



Didactics and Teaching Practices in Algerian Primary Schools: Challenges and Perspectives

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Abstract

This study examines didactics and teaching practices in Algerian primary schools, with a focus on the main challenges faced by teachers and the perspectives for improving instructional quality. It explores how didactic approaches are implemented in classroom settings and how they influence learners' comprehension, motivation, and skill development. The research highlights structural, pedagogical, and contextual constraints affecting teaching effectiveness, including overcrowded classrooms, limited instructional resources, teacher training gaps, and curriculum rigidity. At the same time, it emphasizes ongoing reform efforts and pedagogical innovations aimed at improving learning outcomes. The study adopts a descriptive-analytical approach to better understand the relationship between didactic strategies and classroom performance in the Algerian primary education context. Finally, it proposes perspectives for enhancing teaching practices through improved teacher training, learner-centered methodologies, and better integration of modern didactic tools.

Keywords: Didactics; Teaching practices; Primary education; Algeria; Pedagogical challenges; Classroom management; Curriculum; Teacher training; Learner-centered approach; Educational reform.

Introduction

Primary education represents the foundation of any educational system, as it shapes the learner's basic cognitive, linguistic, and social skills. In Algeria, primary schools play a crucial role in building the intellectual and cultural foundations of future generations. Within this context, didactics—the science of teaching and instructional methods—occupies a central position in determining the effectiveness of educational practices and the quality of learning outcomes.

Didactics in primary education is not limited to the transmission of knowledge; rather, it involves a complex set of processes that include planning, instructional design, classroom interaction, assessment, and adaptation to learners' needs. In Algerian primary schools,



teachers are required to apply national curricula while simultaneously adapting their teaching strategies to diverse classroom realities. These realities often include large class sizes, heterogeneous student abilities, and limited pedagogical resources, which make the teaching process more challenging and demanding.

Despite ongoing educational reforms aimed at improving the quality of teaching, many difficulties persist in classroom practice. One of the main challenges is the gap between theoretical didactic models introduced in teacher training programs and their actual implementation in schools. While modern pedagogical approaches emphasize learner-centered instruction, active learning, and competency-based education, classroom practices often remain traditional and teacher-centered. This mismatch affects student engagement and limits the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Furthermore, teacher preparation and continuous professional development remain key issues in the Algerian educational system. Many teachers face difficulties in updating their didactic skills or integrating new technologies and innovative methods into their teaching practices. As a result, instructional strategies may become repetitive and less effective in addressing the needs of 21st-century learners.

On the other hand, the Algerian education system has made significant efforts to modernize curricula and introduce reforms aimed at improving teaching quality. These reforms emphasize competency-based learning, integration of ICT in education, and the promotion of active learning strategies. However, the success of these reforms largely depends on their practical implementation in classrooms and the readiness of teachers to adopt new didactic approaches. Therefore, this study seeks to analyze didactics and teaching practices in Algerian primary schools by identifying the main challenges faced by teachers and exploring possible perspectives for improvement. It aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice by highlighting the importance of effective didactic strategies in enhancing the quality of primary education. Ultimately, improving teaching practices at this level is essential for ensuring better learning outcomes and for preparing learners to meet future academic and social demands.

1. Theoretical Framework of Didactics in Primary Education

Didactics is a fundamental discipline within the field of education that focuses on the science of teaching and learning processes. It examines how knowledge is transmitted, constructed, and assimilated within classroom environments. In primary education, didactics plays a crucial role because it provides teachers with structured methods to organize instruction, select appropriate teaching strategies, and ensure that learning objectives are effectively achieved. It bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical classroom application, making it an essential component of effective teaching.

The importance of didactics in primary education lies in its ability to guide teachers in making informed pedagogical decisions. At this educational level, learners are in a critical stage of cognitive and social development, which requires carefully designed instructional approaches. Didactics helps teachers adapt their lessons to the developmental needs of children, ensuring

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that concepts are presented in a simplified, engaging, and meaningful way. This contributes to improving learners' understanding and long-term retention of knowledge.

One of the central principles of didactics is the adaptation of teaching methods to learners' characteristics. This principle emphasizes that students do not learn in the same way, and therefore instruction must consider differences in abilities, learning styles, and prior knowledge. In Algerian primary schools, this principle is particularly relevant due to the diversity of learners in terms of linguistic background, cognitive levels, and social environments. Effective didactic practice requires flexibility and responsiveness from teachers in order to meet these varied needs.

Another key principle is the organization of learning content in a logical and progressive manner. Didactics stresses the importance of structuring lessons from simple to complex, allowing learners to gradually build their understanding. In primary education, this progression is essential for developing foundational skills such as reading, writing, and basic numeracy. When content is well-sequenced, students are more likely to remain engaged and less likely to experience learning difficulties.

Didactics also emphasizes the importance of active learning, where students are encouraged to participate in the learning process rather than passively receive information. This approach fosters critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. In the context of Algerian primary schools, integrating active learning strategies can significantly enhance student motivation and engagement, especially when combined with interactive classroom activities and collaborative tasks.

Traditional pedagogical approaches in education are often teacher-centered, where the teacher is the primary source of knowledge and students are expected to listen and memorize information. While this approach has historically been dominant in many educational systems, it is increasingly being questioned due to its limited capacity to develop higher-order thinking skills. In Algeria, elements of traditional teaching still exist, particularly in classrooms where resources are limited or class sizes are large.

In contrast, competency-based approaches focus on developing learners' ability to apply knowledge in real-life situations. This approach emphasizes skills development rather than rote memorization, encouraging students to demonstrate understanding through practical tasks. It aligns closely with modern educational reforms in Algeria, which aim to shift the focus from content acquisition to skill acquisition, preparing students for real-world challenges.

Learner-centered approaches represent another important dimension of modern didactics. These approaches place the student at the heart of the learning process, encouraging autonomy, participation, and collaboration. Teachers act as facilitators rather than sole knowledge providers, guiding students as they construct their own understanding. This method has shown positive results in improving motivation and academic performance, especially in primary education settings.

In the Algerian educational context, the integration of these pedagogical approaches remains a gradual process. While official curricula promote modern didactic principles, their implementation in classrooms is often influenced by practical constraints. Teachers may find

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it difficult to fully apply learner-centered or competency-based strategies due to time limitations, overcrowded classrooms, and lack of adequate training.

Despite these challenges, didactics remains a key factor in improving the quality of primary education in Algeria. Strengthening teachers' understanding of didactic principles and encouraging the use of diverse pedagogical approaches can significantly enhance teaching effectiveness. By combining traditional strengths with modern innovations, the Algerian primary education system can move toward a more balanced and effective instructional model that better supports learners' development.

2. Teaching Practices in Algerian Primary Schools

Teaching practices in Algerian primary schools are shaped by a combination of official curriculum requirements, teacher preparation, and the realities of the classroom environment. In theory, teachers are expected to implement modern pedagogical approaches that emphasize learner participation, competency development, and continuous assessment. However, the actual classroom practices often reflect a mix of traditional and modern methods, depending on available resources, class size, and teacher experience.

Lesson planning is a central component of teaching practice in primary education. Teachers are required to prepare structured lesson plans that define learning objectives, teaching steps, activities, and assessment methods. In Algerian primary schools, lesson planning is closely guided by national curricula, which provide detailed instructions on content delivery. Despite this structure, teachers often need to adapt their plans in response to classroom realities, such as time constraints or varying student abilities.

Classroom instruction in many Algerian primary schools remains predominantly teacher-centered. Teachers often rely on explanation, demonstration, and repetition as the main methods of knowledge transmission. This approach is partly influenced by large class sizes and limited instructional resources, which make interactive and student-centered activities more difficult to implement. As a result, students may play a more passive role in the learning process, focusing mainly on listening and memorization.

However, there is a gradual shift toward more interactive teaching methods in some schools. Teachers are increasingly encouraged to use group work, questioning techniques, and problem-solving activities to engage learners. These methods aim to enhance student participation and promote deeper understanding of concepts. When effectively applied, interactive teaching strategies contribute to improved motivation and better academic performance among pupils.

Assessment practices in Algerian primary schools are primarily based on continuous evaluation and written tests. Teachers regularly assess students through class exercises, oral questioning, and periodic exams. These assessments are intended to measure both knowledge acquisition and skill development. Nevertheless, in practice, assessment often focuses more on memorization and reproduction of content rather than the application of knowledge in practical situations.

Classroom management is another essential aspect of teaching practice. Teachers are responsible for maintaining discipline, organizing activities, and ensuring a productive learning

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environment. In many Algerian primary classrooms, managing student behavior can be challenging due to overcrowding and limited support resources. Effective classroom management strategies are therefore crucial for maintaining order and facilitating learning.

The use of teaching aids and instructional resources varies significantly across schools. While some teachers integrate visual aids, textbooks, and simple educational tools to support learning, others rely mainly on the textbook due to resource limitations. The lack of modern educational technologies in some schools restricts the implementation of innovative teaching methods and reduces opportunities for interactive learning experiences.

Teacher-student interaction plays a key role in shaping learning outcomes. Positive interaction encourages student participation, confidence, and engagement in the learning process. In Algerian primary schools, interaction levels depend largely on the teacher's pedagogical style. Teachers who adopt supportive and encouraging approaches tend to create more dynamic and inclusive classroom environments.

The influence of teacher training is strongly reflected in classroom practices. Teachers who have received continuous professional development are more likely to apply modern pedagogical strategies and adapt to changing educational demands. However, gaps in training opportunities can lead to reliance on traditional methods and limited innovation in teaching practices.

Overall, teaching practices in Algerian primary schools reflect a transitional stage between traditional instruction and modern pedagogical reforms. While efforts are being made to improve teaching quality through curriculum updates and training programs, practical challenges continue to shape classroom realities. Strengthening teaching practices requires continuous support for teachers, improved resources, and a stronger alignment between educational policies and classroom implementation.

3. Challenges Facing Didactics and Teaching Practices

The challenges facing didactics and teaching practices in Algerian primary schools are numerous and interconnected, affecting the overall quality of education. One of the most significant challenges is the gap between theoretical pedagogical models and their practical implementation in the classroom. While official curricula promote modern approaches such as competency-based learning and learner-centered instruction, many teachers still struggle to apply these methods effectively due to contextual limitations.

Overcrowded classrooms represent a major obstacle to effective teaching and learning. In many primary schools, teachers are responsible for a large number of pupils in a single classroom, which makes it difficult to manage activities, ensure individual attention, and assess learners properly. This situation limits interaction between teachers and students and reduces opportunities for active learning, group work, and personalized instruction.

Another key challenge is the lack of adequate teaching resources and infrastructure. Many schools face shortages in essential materials such as visual aids, updated textbooks, technological tools, and well-equipped classrooms. The absence of these resources forces teachers to rely heavily on traditional teaching methods, often centered on explanation and

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memorization, which restricts the development of more dynamic and interactive didactic practices.

Teacher training and professional development also remain critical issues. Although pre-service training provides foundational knowledge, many teachers do not receive sufficient continuous training to update their pedagogical skills. As a result, they may find it difficult to adapt to new teaching methods or integrate modern educational technologies. This limits innovation in classroom practice and slows down the implementation of educational reforms. Curriculum overload is another difficulty affecting teaching practices. The primary education curriculum is often dense and time-constrained, requiring teachers to cover a large amount of content within limited periods. This pressure encourages a focus on content completion rather than deep understanding, reducing opportunities for exploration, critical thinking, and interactive learning activities.

Linguistic diversity among students also presents a significant challenge in Algerian primary schools. Many pupils enter school with different linguistic backgrounds, particularly in relation to Arabic and French. This diversity can create learning difficulties, especially in early grades, where language plays a central role in understanding instructions and acquiring basic skills. Teachers must therefore constantly adapt their methods to address varying language proficiency levels.

Assessment practices can also be challenging, as they often emphasize memorization rather than competency development. Standardized tests and written exams may not fully reflect students' abilities to apply knowledge in real-life situations. This creates a mismatch between learning objectives and evaluation methods, limiting the effectiveness of didactic approaches aimed at skill development.

Time constraints within the school schedule further complicate teaching practices. Teachers are required to complete extensive lesson plans within limited time frames, leaving little room for remedial activities, revision, or interactive learning sessions. This pressure often leads to a rushed teaching pace, which can negatively affect student comprehension and engagement.

Another challenge lies in classroom management, particularly in large and heterogeneous groups. Maintaining discipline while promoting active participation can be difficult, especially when students have different learning speeds and behavioral patterns. Teachers must constantly balance instructional delivery with behavior management, which can reduce the overall quality of teaching.

Overall, these challenges highlight the complexity of improving didactics and teaching practices in Algerian primary schools. Addressing them requires coordinated efforts in teacher training, resource allocation, curriculum design, and educational policy reform. Without such improvements, the gap between pedagogical ideals and classroom realities is likely to persist, limiting the effectiveness of primary education.

4.Challenges and Recommendations

The challenges facing didactics and teaching practices in Algerian primary schools are multifaceted and continue to hinder the full realization of educational quality. One of the most

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persistent difficulties is overcrowded classrooms, which significantly limit teachers' ability to apply effective didactic strategies. When class sizes are too large, it becomes difficult to ensure individualized attention, manage classroom activities efficiently, and maintain active student participation, all of which are essential for meaningful learning.

Another major constraint is the lack of adequate teaching resources and infrastructure. Many primary schools operate with insufficient educational materials such as visual aids, laboratory tools, digital technologies, and updated textbooks. This shortage forces teachers to rely heavily on traditional lecture-based methods, which restrict opportunities for interactive and learner-centered instruction. Consequently, the teaching process often becomes less engaging and less effective in developing students' competencies.

Insufficient teacher training is also a critical issue affecting teaching quality. Although teachers receive initial training, opportunities for continuous professional development are often limited. This prevents educators from updating their pedagogical knowledge and adapting to new instructional approaches. As a result, many teachers continue to use outdated methods that do not fully align with modern didactic principles or current educational reforms.

Curriculum constraints represent another significant challenge. The primary education curriculum is often dense and time-restricted, requiring teachers to cover a wide range of content within limited periods. This pressure encourages a focus on completing syllabus requirements rather than ensuring deep understanding of concepts. In many cases, it reduces the time available for revision, practical activities, and learner-centered teaching practices.

A major concern in Algerian primary education is the gap between educational theory and classroom practice. While reforms promote competency-based and learner-centered approaches, the actual implementation in schools often remains limited. Teachers may understand these modern pedagogical models in theory but face difficulties applying them due to structural and contextual constraints, creating a disconnect between policy and practice.

Language-related difficulties also contribute to teaching challenges. Students often come from diverse linguistic backgrounds, which can affect their comprehension and participation in classroom activities. This is particularly evident in early primary grades, where learners are still developing basic language skills. Teachers must therefore constantly adjust their instructional strategies to accommodate varying levels of linguistic proficiency.

Classroom management is another ongoing challenge, especially in environments with large and heterogeneous student groups. Maintaining discipline while encouraging participation requires significant effort and skill. Teachers often struggle to balance instruction with behavior management, which can reduce instructional time and limit the effectiveness of teaching practices.

Assessment methods also pose challenges, as they tend to emphasize memorization and written examinations rather than practical application of knowledge. This creates a mismatch between learning objectives and evaluation practices, limiting the development of higher-order thinking skills and reducing the effectiveness of competency-based education.

Despite these challenges, there are several important perspectives for improving teaching quality in Algerian primary schools. Strengthening teacher training programs, particularly

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through continuous professional development, is essential for equipping educators with modern pedagogical skills. Training should focus on interactive teaching methods, classroom management strategies, and the integration of educational technologies.

Improving infrastructure and providing adequate teaching resources is also crucial. Equipping schools with modern educational tools can support more dynamic and engaging teaching practices. In addition, reducing class sizes where possible would significantly enhance the effectiveness of instruction and allow for more individualized learning.

Curriculum reform is another important perspective. A more flexible and streamlined curriculum would enable teachers to focus on deep learning rather than content coverage. Aligning curriculum objectives with real classroom conditions can help bridge the gap between theory and practice.

Finally, promoting learner-centered and competency-based approaches in a more practical and supportive manner can improve educational outcomes. Encouraging active learning, collaboration, and problem-solving activities will help students develop essential skills for academic success and future life challenges.

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