers' responses to the questionnaire have revealed that the contextual adoption of DEE Fink's Taxonomy through the English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book facilitates and makes effective the EFL teaching and learning at Modern Languages School. In fact, 100% of the MLS teachers of English believed that the teaching and learning strategies implemented in the upper-intermediate textbook activities are aligned with DEE Fink's significant learning dimensions so that to keep the EFL upper-intermediate learners engaged in significant learning and to facilitate their task to meet the teaching and learning goals.

It comes clear that the MLS English teachers hold positive attitudes towards the effectiveness of the activities implemented in the English File Upper-intermediate textbook in enhancing learners' intellectual skills.

Findings from this research have suggested that to consider and extent learners' academic content knowledge and to move them toward enhanced cognitive processes, the explicit adoption of the Significant Learning Taxonomy in EFL classrooms is of significant important. In fact, the students' learning is facilitated when teachers possess a set of orientations interconnected with DEE Fink's six dimensions of significant learning since they

offer more proven and gradual strategies for dealing with the development of learners' intellectual skills.

The results obtained from the corpus analysis and the responses provided by the teachers to the questionnaire answer the first research question which is *'Do upper-intermediate textbook activities engage MLS learners in Significant Learning Experience?'* Indeed, the activities implemented in the English File textbook used with upper-intermediate levels at Modern Languages School keep learners engaged in an active learning process in which they construct and acquire the needed knowledge and skills that meet the different teaching and learning goals. Significant learning sit at the intersection of the teaching and learning strategies designed around the six categories of learning established by DEE Fink and aligned with the teaching and learning objectives.

Furthermore, the same findings provide evidence to the second research question which consists of *'Do EFL activities implemented in upper-intermediate textbook promote learners' cognitive faculties?'* That is, these same activities play an important role in enhancing MLS upper-intermediate learners' intellectual skills. Through these activities, learners are directly exposed to better apply their cognitive skills along their EFL learning process.

Regarding the last research question which is '*What attitudes do MLS English language teachers hold towards the effectiveness of the upper-intermediate textbook activities in enhancing learners' intellectual skills?'* Teachers' answers to the questionnaire confirm that they have a positive perception about the English File textbook activities in effectively promoting upper-intermediate learners' cognition. This lead to the conclusion that the reflection of DEE Fink's Significant Learning Taxonomy throughout the teaching and learning strategies in EFL classrooms is an important component in enhancing learners' intellectual skills.

3- Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

This work would not have been possible without the inspiration provided by previous studies about the same issue. This is why we want to follow the example by giving suggestions for further research to future researchers interested in the field of intellectual skills development. The present research is a case study which involves Modern Languages School learners and English teachers. Thus, it can be considered as a limitation to it, since the results obtained cannot be generalized. Further research can investigate to what extent these findings can be applied to other EFL settings. Moreover, it has been mentioned in this work that classroom observations were to be relied on as a data collection tool instead of the corpus analysis. However, a number of circumstances did not allow it. Therefore, future researchers can work on the same issue using classroom observations. They can also address the issue but from a different perspective. For instance, they can work on intellectual skills development from a standpoint of learners rather than teachers. Moreover, this issue can also be conducted in a completely different EFL environment on the Algerian territory, where English is gaining ground, such as Middle schools, High schools, Universities etc.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the findings of the present research, for the sake of providing answers to the research questions raised in the General Introduction. It has been divided into three main sections. The first section has discussed the results obtained from the corpus analysis on the basis of the theoretical foundations of this research. As for the second section, it has been devoted to the discussion of the results obtained from the participants' answers to the questionnaire. The third section has consisted of a general discussion which has provided answers to the research questions. The chapter has been concluded by showing the limitations and suggesting topics for further research.

The dissertation dealt with intellectual skills development among EFL upper-intermediate learners in Modern Languages School. The investigation has tackled the analysis of the activities implemented in the <u>English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book</u> on the basis of DEE Fink's Significant Learning Taxonomy (2003). The latter consists of six learning levels namely: Foundational Knowledge, Application, Integration, Human Dimension, Caring, and Learning How to Learn. These dimensions should be given prominence and integrated within the EFL teaching and learning process, because they are important in fostering learners' cognitive processes along their foreign or second language learning.

In this research, twenty randomly selected activities implemented in the upper-intermediate textbook have been examined in terms of DEE Fink's teaching and learning strategies, and taxonomy verbs. Besides, a semi-structured questionnaire, designed around the same theoretical foundations, has been administered to five MLS teachers who teach English to upper-intermediate levels.

To conduct this investigation, three main questions have been raised as following:

Q1: Do upper-intermediate textbook activities engage MLS learners in significant learning experience?

Q2: Do EFL activities implemented in upper-intermediate textbook promote learners' cognitive faculties?

Q3: What attitudes do MLS English language teachers hold towards the effectiveness of the upper-intermediate textbook activities in enhancing learners' intellectual skills?

To answer these research questions, three hypotheses have been suggested respectively:

H1: The upper-intermediate textbook activities engage MLS learners in significant learning experience.

H2: The activities implemented in upper-intermediate English textbook promote learners' cognitive faculties.

H3: The English teachers support that textbook activities intended for upper-intermediate levels enhance learners' intellectual skills.

The results sorted out from the corpus analysis have made possible to unveil that the activities in which EFL upper-intermediate learners are engaged at MLS classrooms exclusively make use of the different teaching and learning strategies and the taxonomy verbs that are identified in the four first learning levels from DEE Fink's Taxonomy. Therefore, it is clear from the obtained data that the upper-intermediate textbook activities engage learners in significant learning experience. In addition, the findings have revealed that the six learning dimensions established by DEE Fink are not equally emphasized through the textbook activities under study. In other words, the Foundational Knowledge (30%), Application (55%), Integration (10%), and Human Dimension (5%) are the levels of learning that are given prominence at most. The two last levels which are Caring and Learning How to Learn are not given prominence throughout the activities under study.

Moreover, the same data provide evidence that the activities implemented in the English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book used at MLS promote learners' cognitive faculties since they are designed around the Significant Learning Levels' strategies and verbs. Thus, these activities effectively reflect DEE Fink's Taxonomy.

As far as MLS teachers' attitudes are concerned, their answers to the questionnaire show that they all support that textbook activities designed for upper-intermediate activities enhance learners' intellectual skills. Therefore, the participants hold positive views about the activities and they believe in their effectiveness in making learners attain high cognitive outcomes.

To finish with, we hope that our study has contributed to the field of intellectual skills developments in the domain of second or foreign language teaching and learning in Algeria. And has added something new and fruitful as the fact of finding that EFL learners need a set of strategies and practices which help teachers facilitate the teaching and learning process and enhance learners' intellectual skills beside of their content language learning. Also, making use of the different learning theories in EFL course design is of significant importance.

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Teachers' Questionnaire

The present questionnaire is part of a research which seeks to find out Modern Languages School (MLS) English teachers' views about the effectiveness of the activities implemented in <u>English File Upper-intermediate Student's Book</u> in promoting their learners' intellectual skills. In order to achieve the academic objectives, you are kindly requested to answer the questions bellow by ticking off the appropriate box or by providing a full statement whenever necessary. Your answers will remain anonymous and will serve only academic purposes.

Thank you in advance for your precious collaboration.

<u>Section one:</u> Profile of the Participants

01-Would you mention your degree?

a- Bachelor's degree ☐ b-Master's degree ☐

c-Doctor's degree ☐ d-Others (please specify)………………………

02-How long have you been teaching English?

…………………………………………………………………………………………......

03- How long have you been working in the Modern Languages School?

0-2 years ☐ 3-6 years ☐

7-10 years ☐ 10+ years ☐

<u>Section two:</u> Teachers' Attitudes towards the English File Upper-intermediate Textbook Activities in Developing Learners' Intellectual Skills

04- Do the activities implemented in the Upper-intermediate student's textbook help developing learners' cognition?

Yes ☐   No ☐

05- Do you feel that these same activities help learners construct more significant knowledge?

Yes ☐   No ☐

06- Do the textbook activities facilitate the task to you to develop your learners' intellectual skills?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes, would you mention how?

....
....
....

07- In your opinion, do you think that the English File Upper-intermediate activities have a positive impact on learners' learning process?

Yes ☐   No ☐

08- Do you think that the activities implemented in English File Upper-intermediate textbook are graded from simple to complex?

Yes ☐   No ☐

09-How far do you agree with the following: *"Upper-intermediate textbook activities ore of significant importance in the development of learners' intellectual skills and creating a significant learning experience"?*

a-Strongly agree ☐　　　b-Agree ☐　　　c-Disagree ☐　　　d-Strongly disagree ☐

10-To what extent do the English File Upper-intermediate activities emphasize the following cognitive processes? ***Please put a tick in the right box.***

The Cognitive Processes	The Amounts			
	Very much	Quite a bit	Very little	Not at all
a- Understanding and memorizing facts and specific information				
b- Applying learned concepts in new situations to solve problems				
c- Evaluating and interpreting different texts and tasks				
d- Creating new ideas and new solutions to old problems				
e- Understanding links between different ideas and concepts				

11-To what extent do the activities implemented in upper-intermediate textbook contribute in learners' personal and social development?

a-Very much ☐　　b-Quite a bit ☐　　c-Not at all ☐　　d-Very little ☐

12- To what extent do these activities help learners develop interests and progress in learning how to learn?

a-Very good ☐ b-Good ☐ c-Fair ☐ d-Poor ☐ e-Very poor ☐

13- How far do you agree with the idea that the textbook activities designed for upper-intermediate level make a significant educational difference in learners' lives?

a-Strongly agree ☐ b-Agree ☐ c-Disagree ☐ d-Strongly disagree ☐

14- How often do the following activities take place in the textbook? *Please put a tick in the right box*.

The Activities	The Frequencies				
	Always	**Often**	**Sometimes**	**Rarely**	**Never**
a-Students are asked to remember specific information					
b-Students are asked to complete complex tasks using their prior knowledge					
c-Students are asked to evaluate their own work or learning					
d-Students are encourage to be creative learners					
e-Students are asked to reflect upon connections of different concepts or ideas					

f-Students are asked to conduct a research project in real social contexts (alone/peers/groups)					

15-Please suggest any change you would like to make in the <u>English File Upper-intermediate Students' Book</u> activities to provide a better learning experience?

a-Provide students with more engaging activities ☐

b-Replace some activities with others of your own suggestions ☐

c-Change the order of the activities ☐