Global educational reform in a local context

Implementation, resistance, and negotiation of educational reform in Moroccan municipal upper-secondary schools

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Abstract
This thesis showed an analysis of what happened when global educational reforms were implemented in a local Moroccan culture context. Through analyzing and deconstructing discourses in policy documents, as well as qualitative interviews with teachers and pupils in municipal upper-secondary schools and comparing these to each other, a picture was given of what happened in the meeting between the new policies and the implementation of them locally; how they were implemented, resisted and negotiated by different parties concerned. The educational policy, advocating e.g. Education for All, and acquisition of foreign language skills, reproduced social hierarchies when implemented in the Moroccan context. Post-colonial languages, such as French, worked as a class cursor, creating a rift between the social classes and their access to higher education. Student-centered methods were resisted by the teachers, but negotiated by the pupils.

Key words: educational reform, Morocco, languages, English, social class, student-centered learning.
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INTRODUCTION

Morocco is a low income Muslim country, which during the first half of the 20th century was a French protectorate. The formal educational system has to a large extent been built up by the French, and the French influence within the educational system is still considerable. French is in general the first foreign language children learn in school. The country is currently undergoing extensive educational reforms, aiming to eradicate illiteracy as well as preparing the citizens for globalization and an international and flexible job market. According to the aims of the Ministry of Education (1999), language skills in general and English in particular, are strongly advocated in order to be able to compete in the global market. A previously strict teacher-centered education is now to be reshaped to one more individualized and student-centered.

I have lived in Casablanca, Morocco’s biggest city, for about a decade. I work as a teacher of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at a private language center, where an overwhelming majority of the students are Moroccan. In my B.A. thesis in education, I carried out a research on younger teenagers’ self-evaluation at the language center. The result of my research showed that the girls have more difficulties relating to a student-centered learning than the boys (Rönn, 2011). This enhanced my interest for educational reforms, and how they are experienced and understood in a Moroccan context. This will hence be the focus in my Master thesis in education.

MOROCCAN EDUCATIONAL REFORM CONTEXT

Globalization and educational reforms

National reforms are globally becoming more and more similar, and organizations such as the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), UNESCO, and the European Union play a more important role in the processes than before. (Rizvi & Lingard 2010). Therefore, Rizvi & Lingard claim that educational policy analyses need to take into consideration the pressure from outside the nation, as well as the colonial past and present; the expressions of globalization have, from a historical point of view, grown out from a set of colonial practices.

Common to many national reforms is the focus on Gender Mainstreaming, alongside with claims that national and economic development are two main goals of education. An increased focus is put on student-centered pedagogy, school choice, standardized testing and core subjects, as well as an enhanced focus on language skills and particularly English (Anderson-Levitt, 2003).

There is currently, according to Rizvi & Lingard (2010), a global shift, where neo-liberal values, such as privatizations, are to solve various crises and problems that governments are facing. Matching the idea of the market economy and globalization is the idea of privatization of school establishments, along with the individual’s free choice. Privatization, it is argued, thus leads to more injustices; not only between nations, but also within them, which leads to further difficulties concerning gender and racial issues. Rizvi & Lingard argue further against what the World Bank, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and to some extent UNESCO claim; that globalization of trade and
market economy empowers the poor, and state quite the contrary, that globalization mainly empowers global elite at the expense of poor countries and ordinary workers.

As pointed out above, educational policy discourses are globalized and linked to national and local policies, and emanate more and more from supranational and international organizations such as, for example the European Union, the World Bank, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. International organizations influence both national education policies as well as their evaluation. Policy texts, often express interests and values as being in the public good, Rizvi & Lingard argues, but often they camouflage whose interests they represent. Measurable outcomes of the educational reforms at an international level become more important, and quality is rather measured in comparison with for example the PISA within the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The local system is tied to an international system, and testing has become a way of measuring how effective national educations systems are presumed to be.

In 2000 reforms were launched in Morocco that advocated for example Education for All, improved quality of secondary schooling, and the strengthening of teaching skills. In 2009 an emergency plan was designed in order to speed up the implementation of the reform from 2000. African Development Bank, European Investment Bank, European Commission, French Development Agency and the World Bank were technical and financial partners, and some countries such as Belgium, Canada, Germany, Spain and the United States were bilateral partners and also sponsored educational reforms in Morocco with allowances such as “Investment project loan” (African Development Bank, 2009). The reforms and the effects of these initiatives are discussed in the following.

Morocco, and educational reforms
Morocco has 32 million inhabitants. The country is facing financial problems and rapidly increasing population growth. In 2011 approximately 28 % of the population was under the age of 15. The migration from rural areas to towns and cities is very big, for example Casablanca reached 3.4 million inhabitants in 2012, and this has resulted in slum areas on the outskirts of the cities. A good half of the population lives in cities. Together with the International Money Foundation, the country has launched a program for economic reforms; with for example privatizations and investment in export-related industries. There is a general idea that a major cause of extremism in Northern Africa is due to economic stagnation (Holden, 2009). Holden further claims that Morocco is seen as an example of an Arab state with democratic features and a cooperative government. Political liberalization combined with economic development is assumed to enhance the security situation.

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1 A policy expresses, according to Rizvi & Lingard (2010: 4), a pattern of decisions, not on an individual level, but in a context of other decisions made by political actors representing state institutions.
2 PISA stands for Program for International Student Assessment, and is an international assessment of 15-year-olds pupils in mathematics, science and reading comprehension, order to evaluate each country’s management in preparing the pupils for lifelong learning. The study is an OECD project and is carried out every three years, through exam-taking. Both OECD countries and other countries participate. (Downloaded from Nationalencyklopedin, July 23, 2013. “PISA” http://www.ne.se/lang/pisa/2302357)
3 West Sahara not included.
He continues:

*From the Euro-American point of view economic reform is seen as beneficial to development, which should in return reduce support for domestic and transnational extremism. Regime leaders in North Africa also explicitly link development with security and stability* (Holden, 2009: 11).

Arabs and Arabized Berbers form 66% of the population in Morocco. The rest of the population is mainly Berber, belonging to different tribes and speaking different languages and dialects. Most Berbers are bilingual. In 1963 compulsory school was introduced - but the country has a long schooling tradition. The language of instruction is Arabic for the lower levels. Existing school infrastructure does not cover the country’s needs, and there are many private school establishments – in particular French ones. In 2009 approximately 44% of the adult population was considered illiterate, and the ratio of illiterate women to illiterate men was 56% to 31%.

After independence from France in 1956, Morocco was left with a complex educational structure; there were Quranic schools which had existed both before and during the French colonization, French public schools providing schooling for French and Moroccan children, Moroccan schools which countered the French schools, and Israeli schools for the Moroccan Jewish children (Boubkir & Boukamhi, 2005). After independence many different educational reforms were implemented, and some of which as a direct reaction to the French colonizers. The period from independence to the early 80’s was characterized by four main goals: to unify the Moroccan educational system: to get a general education for all children in school age: to introduce Arabic as the language of instruction: and finally to enhance the number of Moroccan teachers and administration staff members – though most of the teachers and administration staff were foreigners. Until 1965 one main goal with the reforms was to provide access to schooling for more children, and schooling rates raised until 1965 when it was decided to limit the number to 360 000, with a million children left behind, which led to a drastic decrease of schooling in the following years. In the beginning of the 80’s the World Bank started to influence the educational reforms, emphasizing issues concerning illiteracy and the access of schooling. High drop-out rates, and pupils who did not finish upper-secondary school, or did not fit into the job market were seen as a major issue. The main focus was to reconstruct primary and secondary education, in total nine years of schooling. One aim with the reform was to limit the number of pupils going to upper secondary school who later would go to college, and instead provide professional training programs. Private schools were encouraged to relieve the government’s burden. The reforms also advocated a comprehensive change including for example textbooks and curricula (Boubkir & Boukamhi, 2005). In 2000 the Moroccan government adopted the educational reform *National Charter for Education and Training* as a means to enhance the country’s economic and social development, a need which previous reforms had not been able to meet. Many college and university students were jobless after having finished their studies, teachers complained about their working conditions, parents and children were not satisfied with the quality of education, and many children did not have access to schooling. The new goals could, according to Boubkir & Boukamhi (2005), for example be to enhance the quality of education, and provide suitable education to meet the needs of the economy.

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5 The university Qarawiyyin in Fès - founded in 859 - is considered as the oldest university in the world.
In the last decades it is argued that schools in Morocco have been alienated from real life, which Boubkir & Boukamhi (2005) claim to be the cause of poor performances on behalf of both students and teachers, and one of the aims with the new reforms is to change this. The reform has had little impact on the economic growth; and the current elevated unemployment rate in the last decades is to be seen as a result of this (Boubkir & Boukamhi, 2005). The language of instruction at a university level is an important issue in Morocco, some preferring it to be French and others Arabic. According to Boubkir & Boukamhi, the reform launched in 2000 is also opening up for the use of English. One aim with the new reform is to eradicate illiteracy, and provide schooling for children of all ages. The Ministry of Education (1999) has given directives for considerable changes from the point of view of education and learning in Morocco. The new guidelines for the country’s education emphasizes that the importance of the new national curriculum in general, and the one about foreign languages in particular, should respond to the perpetual changeable financial, social, and cultural needs in Morocco (Ministry of National Education, 1999). Learning foreign languages, in particular English, is considered a key factor in the inexorable striving for access to the globalized world. Here, the importance of learning how to learn, is considered as a guarantee for the citizens’ lifelong learning. The importance of the individual is underlined. Some of the aims the schools are to achieve are to promote the Islamic and Moroccan identity, enhance the pupils’ understanding of the values of democracy, develop learner autonomy and critical thinking, and to promote their desire to learn (Ministry of National Education, 1999).

The decade 2000-2009 was declared as the national decade for education and training. The aim was that by the end of 2005 90% of children should be enrolled in primary schools, and that by 2008, 80% should be enrolled in middle-school. After middle school, 60% of the pupils should be in either high schools or job training schools by 2011. 40% of these were presumed to pass the A-level exam in 2011 (Ministry of Education, 1999). In 2009, an “Emergency Plan”, was launched in order to further speed up the implementation of the reform started in 2000, to have “almost 100% of six-year-old children enter primary school and stay in formal schooling until the age of 15” (Ministry of Education, 2008). To reinforce the teachers’ competence was another aim of this addition to the 2000 reform. According to Moroccan statistics (Ministry of Education, 2012), more girls than boys study the last year of upper-secondary in urban areas, and more boys than girls repeat the year. Furthermore the private schools have increased from representing 5% of the upper-secondary schools in 2003-2004, to representing 9% by 2011-2012. In the region of Great Casablanca, more girls than boys study in municipal upper-secondary schools. However, more boys than girls study in private schools.

**AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This thesis examines educational reforms in the Moroccan schooling system, in the context of language teaching/learning at upper-secondary school level. The aim is to explore what problems are
formulated in policy and what solutions are advocated, as well as how teachers and pupils relate to the central aims in the curricula.

My research questions are:

- What goals and visions are emphasized in the new policy documents for English, at upper-secondary school level in Morocco?
- How do teachers of English relate to the policy’s goals and vision in their English teaching practice in upper-secondary schools in Morocco?
- How do upper-secondary school pupils experience the implementation of the policy’s goal and visions?
- How can the reform be analyzed from a national as well as international context?

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Global aspects of educational policies

Aid agencies and standardized education

Since the 1950’s, educational reforms worldwide tend to have a focus on equality, and reducing illiteracy (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Even though national states vary a lot, many of their goals for education have become standardized, and also the strategies of how to achieve them. Doctrines about the nation state, citizens, human rights and education - both for the individual’s and society’s best - have been institutionalized by organizations such as, for example, the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and other non-governmental as well as governmental organizations (e.g. Meyer & Ramirez, 2000; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). School systems in many countries have seemingly become more similar (e.g. Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Rizvi & Lingard 2010; Steiner-Khamsi, 2000). In a world where education is considered to be the essence of progress, educational policy is among the first ideas to be copied, and issues concerning human rights and Gender Mainstreaming have come to influence national educational policy and practices. The higher the extent to which a national state is involved in “world society and linked to its organizational carriers, the more its educational system will correspond to world models and will change in directions attuned to changes in world emphases” (Meyer & Ramirez, 2000: 120). As education gets standardized around the world, the authors claim further, and in particular in developing countries, that it is a national central organization which controls and carries it out (Meyer & Ramirez, 2000). Development aid organizations started to get interested in pedagogy, and student-centered learning in particular, after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Neoliberal forces as a developing paradigm for democratic development and as a condition for the economic development during the 80’s and 90’s, have been the driving force in this process. In development aid countries student-centered learning has thus become a part of the development of democratization. From this point of view, educational reforms are to be seen as a Westernization process, disguised as effective and quality education. One reason behind this mainstreaming is that powerful donors, such as the World Bank – as well as the global economy –
have an influence on how the reforms are implemented on a national level (Tabulawa, 2003). Tabulawa claims that

(...) aid agencies’ primary interest in the pedagogy is political and ideological, [and] not educational. It is in this context that learner-centered pedagogy’s much-praised capacity to promote ‘quality’ and ‘effective’ education should be understood (Tabulawa, 2003: 22).

A shift towards neoliberal values is also seen in the discourse on privatization, in educational policies; where private concerned parties and the market economy are assumed to solve various educational problems. Linked to the free market is also the idea of choice and privatization in education, and accordingly that efficiencies can “be obtained from the transfer of services provided by the public sector to a range of private-sector interests, and by giving greater choice to the educational consumer” (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010: 86).

The World Declaration on Education for All which was proposed by the United Nations Development Program together with other organizations has its starting point in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that every child has the right to schooling; primary education is presumed to give both social and economic benefits to the community (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Democratic values are often emphasized in the policies of education, and states often agree on models providing schooling for ethnic minorities and girls; Gender Mainstreaming is thus widespread in donor implemented projects (e.g. Chounlamany & Kounphilaphanh, 2011; Bäcktorp, 2007).

**Gender Mainstreaming**

Gender Mainstreaming tends to be the Westernized one-sided perspective in promoting women’s rights and democracy. The effect might differ in various local contexts, though. For example Bäcktorp (2007) argues that gender is not necessarily the central position in Laos, because of “nayobay” a system granted by the government giving advantages to family members to such as for example national heroes, leaders and teachers. As a consequence children of teachers could go to University without a passing grade on the entrance exam. This could be an advantage for women and ethnic minorities, scaffolding them in getting access to higher education in spite of lacking academic merit. This could, Bäcktorp claims, be seen both as a social equalizer and as a support and reinforcement of the position of those already rooted in the system. The nayobay functions to some extent as a quota for women – provided that they have the kinship and background. Thus other factors than Gender Mainstreaming favor women in education, in the Lao society, even though this is not because she is a woman, but because of her family relations.

Middle-class girls now challenge the boys in secondary schooling and enroll in universities to a larger extent than boys in Great Britain (Arnot, David & Weiner, 1999). The authors further claim that it is poor boys and girls who do not benefit as well as the more privileged pupils do in schooling. The arguments emphasized by non-governmental organizations like the World Bank, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in recent years for greater access for girls in schooling, has been that it gives the highest returns in economic terms (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). The World Bank states in terms of efficiency, that women in general work harder than men, and are major consumers as well as producers (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). However, they point out, the economic efficiency of women is obtained through longer working days, that educated women tend to earn less than men, and that they often are the one in charge of the family’s welfare.
Education as remedy
There is a tendency to see education as the solution to various problems; it is for example considered to enhance productivity (Alvesson, 1999). Modern education is rather considered as “a world enterprise, universal and universalistic in aspiration and in some measure in outcome” (Meyer & Ramirez, 2000; 115), and Alvesson underlines that education is claimed to be a good investment for the individual, companies and the society and he refers to the over-confidence in education as a remedy to all different kinds of problems as education fundamentalism. Education fundamentalism, he defines, is composed of policies and assumptions, such as for example, firstly, that education is something good, and you cannot get too much of it. Secondly, some people are defined as low-skilled, and they need to be an object of efforts in order to remedy this condition, and thirdly, education is the solution to many problems; from international contestability to unemployment. However, education does not only solve problems, Alvesson claims. Negative effects are rarely noticed, nor does it attract much attention that people in schooling also reduce unemployment rates. Staking for higher education can create problems; the value of higher education on the job market is reduced, if average schooling is increased without working life adapting to it in a similar way. Furthermore it is difficult to see, in many different kinds of jobs, how the productivity can be enhanced as a result of the staff members’ qualifications; for example taxi drivers or people working in child day care. Alvesson questions to what extent the working life is relevant to the international competition, since public administration and private service industry in general stand outside international competition.

Technology
Technology is often discussed in educational policy, as it is described as fundamental in economic development. Technology does not only concern the access to the hardware, but also how knowledge is produced and distributed. The unequal divide of the use of the Internet in developed and developing countries, as well as the rift between poor and rich within each nation can hence, Rizvi & Lingard (2010) argue, be seen as a source of underdevelopment. However, it is important not to forget that “[m]uch of the content on the Internet is produced in the developed countries, where English is the dominant language” (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010: 156) and thus the knowledge is skewed toward the global North. They argue further, referring to Peters and Britze, that using the Internet in a more equal way would mean relying more on democratic initiatives such as Creative Commons and Open Source, but also to take it one step further and to enhance the students’ capacity to implement them in a relevant and useful way in a local context.

Languages and the global job market
National documents often agree that the entire population and the nation benefit from education; that it is a human right with positive effects leading to among other things economic growth. Core subjects are central, and an enhanced focus is on language skills and English in particular (Anderson-Levitt, 2003). English and higher education has furthermore benefited from people’s desire to “become transnationally mobile” (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010: 162). Motivation in acquiring English is important from a perspective of globalization where the pupils’ senses of identity, as well as the English language’s importance as world leading language, are taken into consideration. Thus a model

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12 Creative Commons is a licence system where the originators of materials give the authorisation to others to use it in different ways. Open Source is a principle for computer programs where the user have free access to it and can correct and modify it, which gives a high quality. They are often free to be spread. Nationalencyklopedin; http://www.ne.se/creative-commons and http://www.ne.se/lang/%C3%B6ppen-k%C3%A4llkod, downloaded August 10, 2013.
where the pupils’ real identity meets an imagined global fellowship, as a user of the language, form the basis of their motivation, Ryan (2006) claims.

**The local context and educational reforms**

**General aspects of lending and borrowing reforms**

Do school reforms “happen” at the global and national levels, or at the school and classroom levels, Anderson-Levitt (2003) questions? Local actors do not always borrow reforms freely – and ministries might hint resistance. Even when the reforms are imported freely by the ministry, they are often experienced by the teacher as imposed form above.

None of us can ignore that ministries of education, school inspectors, teachers, students, and parents import, play with, or react against a set of similar-looking reforms that are traded back and forth across countries. (Anderson-Levitt, 2003: 18)

Educators, administrators and students transform the meanings of the reforms, or resist them, and thus create different experiences. Therefore, Anderson-Levitt claims, the world is not becoming more homogeneous. When local actors resist the reforms, there might be huge gaps between the practice and the model. Contradictions might thus appear within the national reform. Contradictions within the policies might be explained by saying the reforms carry a national dialogue. Even though the common structure of the reform matters, putting “a frame around ordinarily thinkable ways of doing schooling” (Anderson-Levitt, 2003: 18), lived experience matters more. Therefore, she argues, global reforms like the World Bank’s and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization’s policies, are less homogeneous than the reformers might have foreseen due to local actors and teachers who resist the models they are given. Also differences between nation states occur, for example in many countries whole-class lectures is the standard model of instruction, and in other countries small groups are encouraged. France is an example of largely whole-class instructions, and might thus be considered, as less modern as for example the United States where small-class settings are more common. When global modes of education change it reaches different countries at different times, and some countries will probably always be considered to be “behind” (Anderson-Levitt, 2003: 14). In the following I will give a few examples of educational reforms and tensions in the implementations of them in different countries and cultural contexts.

**Borrowed reforms in Pakistan, Morocco, Botswana, Lao PDR, and Mongolia**

Islamization movements have developed in a number of Muslim countries as a response to modernity, wanting to permeate “all forms of knowledge with Islamic values and arrest the secularization and modernization of knowledge. (...) The movement is rooted in the history of Muslim societies, where religious discourses mediated power and control” (Talbani, 1996: 66). Talbani gives a historical perspective of the tradition of learning in Islam; and states that authoritative acceptance of knowledge is emphasized in traditional Islamic pedagogy; and that learning often is “based on listening, memorizing, and regurgitation” (Talbani, 1996: 70). He continues that listening to the teacher – who is active in transmitting knowledge – is stressed, and the pupil remains passive. In orthodox Islamic schools pedagogical discourses became a tool for social control, and “resulted in an educational stagnation that still persists” (Talbani, 1996: 71). Furthermore he claims that respect and obedience to political and religious authorities became a part of the Muslim culture – and led to a
strong political and cultural identity. To be Muslim, Talbani continues, meant to be loyal to, and obey traditional authority systems – and as a result colonial rule became a serious threat to these loyalties and identities. Modernization is in opposition to traditionalism; and values such as consumerism, rationalism, secularism and individualism threaten the traditional systems. Talbani gives examples from Pakistan where the country’s history in text books during the 1970’s was reshaped to fit the Quran, and also points out that there was a resistance against modern science that did not go with the Quran. However, there is also a public resistance that remains a great importance of public discourse in the country (Talbani, 1996).

The implementation of educational reforms and providing education for all, including girls, has been a huge issue in Pakistan (Ali, 2006). Education was seen as a tool to reduce poverty, and a three year plan in line with the donor organizations was introduced instead of the more traditional five-year plan. One problem, is the dependence of loans and aid from, for example, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which according to Ali hamper “the government’s efforts to develop its policies and plans free of external interference, and push for short term measures to fulfill the immediate requirements of lenders (...)” (Ali, 2006: 9). Rizvi & Lingard (2010) writes that the reforms underline that the citizens of Pakistan need to, through the educational system, be prompted to reach social and individual goals of empowerment, and also envisages that a moderate Islam is consistent with modernity – thus pushing for secular schooling and regarding mainly the family as being responsible for religious education.

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The World Bank, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and USAID are some organizations which have worked to enhance the level of education among women in Morocco. Women’s illiteracy and education have thus been an issue for the educational reforms, and though Moroccan women are more engaged than men in the raising of children, there is a considerable “tendency for children born to undereducated mothers to be at the highest risk of being illiterate and/or undereducated” (Larhouasli Marrakchi, 2008: 58). In spite of democratization values shared by international donor organizations and Morocco, Larhouasli Marrakchi argues, it is needed to be taken into consideration that Morocco remains a Muslim country, with Muslim laws:

Moroccans sustain a double identity, the first as a community of believers and the second as citizens of a democratic state. Although the Moroccan Constitution sustains that men and women are equal, laws relating to marriage, divorce and inheritance to name a few have continued to limit women’s freedom and rights within the society. Moroccan women must thus be identified not as Muslims and citizens, but as second-class citizens. (Larhouasli Marrakchi, 2008: 61)

The aim with the educational reforms in Botswana, which have been adjusted to respond to a globalized market economy and production processes, is according to Tabulawa (2009) to form the “self-programmable worker”, characterized by flexibility, autonomous thinking, inventiveness and creativity. But, Tabulawa claims, the country is far from catching up with the developed countries’ high technology places of work in the globalized market economy. The school establishments were to educate “self-programmable learners” having the competence to encounter a society with an economy fast and constantly changing, in order to compete in the global market; and the pupils’ ability to work in groups, think autonomously, discuss, and cooperate with others was highlighted as a part of a democratic development. However, paradoxes in the educational reforms, he claims,
might give the opposite effects and: “(...) it is highly unlikely that the preferred learner will be produced”. He continues that a:

**critical evaluation of the policy and its attendant learning program (curricula) points in the opposite direction: in practice it is more likely to produce conformists fit only for outdated Fordist production processes** (Tabulawa, 2009: 103).

How student-centered learning is understood and negotiated in a local context, at teachers’ training colleges in Lao PDR, a former French colony, is described by Chounlamany & Kounphilaphanh (2011). Teachers have high status in Laos. At teachers’ training college, group work as advocated in the policy, was carried out to a high extent. One reason for this was the large groups of students; sometimes more than 100 students in a class. Dividing the class into many small groups tended to preserve a teacher-centered approach, though. One student was often chosen in each group to have the main responsibility for the group, and was obliged to report for example misconduct to the teacher. The group leader seemed to be an elongation of the teacher, partly taking over the teacher’s role. Furthermore, the students were often requested to hand in an individual written assignment to the teacher – and not an assignment produced by the group – to be graded. In spite of that discussions in the group tended to encourage both female and ethnic minorities’ students to dare participate more, the hierarchic classroom practice remained.

Steiner-Khamsi & Stolpe (2006) focus on how global educational reforms are transformed when implemented in a local context in Mongolia, a country which is one of few in the world where the attainment of boys in schooling is lower than for girls; two thirds of those who drop out of school or do not attain school are boys. Many educational reforms have been borrowed from high income countries to Mongolia, in spite of that one third of the country’s population is poor or very poor, and another third is nomadic people. The donors could not agree on the best way to handle boarding schools in nomadic education, and accordingly considered it an internal problem. However, “(...) international donors disregard ‘national ownership’ or local forces, and dismiss locally developed solutions,” (Steiner-Khamsi & Stolpe, 2006; 183). Student-centered learning was part of the reform to be implemented in a traditionally bound teacher-centered classroom practice. However in the local national context, pupils – elected by other pupils – represented smaller groups in the classroom and were responsible for academic as well as discipline issues within the group. The monitors, most of them being female as a consequence of that the best pupils in the classes in general were female, assisted the teachers and were mainly the ones who responded to questions. Consequently many pupils did not participate much and the monitors served as an elongation of the teacher. Group work thus played a hierarchical role in the Mongolian class room, promoting a system where the pupils learn to rely on leaders and become passive and less critical in their thinking.

Student-centered learning has thus a central part in educational reforms, and the individual’s position is, in accordance with neo-liberal values, prominent in contemporary educational policies.

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13 As for example “nayobay” (Bäcktorp, 2007).
The individual and educational policies

Student-centered pedagogy

In spite of educational policy efforts to accomplish equality, it seems as though social class is reproduced through education. Many people have negative experience of schooling, and it is associated with sufferance, low self-esteem, frustration and dreariness. Trying to solve the low-skilled’s social situation by offering more schooling might therefore increase the problems the policy sets out to solve (Alvesson, 1999). None is assumed to be the fact of not wanting to go to school for a considerable amount of his or her life; not having access to the job market until after 12-15 years of schooling can easily give expression to the idea that those not having access to a longer education are considered misfits. Many jobs could also be performed with less educational background. A one-sided focus on the beneficial effects of education tend to marginalize other qualifications such as interest, personal adequacy and experience; establishing that most of us have experienced teachers having the formal qualifications, but lacking ability to teach well, Alvesson continues.

There is a shift in education in contemporary society, where the State has a role in creating self-governing individuals; what Foucault refered to as governmentality (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). In a neoliberal market economy the individual has a central position. In transnational reforms there is an increased focus on student-centered pedagogy (e.g. Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Chounlamany & Kounphilaphanh, 2011). One way to understand student-centered learning is that it is based on the idea that knowledge is socially constructed, reconstructed and formed contextually (van Harmelen, 1998). Lifelong learning is one issue that is emphasized in educational policies; and includes according to Rizvi & Lingard (2010) the need to acquire knowledge the whole life through, either in formal or informal education. The importance is not only on “what” to know but rather “how” to know. The learning can take place between generations so parents for example can learn how to use new technology through their own children, the individual is held responsible for his/her own education and should rather consider it as an economical investment. Furthermore it configures the citizen to a knowledge-based society that is formed by globalization (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010: 84-85).

Motivation to learn

In today’s epoch of globalization and market economy, citizens are expected to be flexible and ready to adapt to a constantly changing world, which is not always what happens in practice:

The extremely rapid rate of change in social development, globalisation’s breaking down of borders and cultures, and breakdown in a long series of traditional patterns of interpretations of, for example, religious, ideological, class and traditional natures, all bring more and more people into exile, [and] sudden involuntary unemployment (...) (Illeris, 2008: 45).

Illeris continues that, living in the knowledge society, conveys ideas of an international competition of citizens’ competence, and leads to an awareness of the importance of personal development and also a willingness for life-long learning, which concerns in particular educational reforms, and educational management. A growing problem in the education system is that the pupils’ motivation is under pressure in most parts of the educational system. Apart from pressure on the content and interaction areas, there are also motivation problems and ambivalent feelings in the incentive area.14

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14 Illeris argues that there are three fundamental dimensions of learning which are essential for all understanding and analysis of a learning situation. Two have to do with the individual acquisition process, where content and incentive
Some like, and perform better under pressure, but weak pupils in particular have problems managing it and become insecure and their motivation ambivalent. On the one hand, they would like to qualify themselves, but on the other hand they would like to escape it for fear of more defeats. This is the effect of the knowledge society, and nothing that could be eradicated “by some suitable educational reforms” (Illeris, 2008: 94). Ameliorated framework conditions, such as teacher training and better economy can improve this, but, Illeris underlines, reinforcing the positive part of the pupils’ ambivalence in the motivation issue needs to be noticed; to listen to the pupils, to accommodate them, and to give them “the highest possible degree of self-determination” (Illeris, 2008: 94), is therefore a high priority. However, avoiding treating the learners impersonally, playing on their insecurity, acting over their heads, as well as doing things which they are sensible to and may experience as humiliating, is also important. This, Illeris argues, sounds very easy, but in practice it is not. However, experience shows that it is a successful means of considerably reducing the motivation problems. Another aspect of pupils’ motivation is that when analyzing the differences between successful and unsuccessful pupils in Swedish upper-secondary schools, it turned out that those who were successful and seemingly motivated, also were the ones who had a competing mentality. The importance of “making the right choices, engaging in competitive behavior and exploiting teacher time and resources to improve one’s school grades” were emphasized (Beach & Dovemark, 2011). The unsuccessful pupils positioned themselves as having been belittled by teachers, but also that they did not care much about competing, neither in school nor in a longer perspective on the future university studies. Beach and Dovemark argue that those who do not have a mentality of competing - matching the neo-liberal ideals of the global market economy - are left behind and are often considered by teachers as lacking in effort and ability. However, from another perspective this can also be interpreted as a lack of selfish interests and individual enterprise, and are assumed as needing to acquire these skills in order to be successful in the knowledge society.

Delimitations

I do not speak Arabic, and therefore rely only on Anglophone, Francophone and Swedish previous research on educational policies. Not much seems to be written in English about educational reforms in Muslim countries, though. In spite of that there might be considerable research in French; scientific articles and literature in French are scarce in the mainly Anglophone databases for scientific research, such as for example ERIC. I have contacted Gita Steiner-Khamsi, hoping to get in contact with researchers specializing on educational reforms in the Muslim world, but unfortunately have not received any response.\(^\text{15}\) The previous research I have chosen to rely on, is thus either more general, focusing on general aspects of educational reforms in a globalized world, with an enhanced focus on common discourses such as for example preparing the citizens for a global job market, privatizations, Gender Mainstreaming and an enhanced focus on the individual such as in student-centered learning.

It is important to know who has dictated the reforms in the policy documents I use; and to what extent they are copied directly from the donor/donors, or if the Moroccan Ministry of Education has

modified it to suit their purposes all respecting what the donors demand. However I have left this question out of my thesis in order to limit the extent of my research. The teachers and the pupils still have to relate to the existing policy documents in their practice whoever dictated them, because they are established and/or approved by the government.\textsuperscript{16}

I decided to do research on the implementation of the current educational reform in Morocco. I have chosen to carry out my research in municipal schools, aiming to reach those who cannot afford or who do not want, to turn to private school establishments. Furthermore I have focused on the upper-secondary school level because of its importance as a bridge between the compulsory school and the university. Since language acquiring in general and English in particular, is central in contemporary global reforms, I have decided to focus on language learning in general and English in particular. Eventually I have chosen to focus both on policy documents per se, as well as the teachers’ and pupils’ experiences and feelings related to the educational reforms.

**THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

**Discourse Theory**

In educational research Foucault’s theories about power, knowledge, discourse, and governmentality often have a central position (e.g. Bäcktorp, 2007; Larsson, 2001; Steiner-Khamsi, 2000). Discourse theory has as point of departure a poststructuralist idea comprising that the meaning of the social world is constructed by discourse, and considering the changeable basis of language, meaning is never firmly fixed. “No discourse is a closed entity: it is, rather, constantly being transformed through contact with other discourses. So a keyword of the theory is “discursive struggle” Jørgensen & Phillips (2012: 6). To map out the process of how meaning becomes fixed and the process of how some ideas of meaning become so conventional that they are considered natural, is what the aim of discourse analysis is about. Power is understood as something which produces social aspect of life. “Power is responsible both for creating our social world and for the particular ways in which the world is formed and can be talked about, ruling out alternative ways of being and talking. Power is thus both a productive and constraining force” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2012: 14).

Power is not to be considered as negative:

\begin{quote}
We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it ‘excludes’, it ‘represses’, it ‘censors’, it ‘abstracts’, it ‘masks’, it ‘conceals’. In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production (Foucault, 1977: 194).
\end{quote}

One difficulty analyzing the modern exercise of power is that the steering of us works because we have the freedom to develop ourselves, and that the individual has the responsibility for learning. According to Foucault, the individual simultaneously strains, not only to produce knowledge but also

\textsuperscript{16} It might have an influence on the analysis of the control documents themselves, not knowing how much the government advocates these changes or resists some of the changes, though.
to construct himself (Hermann, 2009). Identities and knowledge is “always contingent in principle, they are always relatively inflexible in specific situations. Specific situations place restrictions on the identities which an individual can assume and on the statements which can be accepted as meaningful” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2012: 6).

Jørgensen and Phillips, list four premises which are shared by all social constructionists. These are: to have a critical approach to knowledge that is taken for granted, that the way we understand the world is bound to a historical and cultural context, that our understanding of the world also is created by social processes and social interaction, and finally that there is a link between social action and knowledge; different understandings of the world will thus lead to different social actions – in accordance with the latter “the social construction of knowledge and truth has social consequences” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2012: 5-6). In accordance with this, discourse is not forever fixed, but a temporary closure. It is a special way to understand and talk about the world or aspects of it, and to carry out discourse analysis is seen as an aim of critical research which Jørgensen & Phillips explains as an investigation and analysis of power relations in society.

Every system of education is a political means to maintain or change the knowledge and power of discourse, but still, “if discourse may sometimes have some power, nevertheless it is from us and us alone that it gets it” (Foucault, 1981: 52). In every society, the production of discourse is selected, reorganized, controlled, and redistributed by a number of procedures in order to prevent its power and dangers. Exclusion is one procedure that is well known in our society, and prohibition is the exclusion that is the most familiar one.

We know quite well that we do not have the right to say everything, that we cannot speak about just anything in any circumstances whatever, and that not everyone has the right to speak of anything whatever. (Foucault, 1981: 52)

Discourse is thus a reduction of possibilities, and always constituted in relation to what is excluded. According to this, groups for example, are not predetermined socially, they have to be constituted in discourse – such as someone talking on behalf of the group or about the group. Jørgensen & Phillips give an example of the idea of ‘the new man’, challenging a more traditional idea about being masculine, and also the contrast between feelings and man. Jørgensen & Phillips thus argues that identities “are accepted, refused and negotiated in discursive processes. Identity is thus something entirely social” (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2012: 43).

Governmentality is what Foucault named the link he saw in liberalism, between the government of the state - seen as a political supremacy over citizens - and the governance of the self (Peters, 2009). It covers both how the state governs the subjects, and how the individual governs himself and has thus a broad and narrow leeway (Bäcktorp, 2007).

17 Foucault therefore distinguished between teaching - where the teacher is constructed as a subject and the student as an object - , and learning - where the student is constructed as a subject and whose driving force and own activity leads to producing knowledge, and where the teacher is seen as object (Hermann, 2009).
19 Seen in the light of this the idea of the group ‘the new teacher’ might similarly be contrasted with the more traditional idea of an authoritarian teacher seen as a source of knowledge. (My comment.)
“Governmentality has dual functions as individualizing and totalizing, in shaping both individuals and populations, in order to understand the strategic exercise of power as it is applied to situations.” (Olssen, 2009: 91)

The first part of the word governmentality “govern” indicates that it is a matter of exercising control or influence. The second part “mentality” points out that in every society, a specific kind of mentality is developed amongst the subjects which at the same time is an attitude towards themselves that enables the subjects to be steered, and to be willing to be governed. That is, Larsson (2001) argues, why Foucault recommend that the control mechanisms should be investigated on the level of subjectivity; such as experiences and knowledge. At a macro level, Bäcktorp (2007) argues

(...) governmentality can be understood as embodied power and knowledge relations, which give rise to a certain mentality towards the objects which need to be controlled. In this sense it could be understood as the relationship between political rationality and social practices (Bäcktorp, 2007: 75).

She continues, that governance always depends on to what extent the subjects of governance consent to be governed. Governmentality on a micro level, thus deals with the subjects’ understanding of their objectivity, and their attitudes towards themselves and their willingness to – or resistance to – governance.

The control mentality of power designs the relation between a political thinking and the existing social practices in a society, but it is not rational. On the contrary it works more indirectly, which is one explanation to why it is not possible to fully foresee the outcome of the control. Modern exercises of power assume that the subjects consider themselves, or at least are striving to be, free and equal. What freedom and equality are considered to be, vary. You need to be able to recognize what is considered freedom, before you can emancipate yourself (Larsson, 2001).

The above mentioned theories I rely on in this thesis can be applied both on a macro and micro level, and can also be used to analyze different kinds of ‘texts’; such as policy documents (macro level) and interviews (micro level) though both express various discourses. The aim is to firstly investigate which discourses that are articulated in policy, and secondly to explore how the respondents take up and resists macro level discourses.

Lending and borrowing educational reforms
How local actors in various cultures interpret, modify, and implement mainstreamed global educational reforms from developed countries is what Steiner-Khamsi (2000) theorizes in her works. Steiner-Khamsi argues that it is the discourses which are similar in the international educational models – and not the application of them because the implementation relies on the local actors and on the local cultural context. Even though the reforms and policies are similar between nations, the local implementation might be very different. In the discourse of lending and borrowing educational reforms, she claims that there is not much that can be borrowed; the discourse rather implies that the reforms are to be considered as isolated from their economic, political and cultural context. To borrow, she underlines, is not to copy, because every transferring of an educational model “produces a recontextualization process” (Steiner-Khamsi, 2000: 171). The transferring does not occur in a vacuum, though, and she emphasizes the importance of asking “how and why did this transfer occur? (Steiner-Khamsi, 2000: 180), as well as who gains by and who loses with the new system. It is thus
more relevant to question “What has been learned?” and “What has been transferred?” instead of
questioning “What can be learned?” and “What can be transferred?” (p 171). To some extent,
Steiner-Khamsi argues, the lending and borrowing can be regarded as a new process of colonialism,
where the local knowledge often is neglected. Furthermore many post-colonial countries are
borrowing second hand – which, according to Steiner-Khamsi & Stolpe (2006) means that they are
late to adapt reforms so the first borrowing countries have already moved on to other reforms.

The culturalist model, one of Steiner-Khamsi’s three theoretical frameworks, regards the
international converging of educational systems as a transferring of professional and academically
discourses on education. The culturalist model’s perspective acknowledges the culture imperialist
effects of educational systems. It simultaneously emphasizes that how the local forces respond to
these are not as predictable as the theorists advocating these educational systems claim. Instead it
results in a crossing between the global and the local, and that no global development has the same
influence on local cultures. This perspective:

(...) recognizes the plurality of cultures within a nation-state and highlights differences in how
people construct shared meanings around issues of education. It acknowledges the
persistence of diverse educational interests and concerns in societies that are divided by class,
race, ethnicity, and gender. As a consequence of these different perspectives, educational
reforms are always contested, that is supported by some and opposed by others (Steiner-

Through this, Steiner-Khamsi continues, culture enters into educational research and attracts the
attention to what happens locally when the educational system is nationally implemented.

METHOD

Connecting aim and methodology
Method and theory are intertwined in discourse analysis (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2012). I have applied
a discursive analysis inspired by Foucault’s ideas concerning discourse, power, and knowledge. The
discourse analysis of the policy documents provided knowledge into what discourses are highlighted
in the Moroccan educational reform, and analyzing the interviews I focused on what discourses the
informants expressed.

The purpose of discourse analysis is, according to Jørgensen & Phillips (2012),

(...) not to get ‘behind’ the discourse, to find out what the people really mean when they say
this or that, or to discover the reality behind the discourse. The starting point is that reality
can never be reached outside discourse and so it is discourse itself that has become the object
of the analysis. (...) [T]he analyst has to work with what has actually been said or written,
exploring patterns in and across the statements and identifying the social consequences of
Qualitative interviews is a method to get access to an understanding of how other people create and construct their social lives (e.g. Dalen, 2007; Trost, 2010). Trost (2010) argues further that qualitative interviews open up to get a deeper understanding, than a quantitative method would have brought. The researcher in qualitative interviews strives to understand the respondent’s point of view, experiences and frames of references (the specific) before searching for scientifically explanations (Dalen, 2007). I am interested in how reform is constructed in policy and among teachers and pupils of English in upper-secondary schools in Morocco. My aim was therefore to reach a comprehension of their reasoning and acting, and to identify which discourses become visible in the respondents’ perceptions of educational reform. I have thus chosen to do a qualitative interview research. My choice of method is related to my research questions, and to my theoretical framework, in order to be able to interpret what my collected data could mean - given my theoretical perspective and the given situation.

I followed the seven steps of qualitative interview research, designed by Kvale & Brinkmann (2012: 118). These are meant to help and scaffold the researcher to make well-thought decisions, and to get a good overview through the whole research process. The steps are: clarifying the aim and method, planning, interviewing, transcribing, analyzing, verification, and reporting the findings in the policy documents as well as in the interviews.

**Planning**

While designing the outlines for my research, I strived to interview municipal upper-secondary school teachers of English and pupils in Moroccan municipal schools. The planning process turned out to be long and complicated. It took me one year in total to receive the appropriate permissions from national, regional and local authorities, and receive all the documents I had requested. Along the way I met many so called gatekeepers who are representatives from various authorities, and who have a specific key-role to the research field (Dalen: 37; Trost: 140).

I came across many gatekeepers on my way to the informants; both on local, regional, and national administrative levels, but also, eventually, in the three school establishments where I accomplished my research. During one of these visits at the regional administration, the selection of the school establishments was settled. I was provided a list with the names of about a hundred municipal upper-secondary schools in the Casablanca region, and chose three. For convenient reasons I did not want the schools to be very far from where I live or work. I was provided with a formal letter to the directors of these three school establishments, and I could eventually start looking for my informants.

To listen to the respondent is not to just passively receive; it is a creative process. The pre-understanding is therefore important in qualitative research for the further comprehension and later analysis (Dalen, 2007). In order to get a better understanding of the research it is important to get adapted to the surroundings where the interviews are going to take place (Dalen, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2012). Attending some English classes at the chosen schools beforehand, gave me an

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20 The validity of the methods depends, according to Dalen (2007), on how they are accommodated to the research’s aim, research questions and theoretical framework.

21 Several times I was tented to give up, and turn to a back-up plan of mine, interviewing public upper-secondary school teachers and students at the private language center where I work. It would have been more convenient and less time-consuming. However, my main aim was to learn more about the municipal school establishments, and about the reforms, teachers and pupils in that context – and not mainly the teachers and pupils who sought to the private sector.
idea about the settings, the daily routines and power structures. I shared with the pupils the utterly uncomfortable pupils’ desks, and became also aware that the teacher’s desk always stood on a raised, approximately 20 centimeters high platform; the teachers’ position was literally raised above the pupils. One advantage for me focusing on English lessons, and no other school subjects, was that I would understand what was said in class, and to some extent understand what might be difficult for both teachers and pupils. I attended lessons with both science and humanities classes.

In qualitative research interviews, questions are often used where the respondents can respond as freely as possible – this is called open questions (e.g. Dalen, 2007). Trost (2010: 40) claims that questions are unstructured or non-structured when they are open, and structured when they have given answer alternatives; and also that unstructured replies are more difficult to account for in a simple and explicit way. I have used the open and unstructured questions.

The selection of informants

In contrast to quantitative research, the number of respondents is - from a general aspect - not important once the aim with the study is fairly clear (Trost, 2010). However, in one way the number of informants is important in qualitative research; it should not be too big, because interviewing and processing the collected material is time consuming (e.g. Dalen, 2007; Trost, 2010). Kvale and Brinkmann (2012) propose fifteen, plus minus ten. There are strategic selections and convenience selections (Trost, 2010: 138). A strategic one, Trost claims, means that the researcher decides the criterion of which informants to interview. A convenient selection means, roughly speaking, that the researcher takes those informants offered. I made some strategic selections when I choose to interview two teachers and two pupils from the three schools – in total twelve informants. In many contexts men and women have different life experiences; therefore, I considered it being relevant to choose 3 men and 3 women in each group. I furthermore aimed to interview teachers with different lengths of teaching experience, because those who started working as teachers after the reform was introduced might have experienced the reform differently from those who were teaching before it was introduced. Concerning the pupils, I wanted informants who were studying the two last years of upper-secondary school. These two years are the ones where the grades are counted for the A-level. As boarding schools are a part of the reform, I also wanted to interview some boarding school pupils.\footnote{To thoroughly account for choices made during the research project is one aspect of validity in qualitative research. E.g. Widerberg, 2002.}

The upper-secondary school’s administration, helped me to get in contact with teachers and pupils, and a convenience sample complemented my strategic one. The teachers were contacted either by the director accompanying me to a classroom where a teacher was teaching so I could talk to him or her directly, introduce myself and my research project, or the director phoned a teacher so I could talk to him/her, or I was given a phone number to contact the teacher. When a teacher did not want to participate, the director just phoned up another one. Eventually the group contained three men and three women with various lengths of teaching experience.\footnote{I did not interview any of the teachers whose classes I had attended. I did not want to risk that they would feel uncomfortable thinking I might judge what they said according to what I had seen – and therefore feel less free to express themselves.} The pupils were selected in a similar way; either a gatekeeper asked a group of pupils in the schoolyard during the break, or they were chosen by the director who went to a class and selected two. Two pupils were proposed to me by a teacher whose class I had attended, who knew I wanted to interview boarding-school pupils. One
pupil cancelled later on, but I found another one in the corridor of the boarding school; this was the only informant who was chosen by me. My aim had been to interview both science and humanities pupils, but in the end all pupils turned out to be pupils of different science streams, with English or Spanish as foreign language, and two boarding pupils.

The collecting of data

My data is composed of two different kinds of materials; two policy documents, and interviews with twelve teachers and pupils. The first of the policy documents is the main reform from 1999 “Charte nationale D’éducation et de formation” when the current reforms were launched, and the second is “English Language Guidelines for Secondary Schools: Common Core, First Year, and Second Year Baccalaureate” from 2007 which is a control document for teachers of English. I will further on refer to both of them as “policy documents”. They are chosen in order to give an overview of the reforms, as well as more detailed guidelines for English.

Dalen (2007) and Kvale & Brinkmann (2012) claim that good interview questions should be thematical. My questions had three main themes; the educational reforms, the classroom practice, and student-centered learning. Questions asking the informants to describe a situation in more details is recommended (e.g. Dalen, 2007; Trost, 2010). By asking the respondents to give account for a specific course of events, feelings are revealed. Feelings are behaviors, and are related to a given situation (Trost, 2010). I therefore asked both teachers and pupils to describe a lesson; “Can you describe an ordinary lesson, from the moment you walk into the classroom until until the moment you walk out?” The responses to the question gave a very rich material concerning, for example, how the four skills were taught and how the textbooks were used, but also on for example the methods used, and the relation between teachers and pupils. However I have chosen not to focus particularly on the four skills since I consider the data deserving another research project to be analyzed properly. With the classroom practice as a starting point, however, much was said that revealed how the teachers’ and the pupils’ related to, and experienced different aspects of the reform. I carried out two pilot interviews in order to test my interview guide; one with a male colleague of mine, who is a municipal upper-secondary school teacher of English, and one with a female upper-secondary school pupil from a private school. The feed-back from my colleague was that the questions worked well, which was my impression as well. The pilot-interview with the pupil was held in French. One thing I learned from this, was that the two very similar English and French words “lesson” and “leçon” seemed to have different connotations; while in English rather signifying a short session of approximately an hour or two, in French it signified a theme, of for example grammar, which covered several weeks of classroom practice. This was a good example of what Trost (2010) underlines, that the words have a descriptive function; and that the interviewer should be critical towards his or her own presumptions, and should work unprejudiced. The pilot-interview helped me to be observant of this language confusion during the interviews.

24 See appendices 1 and 2. According to Dalen (2007), to enclosure the interview guide is a way to enhance the study’s validity.

25 Asking questions leading to substantial and comprehensive opinions, revealing the informants’ understanding concerning specific episodes or acts increases the possibility that the material will contain “thick descriptions” which is in favor to the validity of the research (Dalen, 2007).

26 Traditionally “validity” means that the question measures what it is meant to measure. In this context it is therefore important to specify what words mean – this is a part of the validity (Trost, 2010).

27 Pilot interviews are also considered as a part of the validity in qualitative research (Dalen, 2007).
Interviewing

In order to carry out open interviews for qualitative research, an interview guideline is requested to cover the general problems which are the aims of the study. The questions should correspond to the research question, but do not need to be exactly the same for all the informants, and do not need to follow the same order during the different interviews (Dalen, 2007; Trost, 2010). Trost further emphasizes the importance of flexibility, and that the interviewer should try to follow the informant in his or her way to associate; the order should be decided by the respondent rather than by the interviewer. In accordance to Dalen (2007), Kvale & Brinkmann (2012) and Trost (2010) I gave a brief introduction of myself, and informed the respondents about the project and how it would be used, before the interviews started. I also asked them if they had any questions. Towards the end of the interviews I accordingly asked them if there was anything they wanted to add that I had not asked about, or if they had any questions. I told the informants that it would take about an hour; it turned out to be between 45-75 minutes. One exception though, was an interview with a pupil which took about two hours due to my language issues in Arabic, and the respondent’s in French and English.

The place where the interviews take place is important (Trost, 2010). I let the teachers decide the place, and they chose either their classroom or in the teachers’ room, when empty between the breaks. I preferred not to carry out the interviews with the pupils in an ordinary classroom, thinking that it might lead the pupils to fall into a role as a pupil vis-à-vis me as a representative for teachers. This was respected by the administration, and the interviews with pupils were held either in the school library, in a huge classroom occasionally used for exam-taking, in an abandoned multimedia room, or in a study in the boarding part of one school.

The informant is an expert on himself/herself, and therefore has a “higher” position than the interviewer (Trost, 2010). The interviewer on the other hand is seen as an expert in the field, knowing what the interview will be about, and has also – in general – a higher level of education than the informant (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2012; Trost, 2010). Therefore it is advantageous to try to minimize the rank of the interviewer. While interviewing children28, the interviewer should not be associated with the teacher (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2012). I therefore declined all offers from pupils to have a “better” seat; I did not use the librarian’s chair, nor the offered teacher’s chair in the classrooms, but the same sitting arrangements as the respondents.

Technical devises are often used in qualitative research, (e.g. Dalen, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2012; Trost, 2010) and I asked the informants for their permission to record the interviews.29 No one objected. I also wrote down thoughts, follow-up questions or non-verbal expressions to accompany what the respondents said. I did not offer the informants the chance to read the transcript version of the interview, for two reasons; firstly it would be time consuming, and secondly I knew that I would make spelling and grammar errors in the French transcriptions. I did not consider the latter an issue that might lead to misunderstandings while I analyzed the transcripts – but it might have been confusing and even insulting for the respondents. To let someone proof-read the French interviews first, would have been even more time consuming – and it might have changed the content of what was said in order to correct the respondents language errors. I did not want anyone who had not been present during the interview to “correct” the transcript, and considering the circumstances, the

28 The pupils I interviewed were in general just under age – between 17 and 18 years old.
29 Recording is, according to e.g. Dalen (2007), a part of the validity in qualitative interview research.
respondents thus have not read the transcriptions. During these interviews no one spoke their mother tongue. The teachers and I were on a fairly equal language level in English. However, one teacher was tense before the interview, and claimed to be better in written English than spoken. I replied claiming that my spoken English was better than my written. This made the informant laugh and relax. The interview started and I did not notice any more concerns about the language. With the pupils it was different. Lack of vocabulary and fluency is a handicap (Trost, 2010). I do not speak the local Darija Arabic dialect, which is their mother tongue, nor do I speak Standard Arabic which they learn at school. Their first foreign language is French; the second is in general English. I let the pupils choose between French and English, and 5 pupils out of 6 preferred to be interviewed in French. I made sure to tell them that this was not a language test; it was what they said that was important. I have struggled with French as a foreigner both in France and Morocco, I have struggled with Arabic in Morocco, and I have worked as an English teacher for many years. I have much experience trying to be understood as well as trying to understand. My imperfect French, together with my experience, probably added some comfort to the pupils and reassured them that I was there to listen to the content of what they said – and not assessing language errors. Dalen (2007) points out the importance of silence. I tried hard to give the informants time to reflect and find the right words to express themselves, in particular during the interviews with the pupils. As the informants were not speaking their mother tongue, I considered it even more important to give time. The interview with one informant took 2 hours, including my attempts at trying to verify that I had understood correctly. On a few occasions, when the informant wanted to tell me something, but lacked the proficiency in French and English, the respondent said it in Standard Arabic and I got a translation into English afterwards. The inconvenience was that I did not understand what had been said – and was therefore unable to ask follow-up questions. The advantage was that the respondent expressed deeper and more overriding opinions. Many of the pupils mixed the languages during the interviews. Two or three languages were used in most of the interviews. I interpreted the swapping between languages, as a sign that the lack of fluency did not hold them back from trying to express what they wanted to say; they spontaneously used another language, and it seemed to be clear that my role was to listen to them.

It is important to ask open questions and not suggest what the respondent might mean. For example, instead of saying: “So you mean that... (proposing something)”; while interviewing, it is better to ask “What do you mean exactly?” (Trost, 2010: 105). However, with two of the pupils, the ones with the largest language issues in French and English, I gave suggestions on a few occasions. When they, after a long silence had not found an appropriate word, I proposed something. Sometimes this led to a “No, I didn’t say that.”, and sometimes to a “Yes! Yes.”! It happened in both interviews that a suggestion was rejected, which reassured me that I had managed to establish a non-threatening environment for the informants, and that they did dare to contradict me.

There are certain ethical aspects which should be respected while doing qualitative research (e.g. Dalen, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2012; Trost, 2010). Before the interviews I therefore informed the respondents that what they said would be strictly confidential; neither their names, nor the name of

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30 However the quoted parts of the French interviews have been proof-read.
31 Interviews 2 and 9 : « Non, je n’ai pas dit ça. » or « Oui! Oui. »
32 When the researcher account for how questions and follow-up questions have been asked, openness is established with the reader of the research report. This can lead to increased credibility, which according to Trost (2010) might enhance the validity of the research.
the upper-secondary schools would be mentioned in my Master thesis – and they confirmed that they had agreed to be interviewed. The Swedish Research Council underlines that there are several ethical considerations to be taken into consideration in research on humanities or social sciences. Two of these, are the research demand and the individual protection demand. The individual protection demand is further divided into four parts; the information demand, the consent demand, the confidentiality demand and the user demand. The research demand, declares the importance of doing research in subjects that can ameliorate people’s life situation and increase their understanding of their own capacities (Swedish Research Council, 2002). I consider that the aim of my research fits well into these frames. The importance of doing research and gaining new knowledge should equally be balanced with the possible negative consequences the research might lead to for the individual. The Swedish Research Council declares furthermore that if the participants are under age, and the survey is ethically sensitive, the parents’ consent should be required. Some of the participants in my study were under 18, but my research questions did not contain matters of a private or ethical delicate disposition. The consent had been given by the Ministry of Education, and furthermore the informants were selected by the school administrations, I therefore did not ask for the parents’ consent. In my research findings I have withheld the informants’ names, according to the confidentiality demand. The Swedish Research Council (2002), as well as for example Dalen (2007), and Trost (2010) state that rather than risk breaking the confidentiality demand, the researcher should withhold reporting on the findings; especially when it concerns just a small group of informants. Parts of what the informants told me might give away their identity. I have therefore chosen not to use these parts in the result discussion of my findings.

Transcribing
After the interviews, I transcribed them. Sometimes, the respondent answered in a very small voice, and I could not hear clearly what had been said. Sometimes the school bell rang loudly and made it impossible to hear what was said. Occasionally hoards of pupils walked through the corridors outside the room where the interview took place, which made it difficult to hear what was said. If I, in spite of numerous listening, did not hear what was said, I wrote “inaudible” in the transcription. In some cases I remembered what had been said, and in those cases I made a separate note about that, which was included into the transcripts. As Trost (2010) suggested, I also numbered the lines in order to make it easier referring to the quoted parts.

Analyzing
I read and reread the two policy documents; “Charte nationale D’éducation et de formation” (Le Ministère de L’Education Nationale, 1999) and the “English Language Guidelines for Secondary Schools: Common Core, First Year, and Second Year Baccalaureate” (Le Ministère de L’Éducation Nationale, and Le Ministère de l’Enseignement Supérieure, de la Recherche Scientifique et de la Formation des Cadres, 2007) numerous times looking for different themes and discourses. I also compared between them to within between; they overlapped to a great extant, but the English Guidelines has a bigger focus on teaching English, and on upper-secondary schools, while the Charte

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33 This is also according to Kvale & Brinkmann (2012) a part of the validity of the research project.
34 If there is no reflection over ethical considerations concerning the collection as well as the reporting of data, the result might be found less trustworthy and the result might be questioned. To reflect and report about ethical aspects enhances on the other hand the credibility - and the validity (Trost, 2010).
35 This affects the validity of the research in a negative way, according to Dalen (2007), but the fact that the researcher is transparent about this makes the research more trustworthy and influences the validity in a favorable way.
nationale D’education et de formation cover all levels; from elementary school to the university. Several major discourses were revealed.

Once I had finished the transcription I printed the interviews and read them over and over again. The process of collection, analyzing and interpreting the data can be described as three different parts which are not distinguishably separated. Already when the interviews take place the researcher makes reflections, analyses and interpretations. This occurs also during the transcription (Trost, 2010). During the analyzing phase the researcher tries to find inner connections in the material (Dalen, 2007). Watt Booolsen (2007: 91) claims the patterns depend on the researcher’s intuition, understanding, and knowledge. In order to get a better overview of the material I cut the prints into pieces and labeled them under different rubrics that I described. For several weeks, the ten meters of Moroccan sofas in my living room were covered with pinned rubrics, and different parts from the interview material. I read, reread, and read it over again, and changed different parts of the interviews between the different piles. Trost (2010) points out that it is important that the researcher should be open-minded, while doing this. After having read the interviews many times, various discourses appeared. For the teachers’ analysis much was said about the pupils’ lack of motivation; which seemed to be a problem for the teachers. Within this group several themes appeared; such as for example discourses about gender differences, social background, and the school facilities, which became a part of the analysis where selected quotes illustrated the different perspectives. With the pupils’ interviews I had many different piles with various rubrics; such as languages, grades, private schools, etc. I noticed after a while that several of these actually could be grouped together, as discourse on the effects of the reform. The teachers’ complaints about the pupils’ lack of motivation were for example dismantled, some of the pupils’, on the contrary, were fused together into a larger theme. In order to further narrow down my research I have chosen not to have a main focus on the classroom practice in details, such as for example how the four skills are taught in class, nor the textbooks.

**Verification**

It is important to be able to believe in the results, and believe they can be true (Watt Booolsen, 2007: 188). The more thoroughly the researcher accounts for his or her pre-understanding and what expectations brought into the research process, the clearer the different factors become during the interpretation process (Widerberg, 2002). Choosing a qualitative method is no safeguard for qualitative research. The methods have to be developed and applied in a qualitative way before it can be considered to be qualitative research; therefore, Widerberg claims, it would be more correctly to talk about qualitative analysis instead of qualitative methods, and to do qualitative research is to use oneself as a tool; this leads to increased knowledge both about oneself and others. To define the researcher’s own role and how it is related to research is therefore decisive in order to avoid a poor quality and low attainment claims (Widerberg, 2002). According to Trost (2010) it is important to present to the reader many of the decisions taken during the seven steps, also in order to invite the reader into the analyzing and interpreting parts of the results.

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36 To account for how data has been selected and constructed is a part of the research project’s validity (Watt Booolsen, 2007: 189).

37 To account for, to what extent the connections between ideas and patterns the researcher uses give the reader a theoretical understanding for the phenomena the research comprises. Such validity demands that the revealed connections are explained and documented in the collected data and in the researcher’s record of it (Dalen, 2007: 121).
The definitions reliability and validity are not well suited to be used in qualitative research (e.g. Dalen, 2007; Trost, 2010; Widerberg, 2002). Reliability assumes that the method for collecting data and analyzing could be verified by repeating the researcher (e.g. Trost, 2010). In qualitative research, people are instead considered to construct themselves in a specific social context, which is rather seen as a process, and the result could be different at different moments. It is therefore peculiar to talk about reliability in qualitative interviews (Dalen, 2007; Trost, 2010). Dalen argues that another perspective is needed when talking about reliability in qualitative research. Instead of meaning that another researcher should be able to repeat the same research with the same result, it should instead be a matter of carefully describing each individual phase in the research process, so the reader can follow it in an imaginative way carrying through the research in question. The descriptions need to comprise the conditions for the researcher, the informants, as well as the analytical methods used analyzing the data. Trost (2010) states that few people today believe that objectivity exists and that the researcher should strive to be objective. The researcher’s personal opinions should not be of any importance during an interview, though. There are “objective” criterions within the research; but these are rather a question of theories, methods, and techniques the researcher consider adequate – and these should not be so dominating that creativity and new constructions risk to be inhibited.

The aim with qualitative interviews is to use the direct conversation between the informant and the interviewer in a particular context; and the researcher is considered as a tool in order to unveil this particular respondent’s statements, and understandings. It is a method to uncover people’s understanding of phenomena. The reliability demand, that the research should be able to be reproduced, by another researcher could thus work counter to the creativity and diversity (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2012). Validity traditionally means that the research should measure what it is designed to measure (e.g. Dalen, 2007; Trost, 2010; Widerberg, 2002). Even though the researcher is familiar with hermeneutic, phenomenology, discourse analysis or grounded theory, it is important to have a critical perspective to the theories, and to question to what extent the collected data, ideas and patterns can give us a theoretical understanding of what the research is about; one condition for this is that the material is processed, interpreted and analyzed in a suitable way (Dalen, 2007). Dalen (2007: 121-122) also points out three difficulties the researcher has to deal with while analyzing and theorizing the interview material: the Holistic Mistake (where the researcher believes knowing the domain and therefore risks to analyze statements and expressions form a wrongly pre-understanding), the Elitbias (when the researcher puts too big an importance on certain respondents considering them “key”-informants concerning the examined topic), and Going Native (when the researcher is utterly familiar with what he or she is studying that nuances and certain characteristics and patterns might remain undiscovered). I have through the whole research process tried to keep a critical and reflective perspective in order to avoid being caught by any of the three above mentioned difficulties. If I had carried out the research at the language center where I work, it might have been more difficult to avoid the “the Holistic Mistake” and “Going Native”. The fact that all interviews were carried out in a – for me – strange setting of municipal upper-secondary schools, was a constant reminder that I did not know this context.

Kvale & Brinkmann (2012) claim that the validity should permeate the seven phases; how well the reinforced the theoretical presumptions and research questions are, to what extent the interview

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38 Dalen (2007) points out that when the researcher explicitly clarifies his or her connection with the studied phenomena, it gives the reader an opportunity to take a stand on to what extent the circumstances have influenced the interpretation of the results – and is therefore related to the research project’s validity.
guide and method are in relation to the research’s aim – and that it should produce knowledge that is to people’s benefit, the interviews should be reliable in the real situation, the chosen form of the transcript turning it from spoken language to written is also a form of validity, whether the questions asked to text are logic (valid) and the interpretations sustainable, the importance to take under consideration what kind of validity is relevant in a particular research, and whether a particular report gives a valid account.

**Reporting**
The result should be reported in a well-structured and clear overview of the main finding (Trost, 2010). Spoken languages should be slightly modified to adjust to a written description, by respect for the informants. However, literal quotes can be necessary to point out different aspects that are important for the understanding (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2012; Trost, 2010). Quotes can also illustrate the essential, or serve as an example for many respondents, or be important if it rarely occurs (Dalen, 2007). Though social interactionism focus on peoples experience, one criterion I have had in mind while selecting quotes have been the respondents’ expressions of emotions.

**RESULTS**

**The reform in policy**
My research question was: What goals and visions are emphasized in the new policy documents for English, at upper-secondary school level in Morocco?

**Education, Gender Mainstreaming, and the global job market**
Many discourses were pronounced in the policy documents, such as: forming democratic and faithful citizens, Education for All, Gender Mainstreaming, privatizations, ethnic minorities, life-long learning and the global job market, the individual’s duties, the quality of the education, student-centered learning, the teachers’ new role, in-service training, modern technology, proper behaviour, the pupils’ motivation and success, and the parents’ role. The two documents are overlapping each other, and the discourses are fairly stable across the documents. I have therefore not separated the two policy documents, instead I continuously discussed them in relation to each other.

The two policy documents, the “Charte nationale D’éducation et de formation” (Le Ministère de L’Education Nationale, 1999) and the “English Language Guidelines for Secondary Schools: Common Core, First Year, and Second Year Baccalaureate. All Streams and Sections.” (Le Ministère de L’Education Nationale, and Le Ministère de l’Enseignement Supérieure, de la Recherche Scientifique et de la Formation des Cadres, 2007) which addresses teachers of English, regulates general directions about the foundation of the educational system, the extension of education in order to connect it to the economic environment, partnerships, and governance, as well as pedagogical aims, and the quality of education. The English Guidelines are in accordance with the Chart, but more detailed when it comes to the teachers’ practice.

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39 This is also, according to Trost (2010) related to the research’s reliability and validity.
40 Further on referred to as “Chart”.
41 Further on referred to as “English Guidelines”.

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The two first articles of the Chart emphasize the country’s Muslim identity; stating that the policy is based on the values and faith of Islam, manifests the sacred values of faith in God, love of the motherland and loyalty to the Monarchic Constitution. It is on “(...) these foundations the educational system cultivates the values of citizenship which permits everyone to fully participate in public affairs and private affairs in perfect knowledge of each one’s rights and duty.  

This is also in line with what Ali (2006) claims, that policies show that Islam is consistent with modernity and secular schooling and Western ideas. Other fundamental principles are mentioned, in policy, emphasizing some important points for Moroccan children and teenagers to learn at school. The pupils should become virtuous citizens, develop democratic values, develop conciliation between being faithful to traditions and strive towards modernity in which a dynamic interaction between Morocco’s cultural heritage and the universal human rights, acquire initiative and entrepreneurial spirit, open up to the use of foreign languages, and participate to advance the country in the fields of science and technology in order to enhance its economic, human and social development and competitiveness in this era characterized by an opening vis-à-vis the world.  

School is compulsory from 6 to 15, which is the legal age of work, and the aims are to reduce the extent of illiteracy to less than 20% towards the end of 2010, in order to almost eradicate it by 2015. Illiterate adults, jobless adults – especially mothers – and people under 20 years of age, who have dropped out of school, are needed to be given a second chance through non-formal education. A part of the television programs should therefore be devoted to literacy programs. One discourse is that human and children’s rights should be respected in the educational reform, following international standards, including equality between girls and boys, with a special attention paid to girls in rural environments to promote education for girls. In every region there should be at least one high school capable of receiving at least 30% of the pupils as boarding pupils especially for those who do not live in the area, and pupils from families with a limited income. 

In line with the discourse to improve access to schooling, the private sector is considered as a partner, and should engage in the educational reform as a public service, participating in improving the quality of education. The private sector is to follow the program and methods in municipal establishments. These strategies are linked to an exemption of all taxes over a period of 20 years.

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42 « (...) ces fondements, l'éducation culture les valeurs de citoyenneté qui permettent à tous de participer pleinement aux affaires publiques et privé en parfaite connaissance des droits et devoirs de chacun. » Chart: article 2. My translation. All translations from French into English are translated by me.  

43 Chart: articles 1, 2, 4, and 5. According to Meyer and Meyer & Ramirez (2000) education is often considered to be the essence of progress and policies widely copied; issues on human rights and Gender Mainstreaming often influence national policies. Furthermore are the ideas in agreement with what for example Bäcktorp (2007) and Rizvi & Lingard (2010) claim concerning national values and modernity. The individual should acquire initiative spirit; which can be related to what Illeris (2008) states concerning educational reforms and globalization. Tabulawa (2003) underlines that student-centered learning becomes a part of the development of democratization.  

44 The Education For All discourse is common in contemporary educational reforms, as Bäcktorp (2007), Chounlamany & Kounphilaphanh (2011), and Rizvi & Lingard (2010) states.  

45 Chart: articles 13, 24, 29, 31, 34, 38, and 123.
Furthermore:

*private establishments (...) engage to apply school inscription fees, school fees and assurance fees, which are fixed in accordance with educational authorities, in a way that makes these establishments accessible to the greatest possible number of pupils.*

The aims are also linked to adapting the educational system to the needs of the individuals and the society. In line with these ambitions the learners should become proud of their identity and their culture. All children in primary school, which covers six years, should be guaranteed “the maximum equality of chance to succeed in their schooling, and later of their professional life”. This matches Alvesson (1999) that education is seen as the solution to various problems, and is considered to enhance productivity.

To meet these stated goals they should acquire knowledge of Arabic from the first year of primary school, two years later learn a first foreign language, and later on add a second foreign language. The necessity of English is underlined, which is in accordance with e.g. Anderson-Levitt (2003) and Ryan (2006), that English is assumed to give access to higher education and the job market. As for ethnic minorities the municipal and private schools are open to Moroccan Jews, based on their constitutional rights to practice their own culture. Regional pedagogical authorities can choose to use the Amazigh language to facilitate the learning the first years of primary school.

The vision is that by the end of junior high, 80% of the children should be enrolled in 2008, and 40% of the children ought to pass the A-level exam in 2011. The university should be a place where competent scientists converge, and “should follow the same track and become an open establishment and a developing engine, in every region of the country (...).”

According to the Chart, both municipal and private sectors are to meet these goals, as well as those who are marginalized or having insufficient qualifications. In line with this the English Guidelines underlines the importance for “learners to grow autonomous and responsible citizens” in order to achieve “success in the job market.”

One discourse mentioned in both the Chart and the English Guidelines, are that the pupils should relate to experiences from outside the classroom such as for example the Internet, in order to be aware that they live in a global world. Pupils should also relate to life-long learning as a means to adapt to globalization, which is considered an essential factor to respond to the needs of enterprises,

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46 Chart: articles 163, 165, and 166. “Les établissements privés, (...) s'engagent à appliquer des frais d'inscription, de scolarité et d'assurance fixés en accord avec les autorités d'éducation-formation, de manière à rendre ces établissement accessibles au plus grand nombre possible d'élèves et d'étudiants.” (Article 166)

47 Chart: articles 61, 64, and 65. “(...) le maximun d'égalité des chances de réussite dans leur vie scolaire et, par la suite dans leur vie professionnelle... » (quote from article 65)

48 Chart: articles 61, 65, and 66.

49 A Berber language, spoken by the ethnic minorities, mainly in the country side.

50 Chart: article 115. Ethnicity is a common discourse in contemporary educational reforms, as for example Bäcktorp (2007) and Chounlamany & Kounphilaphanh (2011) show.

51 Chart: articles 10 and 28. The university « doit suivre la même voie et devenir un établissement ouvert et une locomotive de développement, dans chaque région du pays... » (quote from article 10.)

Not having access to the job market until after 12-15 years of studies might as Alvesson (1999) claims lead to that those who have less educational background are seen as misfits.

globalization’s economy and crossing borders. In order to foster the pupils’ connection with their community they should recognize their responsibilities as citizens, be willing to be life-long learners and to work hard, see themselves and their community from both a local and global perspective.\textsuperscript{53}

The quality of education is another discourse. Several means are mentioned in the Chart to regulate the quality of education, among them for example teachers’ training and exam taking. It further underlines the importance of improving the curricula, schedules, schoolbooks, the evaluation of the learners in private and municipal schools, the pedagogical methods, as well as to reinforce the perfection of teaching languages. The four last years in primary school are based on continuous controls, and brings to those in need pedagogic support. Toward the end of primary school, the pupils take an exam to be authorized to pass to upper-secondary. Those who do not pass will repeat the year receiving the necessary pedagogic support. At upper-secondary school the passing from one level/year to the next is based on the results from regular controls. The last year there is a national exam covering their specialization of the branch, which counts 50\% and continuous controls during the last year counts for 25\% of the final result. One regional test the year before the last year of upper-secondary is counted 25\%. 15 days after the results are announced there should be a recuperation session organized to give some of the pupils a second chance to get a passing grade. The educational system will be submitted to regular evaluations, regarding both pedagogical and administrative aspects. Regional authorities will publish a report to make the evaluation accessible to the public; which is considered to be a part of a quality evaluation.\textsuperscript{54}

According to both the Chart and the English Guidelines, the school should also be open towards its environment through a pedagogical approach based on welcoming the society, and relate to the pupils own lives.\textsuperscript{55}

\textbf{Resumé}

Discourses such as for example Education for All, eradicating illiteracy, Gender Mainstreaming, encouraging achievement of the A-level diploma, as well as promoting an interest for learning the whole life through, are pronounced – focusing on the individual’s lack of education; covering children, teenagers and adults – with a special emphasis on girls and women. This is in accordance with common contemporary educational reforms (e.g. Bäcktorp, 2007; Chounlamany & Kounphilaphanh, 2011; Illeris, 2008; Meyer & Ramirez, 2000; Rizvi & Lingard, 2009). One assumption in policy seems to be that with more education the citizen’s would be able to compete on the global job market. This matches wildly spread concepts in contemporary global educational reforms (e.g. Ali, 2006; Alvesson, 1999; Boubkir & Boukamhi, 2005; and Illeris, 2008).

The connection between a more well-educated population and this population’s productivity and successful competing on the global job market is seemingly unproblematic in the discourse. However, there is no guarantee that more education will lead to access to the international job market (Alvesson, 1999). Alvesson further states that an emphasis on more education, on the contrary can lead to other problems, such as that many people will be over-qualified for their jobs,

\textsuperscript{53} Chart: articles 5, 25, 52, 55, 57, 61 and 130, and English Guidelines: pages 8 and 24. These values are also common in educational policies; see for example Alvesson (1999) and Illeris (2008).

\textsuperscript{54} Chart: articles 13, 25, 28, 65, 92, 93, 95, 96, 105,108, 133, 134, and 157. Written exam-taking as a means of quality control is common, as for example PISA.

\textsuperscript{55} E.g. Chart: article 5, and English Guidelines: pages 11, 15, 17, 22, and 39.
and high unemployment rates among university graduates. This he argues, in accordance to Illeris (2008), might also lead to a lack of motivation among the citizens willingness to further education.

In the Gender Mainstreaming discourse, it is not mentioned, as in accordance with Rizvi & Lingard (2010), that women tend to work harder and being less paid than men, and that this also might be one reason for the desire to encourage women to enter the global market economy. What is furthermore left unproblematic is that all women, and especially in a country like Morocco where the women to a very high extent are in charge of the housework, (Larhouasli Marrakchi, 2008) might not want to enter the local or global job market. The policy underlines the importance of literacy programs for example un-educated mothers. Though in a Moroccan context women has the main responsibility for the children’s education, Larhouasli Marrakchi (2008) points out the illiterate parents tend not to see the importance of education to the same extent as literate parents. In accordance to this, illiterate mothers then risk to raise both illiterate boys and girls. As I see it, literacy programs for women and un-educated mothers could therefore lead to a higher rate of schooling among girls – but also result in a decreased illiteracy rate among boys.

Unproblematic is also the fact that, according to e.g. Alvesson (1999), many jobs in the public sector and privet market never compete on the international market. Tabulawa (2009) points out that similar reforms in Botswana seem to lead to outdated Fordist workers – who are not supposed to be desired on the global job market. The pupils are to be educated and formed for something that might not happen.

Privatization is another discourse, helping the government out in providing education for all. The problem here seems to be, in accordance with Rizvi & Lingard (2010), that the government cannot afford to provide education for all. The policy further emphasizes that the school fees should make it possible for as many pupils as possible to have access to the private establishments. The private schools’ exemption from taxes is probably to be seen in the light of this. An assumption underlying this problem is that everyone will not be able to afford private schooling, and that the privatization thus leads to increased class differences. What seems to be unproblematic here is the enhanced social and maybe even gender inequalities - both from a national as well as international perspective.

The discourse of the individual’s rights and duties is also in accordance with global educational reforms adapted to the neo-liberal free market economy (Illeris, 2008; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Tabulawa, 2003). A problem seems to be that the government is not capable of catering for the citizens’ access to education and the job market.

But not only quantity in Education for All, but also quality is mentioned. The quality of education at all levels, in both private and municipal schools should be enhanced; and this concerns the curriculum, the schedules, the schoolbooks, and the evaluation of the learners. Based on the results from regular controls the passing from one level/year to the other should be effectuated in schools. The problem seems to be a fear for lack of quality, while adapting to the new reforms. Textbooks testing and classifying the pupils is assumed to solve the problem. There seem to be no need to control the quality of the application and outcome of learner-centred methods, and whether the pupils think critically, assess themselves and are autonomous. Not getting a passing grade and thus repeating a class is a means of quality control. It might be doubtful that quality is secured just by repeating – if there are, for example, structural problems within the educational system. Problems and lack of quality in the school systems are not solved just because the pupils repeat. Quality
control of not measurable knowledge (by written exam-taking) is not considered as important - such as for example learner’s autonomy and oral language skills. Written skills are measured, but weak points in the educational system are not necessarily straightened up when the pupils are tested and classified.

**Discourses on Individual and pedagogical practices**

In both the Chart and the English Guidelines, different discourses are activated, such as embedding life-long learning perspective in the overall content of the policy. A pedagogical approach is suggested which should be student-centered, and problem-solving, applying critical and analytical thinking. Pair work and group work activities should be implemented in the education. The pupils should acquire the basis in learning autonomy, including methods of reflection, and be capable to evaluate what they learn. Modern technology should also be integrated in their learning.

In accordance to this, a discourse concerning the teachers’ role is clarified in the English Guidelines, emphasized different learning strategies. Some pupils are **communicative** and learn by listening and talking to friends, others are **analytical** and learn for example “by studying grammar and finding out mistakes”, yet some are **authority learners** and learn by taking notes, and learn through explanations. Eventually the policy also refers to **concrete learners** who “learn by getting involved in games [...] [and] through the use of visual aids [...]”. These different ways to categorize the pupils are furthermore linked to learner autonomy, and the learners’ “right to make decisions about what, why and how to learn.”

Introducing learning training for learning autonomy:

(... suggests a radical shift of the roles both teachers and learners should play in the classroom. While it necessitates some interventions on the part of the teacher, the latter is no longer considered as a purveyor of knowledge or wielder of power. His or her status does not, accordingly, emanate from his hierarchical authority, but from the good relationship with his/her learners. The learners should be active partners in the learning operation.

In accordance with this discourse, the Chart underlines the teachers’ need to consider teaching as “an assumed choice, a steady vocation, and not as an ordinary job.” It further presupposes having a strong motivation to conform to the exigencies of their mission. In return they should be honored and their efforts should be highly held by learners, parents as well as by society in general. To ameliorate the teachers’ social conditions, financial and moral support they will have access to organized activities, and the boarding schools and university campuses during the vacations. Medals are to be introduced to honor distinguished teachers exercising their mission. However, Alvesson (1999) points out that enhanced productivity is not necessarily the result of further education in all occupations, and that the public sector stands outside competition on the global job market. Teachers have furthermore the right to benefice from a solid training and further education, in order...

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57 E.g. Chart: articles 42, 66, and 89 Which is argued by Rizvi & Lingard (2010) referring to Peters and Britez and Open Sources.
58 English Guidelines: page 38. This is in accordance with Talbani (1996), that there is a tradition in Muslim countries that the teacher should be active talking and the students passively listening.
59 English Guidelines: page 52.
60 English Guidelines: page 54.
61 English Guidelines: page 54.
62 «... un choix assumé, une vocation affirmé et non comme un métier ordinaire. » Chart : article 133.
63 Chart: articles 133, and 138.
to regularly enhance their educational level and to accomplish their missions. There is a further stress on "the right and duty to continuing education during the whole life".64 According to the Chart teachers are responsible to put the learners’ interest above all consideration, to give a good example of behavior to the pupils and preserve the intellectual curiosity and a critical and constructive spirit, and to be objective and fair in the evaluations and the exams.65

According to the English Guidelines teachers should further praise and motivate learner (and especially those who are reticent), help weak pupils to develop over time, create non-threatening conditions, foster the learners willingness “to work hard and being long-life learners”66, inform the pupils of what methods are to be used and the rationale, be reflective and avoid misbehaviour such as losing management over group forming, abusing power or giving a lot of tests are other aspects to be underlined. But also training learners in self-assessing is considered as a means to change the learner’s attitude from viewing themselves as being passive beings, and was presumed enhancing their goal orientation and motivation.67

A reason for teachers to adapt to different learning styles is that:

\[
\text{Within the framework of learning training, successful teachers are those who are willing to forsake their own views of what is best for teaching or learning, and consider learners’ approaches and preferences as how to learn best or more effectively.}\]68

Another discourse in the policies related to technology. Schools should progressively, according to the Chart, be equipped with new information and communication technologies. There should be a computer center and a multimedia library at every school. However, this issue is discussed in terms that imply the use of technology is not to be seen as a replacement of “the vivid relationship master-pupil, based on comprehension and respect.”69 Here is a tension or struggle between implying the new technology and the respect for the teacher. As Anderson-Levitt (2003) claims; ministries might hint resistance. This might be an example of such.

A discourse about the proper behavior, points out in the Chart, that the pupils should receive necessary support in their schooling and they should not endure bad treatment. They should furthermore assume their responsibilities to fulfill their schooling duties, be diligent and disciplined in agreement with the timetable and the norms and regulations of the schooling, take an active part in individual and collective activities in class, but also to take the exams with dignity, discipline and honesty, in order to stimulate a loyal competition.70

All efforts should be focused on putting a stop to dropouts, failure schooling and periodic and affected studies, and to meeting these stated goals the Chart declares the importance of attracting and motivating the pupils; the pupils’ motivation should guarantee that they succeed. These ideas

64 Chart: articles 57 and 138. « ...le droit et le devoir de la formation tout au long de la vie... » Quote from article 57.
65 Chart: articles 17, 133, 136, and 138. The importance of teacher training and the teacher’s good relation to the students is also underlined by Illeris (2008).
67 English Guidelines: pages 53, 56, and 57. Also the importance of motivation is emphasized by Illeris (2008).
68 English Guidelines: page 53. This is also in accordance with what for example Illeris (2008) advocates.
69 Chart: articles 119 and 121. «...la relation vivante maître-élève, basée sur la comprehension et le respect. » Here, in article 119, the word “maître” is used, instead of “enseignants” which has been used numerous times before. Maître could also mean lord, master, and it is interesting that this word appears in the context dealing with comprehension and respect.
70 Chart: article 19.
are also shared by the English Guidelines, emphasizing the importance of teachers to vary their task types in order to keep the learners motivated, not to drill learners mechanically – in grammar for instance - which it leads to dissatisfied, bored and exhausted learners. Self assessment and involving learners in decision-taking is furthermore seen as a means to trig the learners to learn more.\textsuperscript{71}

Parents should, according to the Chart, be conscious that education is not only the responsibility of the school, but also that of the family, in order to prepare the pupils for a successful schooling as well as later in the professional life.\textsuperscript{72}

\textit{Resumé}

Still another discourse in the policy documents is the “ideal” teacher, and the ‘new’ teacher’s role implementing the educational reforms. The teacher should be devoted, and adapt to the pupils. The teacher should neither be seen as an authority nor the only source of knowledge for the pupils. The problem, thus, seems to be the teachers’ authoritarian attitude, as well as the conventional pedagogical methods with little focus on the pupil as individual. The presuppositions seem to be that an authoritarian teaching mentality will not form the flexible global worker. Simultaneously the teacher’s authoritarian role is negotiated; while emphasizing that some pupils have an authoritarian learning style – and though the teachers should have a student-centred approach - teachers’ centred authoritarian style may be implemented in order to adapt to the pupils’ needs. The reform further emphasizes the need to learn foreign languages, as well as learners’ autonomy and student-centred learning. The problem seems to be that Morocco does not compete on the global job market (yet), and a presupposition underlies the discourse that Morocco needs to do so. However, Tabulawa (2009) shows that forming the self-programmable worker might, paradoxically lead to quite the opposite result.

Teachers need to consider teaching as a steady vocation, and not as an ordinary job. A strong motivation conforming to the exigencies of their mission is also necessary. Thinking of teaching as a vocation seems to be the source of a teacher’s motivation. The teacher, as individual, has the responsibility of being motivated. The government is inclined towards materialistic rewarding, such as the giving medals. In this discourse of teachers being rewarded by the government, salary is not mentioned, nor are working conditions such as the number of pupils in the classes. There is a silence concerning discipline problems; and it seems that the teachers are supposed to cope and succeed.

The pupils’ responsibilities are to “fulfill their schooling duties”, and “take the exams with dignity, discipline and honesty, in order to stimulate a loyal competition”. It seems as though an assumption is that the pupils today are not responsible.

It is assumed that the individual’s flexibility and willingness to learn, will automatically lead to an income. High unemployment rates world-wide indicate that this might not be the case. However, as Tabululawa (2009) points out, a switch to a learner-centred pedagogy does not guarantee that the global worker will be produced; it might be quite the contrary. It is the pupils’ responsibility to fulfil the schooling. Accordingly, it seems that if the pupil fails, the blame is on him/her.

\textsuperscript{71} E.g. Chart: article 27 and English Guidelines: pages 37, 48, and 87. Other reasons to motivation – or lack of motivation – are emphasized by Alvesson (1999), such as high unemployment rates.

\textsuperscript{72} Chart: articles 16, 138 and 149. The family’s importance in education has Rizvi & Lingard (2010) given examples of – for example that parents have taken over the children’s religious education in Pakistan.
Teachers on the reform
My research question was: How do teachers of English relate to the policy’s goals and vision in their English teaching practice in upper-secondary schools in Morocco?

Discourses on Education for All and the “new” pupils
My interview guide covered three themes, and many discourses were activated within these themes; such as for example social class, poor grades, and primary school issues.

In general the teachers did not doubt that they had the right approach or competence to teach. However, they were in despondence with their role as teachers, and in the teachers’ discourse, the reform was strongly contested. All teachers pointed out that the level of the pupils had become very low since the reform was launched, and many claimed that it is decreasing. One respondent stated:

_The level has decreased, especially from the mid 80’s and the late 90’s. There is something wrong in the Moroccan schools, we should not tell lies. Even high authorities in this country admit that there are difficulties._

In general the teachers’ discourse on the reform rather mirrored what, according to the teachers, did not work – contrasting it to how it had been before – instead of describing the reform itself. Teachers often started off by negative statements such as: “I don’t see any advantages. (…) As far as I’m concerned I think that there is no improvement.” , “(…) the reform, I think, is not in a good way.”, and “(…) unfortunately they don’t work. They don’t. Because of problems…”. Another teacher said that the aim of the reform was to foster a new citizen, and in accordance to this the respondent argued that:

_(…) sometimes it seems to be good, but when you come to how you implement these reforms, here is the question: Do we have enough tools to implement, and how should we implement, these reforms?_

The answer was negative. Another teacher explained that the biggest difference with the reform compared to the situation before, was that “the level of the students” had decreased. This was an opinion shared by all the teachers. The teachers referred to many different reasons trying to explain the pupils’ low level. One was related to social conditions; such as for example social background, living in remote areas as well as poverty, but also family conditions such as pupils having no parents, or having just one parent, or coming from a family where the parents have no awareness of the importance of education. One teacher argued that:

_I think it’s a problem of mind. A lot of students, they are clever. They are poor, not to the extent that they don’t have enough to eat, but they are not ready to come to school, to study. They prefer to work._

73 Interview 4: 303-306
74 Interview 7: 5-6, Interview 10: 30-31, and 174-175. Teachers often referred to the reform in plural, and thus included the Emergency plan launched in 2009, and its aims and visions to speed up the implementation of the reform from 2000.
75 Interview 8: 34-36
76 Interview 10: 125
77 Interview 7: 6-9
The reform’s aim to fight illiteracy and poverty was mentioned by several respondents, and many reflected on the issue of social class and its impact on the pupils’ level. One respondent discusses the problems related to poverty and family issues – also in urban areas, such as Casablanca. The majority of the pupils came from illiterate families, the respondent reasoned: “I don’t mean here that an illiterate person is a person who doesn’t know how to write or read, there are some people who are illiterate in their… They lack awareness (…).” This is to some extent in accordance with Arnot, David & Weiner (1999) that poor boys and girls do not benefit as well as the more privileged ones. Another teacher argued that you cannot separate the social environment from municipal schools:

You have students who come from, let’s say middleclass families, where the parents are well educated - it’s a plus for the child. But when you have parents who are completely out of touch (...), they are indifferent, they don’t care about the results and whether their child has a good mark by cheating – they don’t teach them values.78

Furthermore one respondent summarized that a reason for the pupils being weak and not motivated could be a sort of immaturity, not being aware of the value of the schooling: “They are not mature enough. They don’t appreciate what I tell them; you are here – you are lucky, because others don’t have this possibility.” The fact that the pupils did not see the advantages of formal education, seemed to, according to many teachers, be a reason for not making efforts and lacking motivation. One respondent explained that when the pupils saw that some people got a job without the slightest effort, and others who have studied remain unemployed, they did not see why they should study. It had become a belief that “there is no use in going to school”. Another respondent brought this one step further, and claimed that what was needed in upper-secondary was to prepare the pupils for the job market, and not for higher education: “That is what they need. They need a job. They don’t need education.” However, the problem with many unemployed university graduates, accounted for, according to several respondents many pupils’ lack of motivation. Yet another depicted this as a vicious circle and said tersely: “No bright future for the students, no good jobs, no progress for the economy, no prosperity for the country.”

The teachers’ discourse explaining the pupils’ low level was that the pupils did not acquire enough knowledge in primary school. Several teachers reasoned that because of the goals set by the World Bank making education accessible for everyone, the government could not have too many pupils drop out or repeat primary or middle-school, so the pupils pass even with a very low average. The problem increased for every year, and: “(...) when the students reach high schools – they don’t have the basics for being there”. The respondent explained this further:

78 Interview 8: 378-379
79 Interview 4: 17-21
80 Interview 4: 277-279
81 Interview 4: 322
82 Interview 7: 119-120
83 Interview 7: 58-59
84 Interview 3: 49-50
When most of the students reach 6th grade they have not developed the skills; the reading skills, or the basics in arithmetic, equation or calculations (...) and when they enter the secondary school, the worse things get.\(^{35}\)

By the end of primary the pupils had to take a national standard exam in order to pass to middle-school, another respondent explained how this used to be; before only the best pupils were admitted to middle-school:

It was good. Why? Because it was a selective approach. Only the best ones who deserved to go there, got to the middle schools and we did not have problems, because we had good students. They were selected, they were tested, they were at a standard level.\(^{36}\)

The teacher explained further that before, the pupils had only had two chances to take the exam which meant that “after 2 times – they had to go to the streets.” But now the World Bank intervened with the low rate of schooling in Morocco:

(...) and therefore we have to make some compromise, in order to keep these children in school until they are 16 – if we want to have loans from the World Bank. The problem is: what is the consequence of this decision? It is that the Ministry sometimes says that even if the students only have 5 or 6 out of 20, they have to pass - because we have to have a certain percentage of students going into the middle school, no matter what their average is.\(^{57}\)

The side effects of letting pupils pass, instead of repeating, when they did not have the required level of knowledge, was a frequently mentioned issue:

A lot of students don’t even merit being in primary school – and they are here. They are here in class. I often tell my students that “You don’t even merit to be in primary school”.\(^{58}\)

Apparently there is a problem, where the pupils do not fit the level, but in accordance with Illeris (2008) avoiding acting over the head of the pupils, playing on their insecurity and doing things they may experience humiliating is an important factor if you want them to perform better.

Yet another teacher explained that only a few pupils fit the level:

Most of them do not fit the level. You know, as a teenager or as a kid; when they pass the exams with the least efforts, next year they are going to make less effort than the previous year.\(^{59}\)

This, argued the respondent, turned out to be a vicious circle, where the pupils’ level and motivation decreased. The problem was passed on higher and higher, and when the pupils reached upper-secondary they had very limited understanding of what schooling was about:

Sometimes, they don’t even know how to write their name. We discover, they don’t know how to write, (..), so when we turn around and discover their handwriting – of course they are anxious, they are not eager to study, they are not willing to study (...) \(^{60}\)

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\(^{35}\) Interview 3: 55-58

\(^{36}\) Interview 5: 80-83

\(^{57}\) Interview 5: 89-95

\(^{58}\) Interview 7: 293-295

\(^{59}\) Interview 3: 58-61
The primary and middle-school teachers’ lack of qualifications was another discourse produced by the teachers.

At primary school we teach children to be, but not just to learn. (...) So at the primary level we need to have very qualified and skilled people (...). At [upper-secondary], teachers are qualified to teach the school subjects, but primary schools and kindergarten are much more complicated.\textsuperscript{91}

Some examples of how to deal with both poverty and the low levels were suggested. Poverty was considered to be dealt with by fighting the social conditions first – before sending the children to school: “To progress we could help the families that are in need, and give them money. Then it would change.”\textsuperscript{92} and “We have to work on their social situation, and \underline{then} talk about school.”\textsuperscript{93} Yet another responded by claiming that there was a need to work on two levels; not only “fighting illiteracy which is fatal, but also preparing good students who are at the top for the university, for research...”,\textsuperscript{94} Rizvi & Lingard (2010) underline that primary education is presumed to lead to both economic and social benefits to society; an opinion that many teachers did not share. Also Ali (2006) shows that education in Pakistan was seen as a tool to reduce poverty. To eradicate poverty through education, in the Moroccan context, did not seem to be considered feasible in the teachers’ discourse.

A new group of pupils entered formal education due to the Education for All reform. Their background was considered as a problem, though. Letting the unsuccessful pupils pass to higher levels increased the problem. There were some silences in the discourses concerning the reform. No teacher contested whether it was lack of motivation or lack of comprehension that made a pupil stop making any effort when placed in the wrong level. No one contested that pupils studying hard might not compensate a dysfunctional school system. The privatization, and its effects in terms of giving higher social classes the choice to leave municipal schools and opt for private institutions, leaving pupils from lower social classes with no choice but for the municipal schools – was not mentioned by any respondent.

The upper-secondary teachers furthermore considered themselves as being more qualified than primary school teachers; but many of the upper-secondary pupils were regarded as a group as not qualified to be pupils in formal education – not even in primary school.

\textbf{Discourses on the classroom practice and the pupils’ lack of motivation}

Several discourses were related to the classroom practice, such as big classes, exam taking and the pupils’ lack of motivation. In order to limit my research I have, as mentioned in the method chapter chosen not to focus on teaching the four skills and the use of the text books, even though a considerable part of the interviews concerned this. Many teachers complained that the number of hours the classes studied English had been reduced - but also about the numerous pupils in the classes, often around 40-45; we “have fewer hours, (...) and \textit{more} students in the class.”\textsuperscript{95} The pupils had changed, too; pupils in the past used to be very careful, and always on time, one respondent explained; the pupils were:

\textsuperscript{90} Interview 7: 182-185
\textsuperscript{91} Interview 3: 355-359
\textsuperscript{92} Interview 4: 529-530
\textsuperscript{93} Interview 8: 436-437
\textsuperscript{94} Interview 3: 459-461
\textsuperscript{95} Interview 10: 27-28
very content, and they knew the importance of time, (...) When the lesson started, they did not want to miss even a minute (...). They used to get in, and clean the blackboard, and be seated (...). Now, when I have class at 8, I’m the first here, and I wait. (...) No respect for time. Complete demotivation. They are not interested at all.96

Lack of time, many teachers reasoned, also made it difficult to cover all units in the textbook, in order to prepare the pupils for the national A-level exam. However the A-level exam was not the only exam issue in the teachers’ discourse. Written classroom exams during the academic year, were a problem, too, some respondent claimed. Cheating in class during exams was also a severe problem several teachers explained. One respondent claimed that it was a serious problem in Morocco, not only in schools but also at the university; this problem, the respondent argued, was related to upbringing, historical background; pupils did not cheat 15-20 years ago - but now it had changed: “here are some students who think that cheating is their right. Some said to me: ‘It’s our right!’”.97 The sitting arrangements in the classrooms, with two pupils sitting next to each other at double-desks in the classroom made it difficult to invigilate the pupils, another teacher said, and continued explaining that some teachers helped the pupils with the answers during exams: “They want students to cheat. What do we expect for the students to do?” Keeping the pupils from cheating was a difficult task, though. The respondent continued:

And to be right forward, I say that I need arms! (laughter) (...) I have to be there. (...) But at the expense of my nerves. Really, I feel that...when they cheat, I prefer to teach hours, 10 hours, or 100 hours, than to do an exam 1 hour.98

Exam taking was also related to the pupils’ motivation, some teachers argued. Apart from the regular classroom exam-taking, there were no regional or national exams in English the last but one year at upper-secondary. At this level, one respondent said, “the students are not interested in English, because they don’t take exams”.99 In other subjects they took regional exams, the year before the A-level exam. The results from these were counted as 25% of the total average in the A-level. Some pupils got surprisingly low grades on the regional exam, sometimes only 3 or 2,5 out of 20.100 In order to get the A-level, the pupils thus need to make quite an effort in all school subjects – also English. Instead of considering that the regional exam counts 25% one respondent explained how the result from the regional exam decreased the pupils’ motivation in English: “You could say that you have 75% chance remaining. So they could say: ‘I can do it.’ [But] they don’t at aaall.”101 This, the respondent argued, had something to do with their upbringing, their social environment or, with their homes, the parents’ responsibility, and the society’s responsibility: “If you fail – take advantage of it. But they don’t.”102 Illeris (2008) claims that weak pupils in particular become insecure and their motivation ambivalent when needed to perform under pressure. This might be the case in Morocco with the pupils who do not take advantage of their failures.

96 Interview 4: 261-268
97 Interview 4: 202-204
98 Interview 7: 304-322
99 Interview 3: 288
100 The passing grade for the baccalaureate average is normally 10 out of 20. (My remark.)
101 Interview 4: 119-124
102 Interview 4: 126-127
However, all pupils did not lack motivation even if they were not very successful. One teacher had noticed a big change with some pupils from one year to another and that now, the last year of upper-secondary, they were doing better:

*I asked them in a very soft way, to make them motivated, and I want to say that some are motivated. They are not good students, but they are not students who will write nothing in the [A-level] exam. They are going to write something.*

English was introduced as a new school subject the last year of middle-school, so the pupils had only had one year of English before entering upper-secondary school. However, the teachers claimed that many pupils were also weak in English. This was said by several teachers relating to the fact that a great number of pupils even had a poor level of other languages, for example Arabic. During teachers’ reunions it was often confirmed that the pupils who were weak in Standard Arabic also were the ones weak in for example History, Maths, Geography, Philosophy and English. One respondent argued in respect to the pupils who were poor in both French and Arabic: “How could they be good, or better in English?” This is in accordance with Anderson-Levitt (2003) that even though the reforms set a frame; lived experience matters more – in this context that the teachers ‘know’ what to expect, but also that the pupils weak in one subject are weak in all subjects and thus may not try to make efforts. No teacher reflected that poor skills in Arabic – the language of instruction – could lead to difficulties in other school subjects taught in Arabic; such as for example History, Geography and Philosophy, but that poor skills in Arabic not necessarily had to lead to poor skills in English.

But not only the pupils’ levels of English were low, so also, was their motivation. An explanation given by one respondent to explain their lack of motivation was that it might be “because they feel that they are weak.” Other teachers complained about the pupils’ lack of motivation which was illustrated by their tardiness, poor grades, concentration issues in class, and not doing homework.

Less than a handful of pupils participated in each class, all teachers claimed. Some examples were given of this: “The problem is that they are unable to produce correct sentences. But it doesn’t matter too much – they are here to learn”. “I try to motivate them, to get some response from them, because I can’t accept sleeping. They are sleepy all the time, in my class.” Lack of participation was also mirrored in homework assignments: “It’s the same result, it’s only 4-5 students [out of approximately 40-45] who prepared, the others did not. Maybe it’s a lack of motivation! Students today are not motivated to learn.”

Not all pupils showed a lack of motivation, though. The science pupils were in general, the teachers agreed, better and more motivated than humanities pupils. There were gender differences, too: “Art students are more reluctant to learn English and other subjects. Science students are more motivated, and girls outsmart boys while learning languages.” Another respondent concurred that humanities pupils were less motivated than science streams pupils:

103 Interview 10: 482-485
104 Interview 7: 179-180
105 Interview 8: 322
106 Interview 10: 310-312
107 Interview 8: 304-309
108 Interview 3: 110-112
Science students are more motivated than art students, because art students know that all they can do is study Law to become a lawyer, or go to the faculties of arts and letters, and study English literature or French literature and become a teacher. No one thinks about other possibilities.  

The pupils in the Science-Math stream, were considered as being the most successful. However, also their level and motivation had decreased.

(...) the Science-Maths who are the best students. Not all of them, but I’d say 60 or 70% of the students participate, which was not the case before! Because with classes of Science-Maths, before we had 100% of participation in class - orally and written. But I’ve noticed that there is a little change, even for the Science-Maths.”

Other discourses concerning the classroom practice were related to the archaic classrooms; the teachers complained about colorless walls, old fashioned and poorly maintenance desks, blackboards and chalk, and the lack of technical devices – there were not even sockets in the classrooms if the teachers would like to use the CDs from the textbooks for listening comprehensions. In one way or another all these issues could, according to the teachers, relate to the pupils’ lack of motivation. The lack of technology in class was furthermore another reason mentioned: “These young students who are eager to use new technology, (...) when they come to school they are frustrated.” Yet another teacher claimed that the reason the pupils were not hardworking in class these days was the pupils’ interest in technology outside school: “They don’t want to work at all because of the Internet or the television. It means that they work less than before.”

There were many complaints about the classroom practice, and the impact the issues might have, to explain the pupils’ lack of motivation. The classroom practice discourses focused mainly on external factors, and reasons for, for example, the pupils lack of motivation. The discourse seemed to take for granted that there was not much the teachers could do to improve the situation. Only one of the teachers mentioned that the pupils’ lack of motivation could perhaps also be related to the fact that the pupils might find the way they were being taught boring – and that the pupils wanted something else. The respondent also emphasized the lack of other activities to “help them love, to love the school. For example (...) theater, music etc. They just come to take lessons – and go back home.”

Making pupils want to come to school – but not for the core subject, could therefore be a way to motivate them, the teacher reasoned, and pupils who were weak for example in English or Math might be good as actors – which might be a way for the teacher to respond to the idea of student-centered learning. Eventually the respondent added one more possibility for the pupils’ lack of motivation: “Or maybe! Sorry. Maybe it is because of the type of the teacher.”

Fewer hours per class, and bigger classes were common complaints. Another discourse was cheating during exam-taking, which was considered a widespread problem. The main issue, however, was the pupils’ lack of motivation, and many reasons were given in order to explain this; poor results on exams, poor grades in other subjects, lack of technology, access to technology, archaic classrooms,

109 Interview 4: 231-234
110 Interview 10: 504-512
111 Interview 5: 138-140.
112 Interview 10: 261-263
113 Interview 4: 326-328
114 Interview 8: 332
and that humanities pupils in general were less motivated than science ones, and that boys in
general were less motivated than girls. One silence in the discourses on the classroom practice is that
no one seemed to see a possible connection between the pupils passing from one level to another in
spite of not having a passing grade and not being motivated. Cheating might have been one strategy
the pupils used, trying to compensate for being there without having the basic tools to succeed. No
one claimed that the teachers were motivated. Only one respondent reflected that teaching methods
and the teachers themselves could influence the pupils’ motivation. A common discourse which had
transferred into a taken for granted truth, was that the pupils did not want to make any effort and
lacked motivation - and that the teacher could not do anything to change all these external causes
either. The teachers conveyed the pupils as a group who cheated, were weak, and lacked motivation.
The teachers conveyed themselves as victims where they had no or little power.

**Discourses on student-centered learning**

Several discourses concerned student-centered learning, such as group work, critical thinking and in-
service training related to student-centered methods, as well as technology. All teachers agreed that
the pupils did not participate much in class, and that the teacher talking time was considerable. This
might be seen in the lights of what Anderson-Levitt (2003) states, that lived experience matters more
than the frames of the reforms. Considerable Teacher Talking Time worked before, and that is the
experience the teachers have – but it seems that it does not work during the current conditions,
though. Furthermore, the teachers explained group work was hardly ever carried out. One reason for
this was the number of pupils in the classes, often between 40-45, as well as the number of teaching
hours. Before the teachers had had extra hours per week just for half the class, and then later on, the
other half. This was appreciated by the teachers, and also gave them an occasion to not only “deal
with the weak students (...) who were in need of work”\(^{115}\) but also to get to know the pupils:

> It was good and very beneficial for the students and also for the teachers – because the
teachers knew the students better in this way. But now, what do we have – we have whole
classes, no split classes, no groups. (...) We need to know the students better.\(^{116}\)

There were no split classes anymore, which the teachers explained was the reason why it was not
possible to do group work in class:

> Because of time. For example – for science students you have 3 hours a week. And you have a
program for that week. So how can you divide them? If you want to divide them...you will
have them 6 hours. So where to put the other 3 hours? \(^{117}\)

Another teacher said:

> How can we do group work? Shall we send half the class away in the street and then work
with a group? Or should we for instance give them to other [teachers]? You cannot speak
about group work in a class – even the (...) setting of the tables are not appropriate. (...) We
need fewer students, to make group work...\(^{118}\)

Dividing one whole class in many small groups did not seem to be an option:

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\(^{115}\) Interview 10: 137-139

\(^{116}\) Interview 5: 292-296

\(^{117}\) Interview 8: 205-208

\(^{118}\) Interview 5: 438-444
You cannot divide them in the classroom! (panting laughter) Then the environment will be noisy. You cannot control the students; and what about the participation of students? How can you make them all participate? If we want it to be fruitful, we must have just about, 20 or 18 students.\textsuperscript{119}

In the group work discourse, the teachers compared today’s big classes and fewer hours, with what it had been before the reform. The advantage with having some hours with split classes was that the teacher learned to know the pupils better and also got an opportunity to help the weak pupils, and thus could ameliorate the relationship between the teacher and pupils. However group work was construed to be a half class, with about 20 pupils. Neither the whole class, nor the split class, was divided into smaller groups, nor did the methods of teaching seem to change; group work did not implicate student-centered learning, but rather remained traditionally teacher-centered. Dividing the classes into smaller groups in Laos and Mongolia (Chounlamany & Kounphilaphanh, 2011; Steiner-Khamsi & Stolpe, 2006), was used as a means to handle big classes; in the Moroccan context the big classes were used as a reason for not doing group work which the teachers agreed would only be viable for classes with fewer than 20 pupils. However, in all it would not change the methods, which would remain teacher-centered. Thus the democratic development where pupils work in groups, discuss and cooperate as Tabulawa (2009) describes is far from being realized. The traditional Muslim pedagogy is teacher-centered, according to Talbani (1996), with the teacher talking and the pupils passively listening. This seems to a large extent be practiced in the local context. According to Anderson-Levitt (2003) France is an example of large whole-class instruction. This also seemed to have a strong hold in education in post-colonial Morocco today; thus two different teacher-centered traditions reinforcing each other in the local context.

Another discourse was about critical thinking. One respondent said that the student-centered methods advocated in the reform had little impact on the teaching: “This is, believe me, just on a theoretical level. There comes papers with new methods, but when you apply them – they don’t work!”\textsuperscript{120} Furthermore the despondent teacher said tersely about the methods of teaching: “There is no method which can work. Because they can’t.”\textsuperscript{121} One teacher described student-centered technique:

\textit{That means that the student is the person that plays the best role in teaching. They should look for learning themselves. They shouldn’t wait for the teacher to be the source of knowledge, the source of everything. They should look for information themselves, and [the] teacher has to help and to guide them - if it’s difficult for them. But [the student] is the center, or the core, of the learning process. So, this is the last technique which is applied. The problem... This is another problem because we cannot apply [it]. This can never be applied.}\textsuperscript{122}

When it came to expressing opinions and discussing a topic, another respondent claimed that the pupils had nothing to say, and that only 4-5 out of 40-45 were able to think critically:

\textit{Even if you turn to Arabic, they [just] stare at you. So I feel that the obstacle is not language – it’s something else (...) So maybe here we see the failure of the teaching or the way the...}

\textsuperscript{119} Interview 8: 213-217
\textsuperscript{120} Interview 4: 283-284
\textsuperscript{121} Interview 4: 392-393
\textsuperscript{122} Interview 7: 103-112
students were taught. They were not taught to think, to use their minds, to be critical in their thinking. They were taught a lesson and they were asked to give it back in the exam. That’s it.  

One teacher gave an example of a colleague, a teacher of Arabic, who had worked at a French private upper-secondary school for a few months, and when returning to the municipal school had claimed surprise at the level of analyzing ability the pupils in the private school had.

Although they have limited Arabic, they could extract a lot from the texts given. This is something that the students learn from an early age. This is what we should focus on. We should focus on student-centered learning.

Another teacher insisted on the importance to teach pupils to be more responsible and to express their opinions:

In Moroccan schools we ought to teach them to be independent, we don’t teach them to express their opinion, we just have very nice students who learn things we teach them, and give it back (...) when they take the exams. Critical thinking is not developed and the older they get, the less critical they are. And if you are not critical, you are not creative.

Reasoning a little further the respondent concluded: “But we don’t want to have critical thinking, (...) we don’t want to have people think critically - because it’s not good for the government.”

Teacher talking time was considerable, and furthermore the position taken by the teachers was that student-centered learning could not be applied but was rather on a theoretical level. In transnational reforms there is an enhanced focus on student-centered learning as for example Anderson-Levitt (2003) and Chounlamany & Kounphilaphanh (2011) claim. The pupils were not able to think critically and were not trained to do so either. In a French private school for the elite, pupils were – even with a poor level of Arabic – good at analyzing in comparison to those in the municipal schools, which placed the latter ones lower down the school hierarchy. Some teachers emphasized the importance of teaching pupils to express their opinions – but according to the respondent the government did not promote positive attitudes towards critically thinking.

**Technology**

Even though the teachers considered themselves competent, in-service training was required by some. One respondent questioned upset, how the reform could be implemented in the classes: “We need to be helped to implement [the reform], otherwise we will not be motivated to work.” Some teachers regarded the in-service teachers’ training, concerning new methods of teaching advocated by the educational reforms, as something positive but, however, not sufficient. One teacher explained that many inspectors had left their jobs, so some teachers had no more meetings with inspectors who could give them directives. Another teacher argued that there should be a more thorough follow-up, and that there should be someone the teachers could turn to directly when

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123 Interview 8: 284-300
124 Interview 4: 472-474
125 Interview 3: 333-337
126 Interview 3: 342-344
127 Interview 8: 235-236
questions arose about the implementation of new methods such as for example technology: “We want to use technology. (...) But schools are not ready for that, are not yet ready.”

One respondent had had two sessions of teachers training; one of them covering three days of practice, related to the implementation of ICT in education. The in-service training was provided at three different levels according to the teachers’ familiarity with computers: “So the 1st was for people who don’t know anything about computers. Analphabets. (...) [The following] how to present a lesson through ICT.” For some teachers, the respondent explained, this was a huge challenge, and they had found it very difficult, and questioned the use of ICT in Moroccan English classes:

(...) and sometimes they refuse...it’s as if (...) it will be as if they are playing with students. These type of teachers are, are traditional – let me say. They are traditional, so they think that the best way to teach is black board, text books, and copy books.

Life-long learning and the citizens’ willingness to learn the whole life through, as for example Illeris (2008), and Rizvi & Lingard (2010) is a frequent feature in global educational policies. However, some teachers in the given context seemed to lack willingness to enhance their proficiency and to adapt to the current policy.

Another respondent commented that the ICT was the main core of all reforms nowadays – not only in Morocco – and claimed that ICT was the future tool of education. But the teachers needed to guide the pupils on for example the Internet, and provide them with pedagogically good links, and not just let the pupils search for anything:

No, there should be an aim for going to the Internet. (...) If there is homework from this kind of web-sites, it should be supervised. It should be regulated by teachers, in order to have a beneficial and good practice.

Furthermore the respondent insisted on the importance of strategic planning both short term and long term when implementing technology in education; and claimed that it was due to lack of following-up that “not more than 5 % of the Multi-media rooms [in middle-schools] are used now.”

The respondent also argued that the teachers needed someone to ask, and who could reply as soon as possible – “and not just wait for a supervisor to come once a year”. The lack of contact with the inspectors was mentioned by another respondent who said he/she had not had any in-service training for the last five or six years, and claimed that the teachers “before were told by inspectors how to deal with textbooks, but now we have fewer inspectors, so there is no communication between inspectors and teachers.” However, the reform had changed the teachers’ way of teaching, the respondent explained:

128 Interview 7: 164-168
129 Information and Communication Technology, ICT, downloaded from Nationalencyklopedin, August 22, 2013 at http://www.ne.se/sok?q=ICT
130 Interview 8: 155-159
131 Interview 8: 166-169
132 Interview 5: 478-483
133 Interview 5: 173
134 Interview 5: 263
135 Interview 10: 52-56
We have to use the textbook as it is, and the reform is included in [it]. (…) We are conditioned by the textbooks, because the students are asked about the contents on the national exam.\textsuperscript{136}

One teacher mentioned in-line service, dealing with what the teacher should think about, when preparing exams in class:

When you prepare a text, it shouldn’t go beyond 235 words, (…) the writing... the writing, the vocabulary should not be easy to cheat. It should be personalized. Let them talk about their personal life, what happened to him, or her. (…) So they cannot cheat.\textsuperscript{137}

One respondent reflected on the individual teacher’s responsibility in the learning process, and had tried to connect with the pupils through introducing humor in class:

(…) I turn around the roles and I joke with them. I try to create a good environment for them. But I get their attention for maybe just 20 or 50 minutes, and then it’s gone. (…) They lose it.\textsuperscript{138}

The respondent saw humor as a means to make the pupils interested, and introducing humor might be seen as such an attempt. All pupils were not the same, though. However the respondent tried to adapt to the way the pupils were; the teaching depended on the pupils’ personalities:

There are students who like the use of humor. They love it, they enjoy it, they get motivated. And there are others who say ‘Oh, this teacher is wasting our time. Why does [the teacher] laugh? It’s stupid. Why does [the teacher] talk to us? [The teacher] is making fun of us.’ They want a serious teacher. (To illustrate this, the respondent shouted:) \textit{Take your copy books! Copy the lesson!} This is how they see a good teacher.\textsuperscript{139}

The border between the ‘old’ teacher and the ‘new’ one was produced and reproduced. Most teachers resisted changes – but not all. There was a tension between the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ role, both on behalf of the teachers and the pupils. The teachers strongly contested student-centered learning and mainly preferred an authoritarian teacher-centered method. Also during in-service training, the teacher-centered approach – such as letting the pupils personalize their writing assignments during exam-taking – was used as a means to keep the pupils from cheating. This underlines the teachers’ role as authoritarian rather than the pupils’ role in student-centered learning. The teachers are thus far from the “self-programmable worker” characterized by creativity, autonomous thinking and inventiveness, as Tabulawa (2009) describe.

\textit{Resumé}

Rather than describing the reform itself – it was mirrored in its weaknesses. Asked to describe the Moroccan educational reform, two intertwined discourses were expressed; either that the aim was to wipe out illiteracy or that the reform did not work – and both were often used to explain the pupils’ lack of motivation. Most of the reasons the respondents gave to explain the pupils’ lack of motivation were external factors that the teachers could not have an influence on, such as family issues, social class, and geographical differences. Other issues mentioned were that authorities previously had let weak pupils pass instead of repeating, which led to some of the pupils being in

\textsuperscript{136}Interview 10: 74-86
\textsuperscript{137}Interview 7: 492-499
\textsuperscript{138}Interview 8: 335-340
\textsuperscript{139}Interview 8: 489-493
classes way over their heads, thus becoming even weaker. The job market was also mentioned by every respondent but one. Very few reasons were mentioned which the teachers could actually have an influence on; the teachers thus regarded themselves as a powerless group, victim to top-down decisions. There was a resistance on behalf of the teachers towards student-centered learning; the methods could not be implemented the respondents claimed, but were rather on a theoretical level. This is in accordance to for example Anderson-Levitt (2003) that teachers play with or against similar looking reforms.

**Pupils on the reform**
My research question was: How do upper-secondary school pupils experience the implementation of the policy’s goal and visions?

**Overriding effects of the reform**
For some of the pupils, neither the mother nor the father had gone to school. For most of the pupils the mother had not. They were all the first generation to study at upper-secondary. The two boarding school pupils were from Casablanca but had applied to the school due to difficult home conditions such as domestic violence or being lodgers having difficulties to study due to the crowded living conditions.

When the pupils were asked to describe what they knew about educational reforms in Morocco – very little was said. Most of them knew, however, about the goal to fight illiteracy; one pupil mentioned more precisely facilitating schooling for children in remote areas in the countryside, and another mentioned encouraging illiterate women to read and count (the respondent’s mother had participated in such a governmental program for about a year). What they knew had mainly been communicated through the news on the TV. One pupil mentioned further of having heard that the parents should participate in their children’s learning. This had been communicated through one of the yearly slogans at the beginning of the autumn semester. The active knowledge the pupils had about the reform was the discourses about fighting illiteracy, and Gender Mainstreaming which are common discourses in contemporary borrowed reforms (e.g. Bäcktorp, 2007; Chounlamany & Kounphilaphanh, 2011; Rizvi & Lingard, 2009). They also knew that the parents should take an active part in the children’s schooling. However, the pupils were not aware that discourses about subjects such as languages (in order to compete on a global job-market), quality control (e.g. grading), privatization (as a part of providing education for all), and student-centered learning (e.g. to form the pupils to become critical thinkers and adapted to a global job market) were parts of the reform. What the pupils said revealed a lot about the effects of the reform, though.

**Discourses on the importance of languages**
Even though the pupils were pupils of different science streams, they all emphasized the importance of speaking different languages. Two intertwined discourses were emphasized; one that they needed foreign languages in future university studies in Morocco as well as abroad, and another that it was important to speak different languages to get access to the job market. This is in accordance with global reforms in general (e.g. Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Ryan, 2006). Personal reasons, like studying languages for the pleasure of it - outside formal education - were also mentioned. All respondents claimed in one way or another that speaking a foreign language brings a kind of power to the speaker; and one précised that speaking to foreigners in their language, was
very important: “It’s like a power to me.”[140] Not speaking one or more foreign languages was consequently considered as a hindrance for both further studies and, seen in a wider sense, for a successful career. In municipal compulsory school as well as upper-secondary school, Arabic is the language of instruction, even though French is taught as a first foreign language. The last year of compulsory school English is in general introduced as a second foreign language. All the respondents planned to continue to study at the university, and some claimed that they would need English, but for further studies in Morocco the most important language was undoubtedly French. However not all upper-secondary pupils counted on entering university, and they did not see any importance of English once they have passed the A-level exam: “Most of [the pupils], the majority, do it only to get the A-level.”[141]

All the pupils emphasized the importance of having a good level of French, in order to study at Moroccan universities. For two of the respondents the switch of language of instruction was considered an enormous obstacle; which they related to in different ways. One respondent claimed that education is the future, and wanted a good schooling, but that that the education was not good – and therefore changing language became a real problem. French in Morocco was considered to be the biggest problem; a problem the pupils did not want: “All pupils. How do you say? ‘Difficile, difficile.’ (...) With French.”[142] In private schools there were, according to the respondent, pupils who did not know Standard Arabic: "But in municipal schools we don’t know French and English."[143] The respondent having a high level of Standard Arabic, questioned the switch of language of instruction and claimed that it was not logical; Arabic would have been very convenient as the language of instruction at the university, though. The other respondent explained that even if you have good grades in Mathematics or Physics, you are hindered in going to college or the university because “the first thing that they ask is for languages”.[144] Without a good level in French they would never be approved. Also this respondent preferred Arabic to French, in spite of having a moderate level of Standard Arabic.

I have a big problem with Arabic, even though it’s my language, but I can’t for example say a phrase like this in [Standard] Arabic. So, it’s a little difficult.[145]

A low or moderate language skill in the post-colonial language French thus excluded the pupils from higher education, and in a longer perspective the international job market. Arabic was in this context of little importance. However, these two respondents had a strategy in coping with the fact that their French was not good. The grades in different school subjects are multiplied with different coefficients, they explained; Math, French and Arabic have the coefficient 5, for example, and physics 3. Having chosen an upper-secondary school stream focusing on science, then this to some extent balanced poor grades in Arabic and French:

I’m studying Physics and Chemistry, simply because it includes two essential subjects which contain a very high coefficient, that means the latter ones will help me to get a high grade at

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140 Interview 12: 339-340 « C’est comme un pouvoir pour moi. »
141 Interview 2 : 123-124 « Mais la plupart [des étudiants], ils le font seulement pour le baccalauréat. »
143 Interview 9: 503 « Mais dans le public, on ne maitrise pas le français et l’anglais. »
144 Interview 11 : 132-133
145 Interview 11 : 369-371
the end of the year. Moreover, it will be much easier for me to choose whatever major I want at the university.\textsuperscript{146}

Being good in science, but with poor language skills was considered a handicap for future plans. Not being good at science but good at languages was, however, considered a much bigger handicap. Making strategic choice choosing a scientific stream, one of the respondents reasoned, did not seem to be an option for all pupils, though, and therefore some pupils studied humanities.

(...) they are simply not capable of learning Maths or Physics. It’s the kind of pupil who is not capable of learning or understanding science. They have chosen humanities because they do not have another choice. (...) It is rare that they choose it because they want it. (...) They don’t study science or economics – because they are not capable of succeeding (...). They are in humanities because they only have Arabic and French. What they will do after [upper-secondary school] – I don’t know.\textsuperscript{147}

Another respondent concurred with this, and explained further that with very few exceptions the humanities pupils were worthless; because they believe they have chosen an easy stream:

(...) but it’s just the opposite. The opposite. The humanities is more difficult than science, because they are obliged to learn and suffer to learn the languages (...) and even Arabic, it’s 30% of the importance - it’s Arabic.(...). But they are not conscious of that, they don’t know anything. (...) They are really good-for-nothing.\textsuperscript{148}

These pupils viewed themselves in relation to the ‘others’, the humanities pupils, where the humanities pupils in general were considered unsuccessful with a very doubtful future ahead of them. Being unsuccessful in French was thus considered a minor problem to being successful exclusively in languages. All respondents wanted to continue studying at the university, and engineering was a dream they shared. However, almost all of them – even those who did not worry about their French level – emphasized how bothered they were about their possibilities to be admitted to engineering college. Many of them were almost sure that they would not get high enough grades to be admitted; 17 out of 20 - or even higher - was in general needed, they explained. One respondent claimed that this was due to the fact that there were too many pupils applying, and when there were many pupils applying, the requirements for admittance to university became more difficult. Pupils who were not admitted had no other choice than to apply to different departments of study instead; but a common conviction was that getting a job after having studied at a department of study other than for example engineering and medicine would be very difficult. French thus worked as a ticket to higher education and the most desirable college educations, which seen in a longer perspective thus also led to a better chance in getting access to the job market. English is emphasized in many transnational policies; for example Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Ryan, 2006 claim, that English is assumed to give access to higher education and the

\textsuperscript{146} Interview 9: 249-253 Translated from Standard Arabic.
\textsuperscript{147} Interview 6: 189-202 «(...)ils ne sont pas capables d’apprendre les maths, ou les sciences physiques. C’est le genre d’étudiants qui ne sont pas capables d’apprendre ou comprendre les matières scientifiques. Ils ont choisi la littérature, parce que il n’y a rien d’autre à faire. C’est rare que les littéraires choisissent les lettres par conviction. Ils n’optent pas pour les sciences ou l’économie parce qu’ils ne sont pas capables de les réussir. Ils choisissent la littérature parce qu’il n’y a que l’arabe et le français comme matières. Qu’est ce qu’ils vont faire après ? Je ne sais pas. »
\textsuperscript{148} Interview 12: 486-492 «...mais c’est le contraire. Contraire. [La] branche littéraire est plus difficile que la branche scientifique, parce qu’ils sont obligés d’apprendre et souffrir pour apprendre les langues (...) et même l’Arabe, c’est 30% de l’importance – c’est l’arabe. Mais ils ne sont pas au courant, ils savent rien. Les littéraires sont vraiment nuls. »
job market – which also the national policy claims. However, for the pupils French was the most important language in order to be admitted to the university; once there English would be important.

**Privatization**
The difficulties to enter engineering colleges, led to an escape from municipal schools towards private establishments for those who could afford it. The private school discourse was important for all the respondents, and all of them brought it up several times during the interviews. Many examples were thus given to illustrate how pupils with very poor grades changed to private schools and instantly got much higher grades, because the private school direction was cheating: “For, for example 3,000 Dirhams\(^{149}\), they will give you anything; 18 or 19 (out of 20)- whatever they want.”\(^{150}\)

Many respondents explained and counted, and gave examples - also from the Internet - comparing the pupils’ grades from the regional exams and national exams – and the class work grade given by the teachers due to exam-taking during the year. Those pupils who were in danger and who risked to fail the A-level in municipal schools, as well as those who had good grades – but not good enough to be confident to be admitted to engineering or medical school – went to private schools if the parents could afford it. Sometimes they only moved for the last year in upper-secondary. An exorbitant class work grade, several examples proved, could then be the difference between getting a passing A-level grade or not, or being admitted to engineering or medical school or not.

> It’s abnormal. Someone who has 8 on the regional exam, and who has 17 in average in class, it’s...it’s...not normal. And then on the national A-level exam, he got 8 I think. And then when you count all his grades, he got a 12 and passed his A-level.\(^{151}\)

Even with good results from the regional and national exams, the municipal school pupils could not compete with the pupils in private schools: “Because [in a municipal school] you will not get 19. (…) You work hard and you only get 14 – for example. (…) That’s our problem.”\(^{152}\) Being excluded from the university studies they desired because they studied at municipal schools was a tender subject. As one respondent put it, whining loudly: “It hurts! Because we know all this – but we live with it!”\(^{153}\)

The respondents considered as a severe injustice that pupils in municipal schools did not have the same chances as the ones in private schools because of the exorbitant private school grades: “Look, it’s commerce. Education in Morocco has become a matter of commerce.”\(^{154}\) Yet another respondent concurred with this:

> When you give money...you get a better education. I don’t know [why]. It is the country who has made this; the Ministry - I think.\(^{155}\)

This is in accordance with Arnot, David & Weiner (1999) that poor boys and girls do not benefit as well as the more privileged ones in schooling.

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\(^{149}\) About 2 700 SEK. It was considered as the monthly school fee. (A minimum wage lies slightly below this.)

\(^{150}\) Interview 11: 213-224

\(^{151}\) Interview 6: 77-80 « C’est anormal. Quelqu’un qui a 8 au régional qui a 17 en moyenne, genre en classe c’est... c’est... pas normal. Et puis à l’examen nationale du baccalauréat, il a eu un 8 je crois. Et puis, quand on reprend toutes ses notes, et on recompte toutes ses notes, il a eu un 12, et il a eu son bac. » (The passing grade for the A-level is normally 10.)

\(^{152}\) Interview 11 : 326-332

\(^{153}\) Interview 6: 100-101 « (gémis !). Ça fait mal ! Parce que ce qu’on connait tous ça – mais on vit avec ! »

\(^{154}\) Interview 9: 644-649 « Quand tu donnes de l’argent...tu trouves un meilleur enseignement. Je ne sais pas [pourquoi]. C’est le pays qui a fait ça. Je crois que c’est le ministère... »
Grades, and further studies

Neither of the respondents seemed to fear not getting a passing grade on the A-level, but they did fear not being admitted to desirable education like engineering. One respondent claimed that not a single one of the A-level pupils from his/her school, studying Science-Math the previous year, had been admitted to engineering or medical school. Few options remained then but to apply to different departments at the university. A common opinion was that this was not considered a reasonable option for science pupils because they would then have to study with pupils who had barely gotten the A-level and were not considered to be serious pupils interested in studying. Almost all respondents emphasized how difficult it would be to get a job anyhow – and if having had to study at another department of study, instead of engineering or medical school, it would be even worse – the chances seemed to be negligible. This created a situation where the pupils felt very frustrated: “Because now, we work for 12 years and then, towards the end, we get nothing.”

The pupils were aggrieved at being in a municipal school. There seemed to be few solutions around this problem. However, one respondent worked for a year on a strategy to tackle this; the solution was to study abroad – in Germany. Here the whole problem with the A-level average grade and poor skills in French would be sidestepped, because in Germany you had to take the German A-level exam:

That’s why I chose Science-Math, to have a good level in Math and Physics, because when I get the ‘Studienkolleg’, I would like to get good marks in Physics, Math and English. When you have passed it - then you choose any school you want in Germany.

The pupil had previously taken English classes at a private language center, and had for a year taken German classes at a private language center. Learning a completely new language was considered to be a minor problem compared to studying at Moroccan departments. To finance the studies abroad was still a problem to solve, though. Alvesson (1999) emphazises that a one-sided focus on education and grades tend to marginalize other qualities such as interest, personal adequacy and experience.

There seems to be little place for the respondent’s interests and personal adequacy in the municipal school. At least three of the respondents talked about the dream of studying abroad. One respondent suddenly laughed and said empathically:

I want it to be clear that you understand that I do not reckon finishing my studied in Morocco. (...) Maybe in France, because I have some family there. (...) I certainly don’t want to stay here in Morocco.

Another respondent dreamt of becoming an astronomer, but explained that it was impossible, because there were no such schools in Morocco. The dream to study in The United States or Canada was not within the bounds of possibility either. Nevertheless the respondent hoped to be accepted to engineering college in Morocco and summarized tersely: “I don’t have a choice.” There were concerns expressed about studying abroad, though. One respondent wearing a head-scarf, worried how it might be moving to France with the new laws prohibiting headscarves; another pupil was worried about how badly seen Arabs and Muslims were seen in the West. The pupils - both boys and

156 Interview 6: 398-399 « Parceque maintenant, on travaille pendant 12 ans et puis à la fin, nous n'avons rien. »
157 Interview 11: 347-350
158 Interview 6: 503-509 « Je voudrais bien que ça soit clair ; que tu comprennes que je ne compte pas finir mes études au Maroc... Peut-être en France, parce que j'ai de la famille là-bas. (...) Je ne veux absolument pas rester ici au Maroc. »
159 Interview 12: 313 « Je n'ai pas le choix. »
girls - who according to the goals in the policy were considered to be educated in a school system aiming to fit the market economy, were worried about the Islamophobia in the West. The imaged global fellowship Ryan (2006) describes enhancing the pupils’ motivation was not uncomplicated. However, French language skills divided the pupils in two groups; those with access to for example, the Moroccan engineering colleges, and those who were denied access. Even for studies abroad, language included or excluded the pupils; in order to study in Germany, English and German were requested.

But not only education in general, but language in particular was considered important. Several languages tended to be important in the future after the A-level. French, English, and German, were considered important to these pupils. Distinguishing from the other respondents one had chosen to study Spanish at upper-secondary school instead of English; the intention with this was to have a better chance on the Moroccan job market once having achieved a university degree. This would give access to the job market in northern Morocco as well, where many people speak Spanish as a foreign language instead of French, due to the Spanish annexing of northern Morocco in the past. Two post-colonial foreign languages, French and Spanish, would thus be important to compete on the national job market. Neither of the respondents said much about the importance of Arabic, neither in a national nor an international context. But foreign languages such as French and Spanish, from the post-colonial history – were still influential on both Moroccan higher education as well as the national job market.

Several of the respondents’ discourses on education were in one way or another related to the job market; such as not only languages, but also gender and social class. All teenagers did not dream of achieving a university degree, one respondent explained; there were many more girls than boys in class. This mirrored the fact that many boys had repeated two or three years, and then dropped out of school. They believed, the respondent argued, that they could quit school today and start working – but in fact most of them were jobless. Many girls, on the other hand, just wanted to get married as soon as they had finished upper-secondary school, and did not aim for university studies. The respondent knew two or three classmates from middle-school who already had become mothers in spite of having to be 18 to get married and have children: “I don’t know how they’ve managed to do that, (...) but I come from a poor neighborhood with negative effects.” These young mothers seemed to be disregarded by the respondent. This might be an example of what Alvesson (1999) claims that not having access to the job market until after 12-15 years of studies might lead to that those who have less educational background are seen as misfits.

Child labor was an issue that was brought up by another respondent, who came from a very poor neighborhood. The boys often worked - either in the harbor or sold chewing gums in the streets. Many girls worked, too, but then got married at the age of 15 or 16. The pupil also had many poor relatives working as unskilled labour in Europe – which was increasingly difficult after the 2008 financial crises. This informant emphasized the importance of education, and how important it was, not only to have the A-level, but also with further studies:

*If there is not a good educational system, then it is a disaster. Because I believe that people who are well educated are more powerful, and they possess a kind of weapon that protects*

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160 Interview 1: 447-448 « Je ne sais pas comment ils l’ont fait. (...) Je viens d’un quartier populaire, avec des effets négatifs. »
them in their daily life. Especially nowadays we live in the era of globalization that requires us to quickly get integrated with new technology, regardless of our culture differences.161

All the respondents talked in one way or another about dreams and fears, concerning university studies. Some of them made it clear that even with a university degree, the chances to get a job were small; and examples were given of people with a university degree being jobless, or working in a restaurant or café in spite of a Bachelor of Arts. As one of the respondent put it:

*It’s very obvious that the majority of pupils are jobless when they graduate from school, which increases the unemployment and problems among adults. Our government should take much care of its youth and focus more on finding the right solution to minimize the severity of this issue. To be fair, this is not happening only in Morocco, but all over the world.*162

The different interviews with the pupils showed that many of the respondents emphasized in one way or another, the importance of having a strong personality, in order to enter the university and to get a job. One pupil claimed having achieved this, indirectly, at school: an ability to be above everyday life’s obstacles, and to face hindrance:

*In our upper-secondary school life, you have sort of things, which are not normal. I think that in any case you learn indirectly. You learn by yourselves. They don’t teach us, you learn by yourselves. By our own experience.*163

The importance of having a goal was also crucial, one respondent declared empathically, even though only a minority understood this:

*(...) because a guy without a goal...he doesn’t know to do anything at all. You need to have a goal, and like that, we will motivate ourselves, to achieve, and to realize our goal – I hope.*164

The pupils expressed several examples of having a competing mentality in order to reach what they want; making strategic choices such as studying science with a high coefficient in order to compensate for poor French skills, to study German in order to have a chance to be accepted to engineering school abroad, and choosing Spanish instead of English in order to have a better chance to compete on the national job market. The respondents thus developed some creativity, inventiveness and autonomous thinking, which Tabulawa (2009) claims is needed to form the self-programmable worker – which is in accordance with the globalized marked economy. The respondents also claimed achieving a strong personality through overcoming every day obstacles and injustices at school, and to setting goals to achieve. These characteristics match individualistic, neoliberal values (e.g. Beach & Dovemark, 2011 and Illeris, 2008). Beach & Dovemark (2011) point out that the motivated pupils with good grades are those who have a competing mentality; on the contrary pupils with low grades to a high extent lack a competing mentality. In the era of market economy, competing is a central issue. One way to interpret this, might be that those who “succeed” in obtaining a university degree and an employment are those with a competing personality, or who

161 Interview 9; translated from Standard Arabic.
162 Interview 9: 753-757; translated from Standard Arabic.
163 Interview 6 : 169-172 « Dans la vie au lycée, on a des choses pas normales. Je crois qu’en tout cas on apprend indirectement. On apprend par nous-même. Ils ne nous apprennent pas, on apprend par nous-même. Par notre propre expérience. »
164 Interview 12: 672-674 « (...) parce qu’un mec sans but...il ne sait faire rien du tout. Il faut avoir un but, et comme ça, on va nous motiver nous même, pour atteindre, pour réaliser notre but – j’espère. »
have the right tools to navigate within the educational system. Others who might have personal qualities as well as being intelligent and competent, but lacking a willingness to compete, risk to be left behind.

**Discourses on the teacher and teaching methods**

**General aspects of the classroom practice**

When the pupils were asked to describe the classroom practice, they mentioned such things as for example listening to the teacher, copying from the board, and doing reading comprehensions. Pupils did not complain about the lack of use of technology in English class, nor about the low material standard in the classroom, with uncomfortable (and sometimes broken) desks, and colorless walls, as the teachers had. It did not seem to be a problem for the pupils.

**The teachers’ absenteeism**

However, many were very upset about the teachers’ absences. Numerous examples were given; a teacher retiring during the semester and the pupils being left without a teacher for two months; when a teacher went on maternity leave it took two weeks before someone replaced her; teachers being on sick-leave and not being replaced, teachers arriving late to class – sometimes arriving 20 minutes late - or cancelling the lesson one day beforehand (in the latter case the lesson was moved to another day) were also mentioned. Sometimes the teacher just did not show up, one respondent explained: “Sometimes we do not know it before, like for example the last Maths lesson when the teacher did not come – and we lost two hours.”

The respondent stated never having had anyone substituting for an absent teacher – not even once, since the very first day of primary school. However, at upper-secondary the science-maths stream pupils suffered less from teacher absenteeism than the pupils in other scientific branches or the humanities streams:

*The teachers know that we want to study and try to be absent less – even thought the Maths teacher was absent. But if you ask the pupils of other streams (...) well, the teachers are absent a lot. A lot.*

Furthermore there were complaints about teachers leaving the classrooms during class, talking with people from the administration or colleagues while leaving the whole class waiting. This happened often, but less frequent in upstairs classrooms which were less accessible. The teachers absenteeism was considered a problem, where the pupils were excluded from the education they were entitled to. This is in accordance with Beach & Dovemark (2011), and Illeris (2008), who claim that in the pupils’ school routines, frequently the pupils feel humiliated and belittled. This seemed to be a great problem in the Moroccan schools, which may reduce the pupils’ motivation. The pupils thus presented themselves as pupils, depending on the teachers’ presence, which to some extent further reinforced the teachers’ role as authoritarian and the source of knowledge. However this was to some extent contested by one of the pupils who claimed that some subjects – like Maths - requested a teacher, others did not. The respondent, who had chosen Spanish as a foreign language instead of English argued:

165 Interview 12: 95-97 « Par fois on n’est pas au courant de l’absence de prof, et donc, comme par exemple la sance précédente, le prof de mathématiques n’est pas venu, et on a perdu 2 heures. »

166 Interview 12: 145-148 « Pour nous, les profs savent qu’on va étudier, donc ils essaient de ne pas s’absenter – même si le professeur de mathématiques s’est absenté.. Mais si vous demandez à d’autres étudiants qui font d’autres branches, (...) bah, les profs s’absentent beaucoup. Beaucoup. »
I don’t need to come to English class with a teacher. I can speak English in a way you call ‘autodidact’. I’m pleased to learn songs, novels and works in English [through the Internet].

Teacher Talking Time

No respondent had heard anything about the reforms on classroom practice, or student-centered learning and new methods of teaching. The pupils were apparently excluded from these discourses, seemingly both on a concrete level in the classroom practice as well as lacking information through television and annual slogans. Most of the pupils claimed that they participated in class. However, all pupils claimed or complained about the teachers talking too much. Many examples were given: “Most of the time we listen; the teacher is explaining the lesson, and then she writes a résumé,” (which was followed by the pupils copying it from the board). Another respondent said that the teacher talked the most and that the pupils just prated, and continued explaining that the teacher did not give the time for reflection:

I see that the teacher already knows the topic, and doesn’t give much time for the pupils to reflect and express themselves. The teacher says: ‘Look, this is what you should see, look here is what you should learn...’.

Yet another complained about the teachers talking time: “Sometimes I think I’ll get crazy! (laughter) The teacher talks a lot, talks, talks, and talks.” One respondent said that “of course” it was always the teacher who talked the most “in all subjects”. The classroom practice seemed to be very teacher-centered, and it was the teachers who decided the ones to participate: “There are teachers who let you talk; and you, and you, and you - and not the others.” The teachers talked the most, and pupils mainly listened and took notes. Student-centered learning seemed far away, and thus to enhance the pupils’ ability to discuss, think autonomously and cooperate with others, as Tabulawa (2009) underlines as being a part of the democratic development was far away.

The “old” teacher and the “new” pupil

According to the pupils, teachers often tended to compare the pupils of today with the pupils of yesterday; and claimed that the pupils were better before. Pupils a generation ago were described as “pushing” the teachers to do a good job, which pupils of today did not do.

Central discourses for the pupils, however, were the teacher’s role, and the relationship between the teachers and pupils. In the discourse on the teachers’ role the pupils advocated a more listening and comprehensive teacher, where pupils’ opinions and experiences were considered important in the learning process. The pupils also contested the teacher’s attitude towards them. One respondent complained about the teacher of Islamic Education: “The teacher is so hard. (...) And if you go to class, you are treated awfully. Awfully.” Another complaint was about the teachers’ lack of

167 Interview 12: 269-271 « Je n’as pas besoin de venir en cours d’anglais avec un prof...je peux parler en anglais d’une manière que l’on appelle...eh...l’autodidact. J’apprends, je suis content d’apprendre des chansons, des romans, des œuvres en anglais. »
168 Interview 6: 262-263 « La plupart du temps on écoute. La prof est en train d’expliquer la leçon, et puis elle nous écrit un résumé... »
169 Interview 1: 275-276 « Voilà ce que vous devez savoir, voilà ce que vous devez apprendre, et elle ne nous donne pas le temps pour nous pour réfléchir. »
170 Interview 1: 281-282 « De temps en temps je crois que je vais devenir folle ! (RIRE) La prof parle beaucoup, parle, parle et parle. »
171 Interview 9: 353 « Toutes les matières ». 
172 Interview 2: 298-299 « Il y a des profs qui te laissent parler, et toi et toi et toi et pas les autres. »
173 Interview 11: 451-458
professionalism: “They don’t know how to do, how to send, how to make the pupils understand.”, and the respondent illustrated this with an example: “…the Maths teacher wants to make us understand, wants to explain, but (...) he does not cheat in his job, but he lacks professionalism; they need professionalism.”  

Another informant talked about the relation between the teachers and pupils: “If you treat pupils well, and you help them to receive and learn, they will feel better with the teacher and they will learn better.” This is in accordance with Illeris (2008). Yet another respondent emphasized that the teachers ought to help the weak pupils, and yet another complained that the teachers were only interested in the paycheck: “They just take their money and no one has come to...to care for us.”

The pupils thus demanded what Illeris (2008) claims; that it is important for the teacher to accommodate them, listen to them and help them.

The pupils were not in the habit of criticizing the teachers, though. One respondent said: “(...) there are teachers who give to criticize them (...), because there are teachers who give us the right to talk - but it’s rare.” The respondent emphasized that the relationship between the teachers and the pupils needed to be improved:

It is not that the teacher is bad or anything, it’s not the teacher who has done wrong, but the relationship between the teacher and the pupil is not close, so the pupils do not easily say what interest them without the teacher pushing them to express themselves.

Fear and shame were obstacles that had to be improved in the relationship between the teacher and the pupils in order to let the pupils’ voices be heard, the respondent claimed. For instance, the pupils ought to be able to tell the teacher that the teacher’s method of teaching and talking, did not suit them: “I need to be able to tell the teacher this without being ashamed, without being afraid.”

However, this was not a problem that could be ventilated. The respondent suggested that a solution could be to have an hour or two per semester – outside the ordinary class hours, where the teacher and pupils could talk freely not only about classroom related things and where the teachers could listen to the pupils opinions about various issues; such as to talk about their problems and experiences, or just to communicate between the teacher and pupil; but where it also would be possible for the pupils to say:

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174 Interview 12: 100-101, 129-133 « Ils ne savent pas comment faire, comment envoyer, comment faire comprendre aux étudiants. » (…) le prof de mathématiques, veut faire comprendre, veut expliquer, mais... il ne triche pas dans son travail, mais... (…), le professionalism lui manque. Ils ont besoin de professionnalisme. »
175 Interview 12: 130 « On n’a pas du tout compris. »
176 Interview 11: 448-449
177 Interview 11: 28-29
178 Interview 2: 509-513 « (...) il y a des profs qui nous laissent les critiques. (...) Parce que il y a des profs qui nous donnent le droit de parler, mais c’est rare. »
179 Interview 2: 397-400 Le prof ce n’est pas lui qui est mal ou quelquechose, ce n’est pas lui qui a mal fait, mais la relation entre le prof et l’élève n’est pas proche. N’est pas proche pour que l’élève puisse dire n’importe quelle chose qui l’intéresse facilement, sans que le prof le pousse pour s’exprimer. »
180 Interview 2: 426-428 « (…) la façon dont vous m’enseignez ne me convient plus, ne me convient pas, il faut que je dise ça au prof sans avoir honte sans avoir peur. »
I see that you haven’t taught me this well; and your way of teaching doesn’t interest me. (...) But the obstacle that should be eliminated, for me, is that there are pupils who are ashamed to tell their opinion. This shame should be taken away.181

The pupils thus demand a more student-centered approach and comprehensive teachers who listen to them and accommodate them, which is also what Illeris (2008) claims. Few examples were given of student-centered approaches, as for example in English class when they had discussed “illegal immigration”, and everyone had given their opinion.182 Another one was given from a French class, where the pupils were in charge of the final revision before the final exam, and explained (in Arabic) the grammar to those pupils who had not understood. The pupils wanted to take a more active part in their learning; and should be able both to ask for explanations and criticize the teachers in their patronizing attitudes towards the pupils as well as choice of methods. They should be entitled to express their opinion without shame and fear. The pupils wanted to “push” the teachers: to be more helpful towards weak pupils, to be more professional, to use other methods, to treat pupils well and care for them. But there was no forum or existing context where it could be done. However, one assumption is that this might not be the way the teachers want to be “pushed”.

**Technology**

The Internet was used doing research for homework assignments, several pupils explained, and copying and pasting was frequent. One respondent argued: “That’s an inconvenience with the Internet. That’s the problem; to copy and paste. It’s bad.”183 This opinion was shared by another respondent who was convinced that teachers wanted the pupils to copy and paste: “That’s why they give us research to do, so they can give us good grades.”184 The pupil further explained that the teachers did not seem to bother reading what the pupils had copied from the Internet, and gave an example where a piece of homework obviously had been graded unread. Another respondent gave an example of when the use of the Internet is not fruitful:

*I suffer a lot studying Maths, because it’s very difficult. (...) If I don’t find a person with whom I can talk directly and who can start to explain to me...it is difficult for me to understand. I can start to search on the Internet, but it’s... How should I say? It’s not practical.*185

In order to complement parts that had not been understood in Maths during class turned out to be much more difficult than copying and pasting. It turned out to be very difficult because of the lack of communicating. But that lack of communicating seemed to be the source of the problem as well; the lack of communication between the teacher and pupils in class. In spite of this the informant went so far as to claim that the teachers were not really needed in order to learn: “I think that the mentality of the pupil is enough. I can create a strong personality with the conditions you have seen...without

181 Interview 2: 454-457 « Je vois que vous ne m’avez pas bien enseigné quelque chose(...) [et] votre façon d’enseigner parfois ne m’intéresse pas. C’est ça que je peux dire, comme ça dans cette séance. Lines 510-512 : (...) mais l’obstacle c’est qu’il faut éliminer, pour moi, il faut éliminer l’obstacle entre le prof parce que il y a des élèves qui ont honte, il faut enlever cette honte. »
182 Interview 6: 328-329 « (...) de l’immigration clandestine. »
183 Interview 2: 500-501 « C’est un inconvénient pour la situation d’internet. C’est ça. C’est ça le problème. De copier coller ; c’est mal ». 184 Interview 1: 119-120 « C’est pour ça qu’ils nous donnent des recherches pour pouvoir donner de bonnes notes. »
185 Interview 12: 298-303 « J’ai beaucoup souffert en étudiant les mathématiques, parce que c’est très difficile. (...) Si je ne trouve pas une personne avec qui je peux parler directement et qui va commencer à m’expliquer...je vais avoir du mal à comprendre. Je peux commencer à chercher sur Internet, mais...c’est... Comment le dirai-je ? Ce n’est pas pratique. »
coming to school.” The reason for coming to school was rather the lack of self discipline in the study time for the different school subjects, and also the fear of not being allowed to take the A-level exam if they had not attended school.

Three different ideas were crystallized here; firstly that the respondent did not see the school and teachers as the only source for acquiring knowledge, secondly that the help that the school could provide was mainly as a frame for self-discipline, and thirdly fear being excluded from the A-level exam. The school as an institution of knowledge was thus strongly contested, by the respondent.

The discourse about modern technology in teaching could be described as when the pupils wanting to “receive” more than they are offered by the teachers, they seemed to turn to the new technology for help. The pupils did not “push” the teachers to “give” more.

The teachers seemed to not want the pupils to see the advantages with the new technology, but rather underline the disadvantages. The Internet was here used as a means to increase the teachers’ authority, through the teacher’s role of being the one grading. It could be that the pupils of today do not push the teachers as much as previous generations might have done, because due to lack of genuine mutual relations between teachers and pupils, this generation of pupils turns primarily to the Internet instead – and the teachers thus do not get pushed to do a “better job”. From the pupils’ perspective it seems as if they see the teacher’s role in a new way (that matches the aims of the control documents), as for example not being the only source of knowledge.

One respondent gave an example of how the pupils’ demand to use technology at school had been turned down. Due to the poor equipment in the Physics classroom, many experiments could not be carried out, and the pupils had therefore asked the administration to let them and the teacher of Physics be allowed to use the Multi-media room, with computers and Internet connection. The school administration rejected their demand, claiming that the teachers at school were not good at computing. The respondent exclaimed in falsetto, that they “just want to use it in Physics (...) And the teacher of Physics knows how to use the computers.” The focus was not on the pupils and their right and willingness to learn; the pupils were held back by loyalty to teachers who lacked proficiency in modern technology, where the most important part seemed to be to cater for the teachers’ weakness in technology, and not for the ‘new’ pupils’ motivation to learn. The pupils claimed their right to implement modern technology, in a local context, which is advocated by Rizvi & Lingard (2010), referring to Peters and Britez. Furthermore the pupils naturally turned to technology rather than to “push” the teacher.

The lack of student-centered learning was conspicuous, and the pupils did not have access to the discourse of student-centered learning. Still, they seem to have picked it up somehow, and were trying to apply it.

**National and international implications of the reform**

My research question was: How can the reform be analyzed from a national as well as international context?

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186 Interview 12: 219-221 « Je pense que la mentalité de l'étudiant suffit et que... Je peux créer une forte personnalité avec des conditions comme on a vu...sans venir à l'école. »
187 The latter turned out not to be true. When I checked it up with the regional administration I was told that everyone who has a certificate of having passed compulsory school, are allowed to take the A-level exam. (2013-06-26)
188 Interview 11: 833-837
Discourses on Education for All and Gender Mainstreaming

On a governmental level the problems expressed in policy are poverty and illiteracy, but also all citizens need of further education – and in particular the girls’ right to education. Privatization is assumed to cater for making Education for All feasible. Education for All is seen to be a remedy to social and gender inequalities, as well as Morocco’s competitiveness on the globalized market and is assumed to lead to economic growth and the prosperity of the country. Methods of teaching also seem to be a problem, though it is assumed that authoritarian teaching methods will not produce the mentality needed to compete on the international job market. The pupils’ competitiveness on the global job market seems furthermore to be questioned; though lack of critical thinking likely would exclude them from the international job market. Furthermore, the teachers explained that the pupils in the humanity streams only are to become lawyers or teachers; thus they are likely to compete on the national job market. Hence, the educational system seems to produce workers for the Moroccan job market, rather than for the global one. It is interesting that in policy the aim is to form the citizens to fit the international job market, when most countries have their own markets that need to be provided for. It is of interest to reflect further on what this can connote.

Larhouasli Marrakchi (2008) claims that girls are seen as second-class citizens in Morocco. However, according to the teachers and pupils, it was the boys – the first-class citizens – who dropped out to a greater extent than the girls. In this local context Education for All and Gender Mainstreaming have led to a situation where the girls outnumber the boys in upper-secondary schools. This challenges to some extent the local idea that boys are the first-class-citizens. The reform has opened up for more girls, who furthermore have proved doing better in school than boys; this might be a way towards changing the local gender point of view. Education for All is a means to implement and enhance the human rights to an international level. However, there seemed to be a struggle between three different discourses; one claiming girls’ right to education (as a human right at an international level), one preparing the Moroccan citizens for the global job market (adapting to neo-liberal values and the market economy) and one bound in a locally context – where the woman traditionally has the main responsibility for the household and the children’s education. However, one assumption is that the girls, although outnumbering and outsmarting the boys, are less likely to enter the national as well as the global job market. On the other hand, many boys who often want to start working at an early age – which might be seen as one reason for dropping out of school – will be excluded from the global job market, and probably struggle also on the national job market due to the fact that they are considered undereducated. The effect of the Gender Mainstreaming seems to be that more girls, in comparison to boys, fulfill their schooling, which means that the reform has concrete effects. Thus a new issue has aroused, where the boys seem to be less successful in school than the girls – which is the next issue to tackle.

Discourses on technology and the global job market

Technology was one discourse on a governmental level – in-line with global policies – emphasizing its importance for human, economic and social development and competitiveness on the global job market. However, it is mentioned in the Moroccan policy that technology is not to replace the vivid relationship between master-pupil, which should be based on both respect and comprehension. In-service training enhancing the teachers’ proficiency in using ICT in teaching was provided. However, some teachers supported and others contested the use of technology – some teachers considered it like playing with the pupils, and some teachers had very low proficiency in using for example the
Internet. However, the pupils automatically turned to the Internet when they did not understand at school, or used it to study other subjects. The pupils contested the use of the Internet as for copying and pasting for homework assignments – which seemed to be the way teachers used it, and which also reinforced the authoritarian teachers’ role. The pupils also wanted modern technology to be used in Physics class; but were turned down by the administration who claimed that the teachers did not know how to use it. The pupils considered it their right to use the multimedia center. However, the administration considered it the teachers’ right not to be apt in modern technology. Technology in formal education as a means to be able to compete on the global job market seemed far away.

Discourses on languages

The pupils’ discourses showed that the children of the elite in general got better grades and were better in French and thereby more easily had access to higher education and the job market. The interviewed pupils were excluded access to private schooling, and thus aggrieved in relation to higher education and the job market. French was considered a watershed between those who can afford private schooling and those who cannot. One interpretation of this is that the pupils from poor or illiterate families thus have little chance to fit the global job market – and that with poor writing skills even in Arabic there might be considerable obstacles also on the national job market which might lead to unemployment. English was in policy considered of a great importance in order to compete internationally. However, the problem might be looked at differently, with more focus on local needs and the national context; such as language acquiring adapted to the national job market; as for example Spanish in the northern parts of the country. Thus two post-colonial languages were advantageous in order to get access to the Moroccan job market. The wealthier were the privileged in this context, and were in general acquiring higher proficiency in French at private schools. In spite of the policy’s aim to fight social and gender injustices; it rather reproduced social hierarchies where the children of the elite had better access to higher education as well as to both the national and international job market.

In spite of the fact that it had not been taught in school, the pupils of different scientific streams had acquired a problem solving and entrepreneur mentality, a competing mentality that is presumed as being demanded on the global job market. However, the pupils - both boys and girls - who according to the goals in the policy were considered to be educated in a school system aiming to fit the market economy, also expressed concerns about the Islamophobia in the West; and did not naturally feel that they belonged there.

ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

The aim of this thesis was to examine educational reforms in the Moroccan municipal schooling system, in the context of teaching and learning languages at upper-secondary school level. The aim was furthermore to explore what problems are formulated in policy and what solutions are advocated, as well as how teachers and pupils experienced, and related to the central aims in the curricula - and relate this to a national and international context.

The results from policy documents as well as interviews with upper-secondary teachers and pupils have been reported and related to previous research. In the following I will discuss the result from
the policy documents and interview study, on a macro and micro level from a discourse analytical point of view.

Creating new citizens on a global market through student-centered learning

Discourses in Moroccan policy documents show many resemblances with global reform discourses; such as Education for All, Gender Mainstreaming, and acquiring foreign language skills. Other resemblances are student-centered learning as well as that the aim of the reform is to adapt the educational system to fit the global job market, which puts focus on the individual’s rights and duties – such as for example the citizens’ willingness to life-long learning. Adjusting to the globalized market is a goal for the nation’s need to compete successfully financially and therefore acquisition of foreign language skills is strongly emphasized. Lack of foreign language skills, for example English, is hence considered a problem. The problem is seemingly lack of education, lack of women’s rights to education, and lack of competiveness in the globalized market economy. On a macro level there are in policy expressions of how the citizens should be governed, or govern themselves (e.g. Bäcktorp, 2007; Larsson, 2001; Peters, 2009). Policy states for example that the teachers should be devoted, motivated and give up his/her traditionally authoritarian role, and in return should be respected and rewarded with medals. The teachers should not primarily be considered as a source of knowledge anymore. Instead of regarding the authoritarian teacher as the source of knowledge, the ‘new’ teacher should focus on student-centered learning and foster the pupils to become autonomous, problem solvers, and critical thinkers. The pupils, on the other hand, should enhance their language skills, fulfill their schooling, and be willing to learn the whole life through. The parents are also held responsible for the children’s succeeding in school. In the policy the government thus discursively creates ‘new’ citizens; a process in which teachers, pupils and parents are to be reshaped. However, groups are not pre-determinated socially, but have to be constructed in discourse, and identities are context-bound and are negotiated, accepted and refused in discursive processes (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2012). Accordingly teachers and pupils activate different discourses where they in the meeting with the governance negotiate different identities in their particular context. The teachers relate to it as teachers with an assignment with the norms and rules for their job. The pupils have different frames of references; they are teenagers and on their way out in life. Governmentality deals with the teachers’ and pupils’ understanding of their resistance or willingness to governance, but also their attitudes towards themselves (e.g. Bäcktorp, 2007; Larsson, 2001; Peters, 2009). The result thus differ, and is furthermore not predictable. The power of discourse is given by the subjects, thus the “new” citizens (Foucault, 1981).

In going from education for elite to education for all, neo-liberal market oriented values; like an enhanced focus on the individual and privatization of the educational sector are emphasized, in order to provide more school establishments to cater for the increasing number of pupils. Neo-liberal individualistic discourses are thus embedded in policy, which is in accordance with the culturalist model of culture imperialist effects on local implementation of educational reforms.

The culturalist model of educational reform (Steiner-Khamsi, 2000) regards an international convergence of educational systems as a transferring of educational discourses but emphasizes simultaneously that something happens in the meeting between the global and the local context.

189 However, the switch from Arabic as language of instruction to French as language of instruction at a university level - which was carried out before the reform of 2000 - is not considered a problem in policy.
when reform is implemented. Local forces in nation-states respond to the educational reforms, which are negotiated in local practice with previous ideas, norms and experiences. As a result, global development on educational reforms have different influences on local culture where they are always negotiated – supported by some and contested by others. In relation to Morocco’s colonial history, this kind of international influence on national policy and practice can easily get an imperialistic brand due to historical experiences, and might therefore be resisted because of this. However, there is also a strong teacher-centered authoritarian teaching tradition in the Moroccan culture from before the French protectorate. The global society has power to formulate policies, though discourses, as for example student-centered learning, and are “borrowed” and found in local contexts world-wide. However, in order to achieve the goals set in policy, the teachers’ role and the classroom practice has to change, and student-centered learning applied. The ‘new’ Moroccan teachers should adapt to the pupils and their needs. However some pupils are claimed to have an authoritarian learning style – and thus the teachers should cater also for their needs. In the power relation between the global reforms in general and the local Moroccan interpretation in particular, knowledge is thus produced, (Foucault, 1977) for example that student-centered learning can be thought of differently; such as accommodate the pupils’ need of a teacher-centered authoritarian pedagogy. In policy, there is thus a discursive struggle (Jørgensen & Phillips; 2012) between student-centered methods and authoritarian teacher-centered methods. Hence there is a tension between the necessity of implementing student-centered methods as an aim to form the global worker and the necessity to maintain a traditional teacher-centered pedagogy. This can, from the perspective of the culturalist model of educational reform, be understood as a national accommodation to local circumstances, a negotiation and resistance to the global discourse on student-centered learning and the individual’s autonomy. Thus teacher-centered methods were claimed responding to a student-centered learning - meeting the needs of the pupils who are authority learners. A discourse analytical understanding of power states that power never is total (e.g. Foucault; 1981 and Jørgensen & Phillips; 2012), and this is what the Moroccan example shows; reform – even if global – is implemented and made locally. Discourse is a reduction of possibilities, and is constituted in relation to what is excluded (e.g. Foucault, 1977 and Jørgensen & Phillips; 2012); policy advocates student-centered learning – but in the national dialogue it does not exclude a teacher-centered approach, which is not mentioned in previous research.

The new pupils and student-centered learning: teachers on the reform

**Education for All and the “new” pupil**

According to the teachers, the reform created many problems in concrete school practice. As an example, they discussed the government’s need to fulfill measurable outcome of education, which led to pupils in primary school passing from one level to another without having the requested proficiency, hence the donors’ discourse of Education for All led to the general decrease in pupils’ proficiency. In the Moroccan context the implementation of Education for All thus had consequences for teachers and pupils, as well as the pedagogical context. The policy’s vision clashed with local conditions, such as the pedagogical proficiency to handle the new groups of pupils; the educational infrastructure did not seem ready to adapt to the new pupils experiences and needs; neither in primary school, nor in upper-secondary. The teachers described the pupils of today as different from the ones a generation ago which used to come from wealthier families with a mentality prepared to

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enter formal education. The teachers explained that social class mattered and that pupils from higher 
social classes succeeded better and had better tools to succeed compared to those from poor 
families with illiterate parents. Eradicating poverty by Education for All did not seem to be an option 
shared by the teachers. Teachers considered to some extent that poverty should be dealt with and 
solved before the pupils enter formal education, or be offered jobs instead of entering upper-
secondary, and thus opposed the policy and the implementation of the reform.

Some children at school were accordingly discussed by the teachers in terms of not belonging; either 
to the school environment, or the level they were placed in. Some pupils were furthermore spoken 
of as not having the right qualifications to be pupils; in terms of social class, awareness or 
knowledge-base. This new group of pupils were rather constituted by the teachers’ discourse – as a 
group that should not be there, but that rather happened to be in school establishments due to top-
down decision related to the Education for All and conditioned loans. There was also a resistance 
towards this group of pupils that was positioned by the teachers not only as a new group of pupils, 
but rather as non-pupils that should be excluded (e.g. Foucault, 1981 and Jørgensen & Phillips, 
2012). There was furthermore a strong tendency among the teachers to construct their identity as 
teachers, by contrasting to new pupils who were imposed on them (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2012); the 
pupils were weak with poor language skills, lacking motivation, unwilling to make efforts, and unable 
to think critically – thus far from the policy’s vision of a flexible problem-solving worker needed on 
the global job market. Critical thinking seemed to be feasible to some extent in private schools – with 
pupils from another social class – but not in municipal establishments, and there was on a micro level 
not only a discourse claiming that the ‘new’ pupils were unable to think critically, there was also a 
discourse that the government did not desire people to think critically.

The teachers considered themselves as competent, but somehow powerless trying to cope with 
power structures – such as the interaction with the new pupils, big classes and student-centered 
methods. They considered themselves not only unwilling to be governed (e.g. Bäcktorp, 2007; 
Larsson, 2001), but furthermore victimized. Their discourse on the new teaching practice was rather 
about dealing with pupils who did not belong in formal education and/or in upper-secondary - 
circumstances they could not have an influence on (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2012), and thus considered 
themselves victims of the new educational context. There was a silence about privatization in the 
teachers’ discourses. However a considerable part of the “old” (motivated and successful) pupils are 
presumed to apply to private establishments and thus leave municipal schools; while the new group 
of pupils – by social class and lack of financial means – remain at municipal schools.

**Student-centered learning and taken-for-granted knowledge**

Another issue of debate dealt with discourses of teacher- and student-centered pedagogies. The 
methods applied in the classroom practice were not the major ones designed in the policy 
documents; which were generally accepted to be needed to form the citizens to fit the international 
job market (developing qualities such as problem solving, willingness to learn, expressing opinions, 
critical thinking and being autonomous). There was thus a gap between policy and practice 
(Jørgensen & Phillips, 2012). Furthermore exam-taking on national, regional and classroom practice 
levels was emphasized which is rather in accordance to a teacher-centered pedagogy. A student-
centered approach to let the pupils express their personal experiences was, as explained during in-
service training, supposed to be used as an authoritarian teacher-centered control mechanism to 
hinder pupils from cheating. Hence student-centered learning was in the local context interpreted to
be used by the teachers as a control mechanism on a micro level – which could be seen as an accommodation to local circumstances in accordance with the culturalist model. In policy the teachers are expected to move from having a hierarchical authoritarian role in a teacher-centered classroom practice, to being a resource in a student-centered learning process, and start putting the learners’ needs in focus. The steering of the teacher’s role expressed in policy became something different in practice expressed through the teacher’s experience and opinion of what works in the classroom practice. The teachers contested to be governed and to give up their authoritarian role in advantage to a group of pupil who, according to the teachers did not even belong there. The teachers’ willingness to be steered and to give up their authoritarian role was very low. Accordingly, in the teachers’ discourse on the reform, nothing was said on the teachers’ “new” role as described in policy. The policy’s student-centered discourse did not have much power coming from the teachers (Foucault, 1981). Student-centered methods were openly contested and thus to a great extent not applied, and the teachers might thus be regarded as ‘unruly’ subjects. Bäcktorp (2007) argues that governance always depends on to what extent the subjects of governance consent to be governed. In the discursive struggle between the policy’s view on the teachers’ role, and the teachers’ regards of their teaching role, the power relation produced knowledge on a micro level; such as for example that student-centered learning never could be applied in the Moroccan context. Thus from a culturalist model perspective, student-centered learning methods were locally resisted by the teachers. Furthermore, in the power relation between the policy’s discourse of Education for All and the teachers’ discourse on the pupils’ role, knowledge had also been produced that had become so conventional that they were considered taken-for-granted knowledge (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2012); such as for example that student-centered learning never could be implied, and that pupils were not motivated. There also seemed to be a taken-for-granted idea that if only the pupils made efforts and were motivated, this would compensate a dysfunctional schooling system. Hence, the teachers did not question whether it was lack of comprehension or lack of motivation that seemingly made the pupils stop making efforts when placed in the wrong level.

The teachers had a traditionally strong authoritarian role, and contested the implementation of student-centered learning. An interpretation in a local context gave furthermore another meaning to what student-centered learning can be - as for example that group work in the local context was considered as teachers centered - which is not mentioned in the previous research. Thus teacher-centered group learning was an interpretation of student-centered learning, which shows in accordance with the culturalist model that cultural imperialist effects of lending and borrowing educational reforms never can be predictable once crossed with local culture. In accordance with discourse analysis, different understandings of the world will lead to different social actions (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2012). Hence, if you take for granted that student-centered learning cannot be applied you might not try it; if you take for granted that the pupils are not motivated and that this is a result of external factors that the teachers have no influence on - the teacher might not reflect over his/her own role and choice of teaching methods in the pupils’ lack of motivation. And if you take for granted that group work does not work you might not even try. The teachers could therefore be regarded as victimized practitioners comfortable in the taken-for-granted discourses. Larsson (2001) claims that you need to be able to recognize what is considered freedom, before you can emancipate yourself. Hence, the teachers might not recognize freedom; otherwise they would probably not consider themselves as victims of the circumstances. However, one teacher had started to emancipate – and reflected that the teachers and methods of teaching used might be the cause of
the pupils’ lack of motivation, and thus that the teachers have the power to make a difference; as for example by bringing humor into class as a new way of connecting with the pupils and enhancing their motivation.

Creating social stratification through Education for All; students on the reform

Fighting social injustices
The governmental discourse on a macro level - to encourage privatization of school establishments in order to provide education for all and equalize social injustices - led to some extent to quite the opposite on a micro level. The pupils had less insight in the reform process than the teachers, but had somehow taken part in the global discourses, and in accordance with a culturalist model perspective the outcome of the reform was not predictable. The pupils expressed their experiences of the policy’s goals and visions in discourses such as language as a class-cursor, and injustices due to privatization.

Leftover from the days of the French protectorate, French still has a strong hold in the educational system. At a national university level French is the language of instruction and French was considered higher in the language hierarchy. Pupils in municipal schools were in general better in Arabic and weaker in French than pupils in private schools, and vice versa. Poor French language skills were thus experienced as a great hindrance in higher education and in its prolongation as a means to get access to the national as well as the international job market. Even though a new group of pupils was offered schooling, social injustices were reproduced when the children of the elite moved to private schools with a strong emphasis on French language skills preparing the pupils for the university. Furthermore exaggerated grades in the private establishments gave an advantage to the elite both to achieving the A-level, as well as being admitted to the desirable engineering and medical schools. All pupils worried about their future possibilities to enter the job market, though unemployment rates were high both within the country and internationally. In the pupils’ discourses, privatization thus enhanced social injustices, where children from wealthy families had a possibility to a brighter future on the job market. Bäcktorp (2007) states that governance always depends on to what extent the subjects of governance consent to be governed. The science pupils opposed to be classified as those who do not belong to the elite; in spite of not having wealthy and/or well educated parents. On a micro level, in the power of being excluded from the private schools due to lack of financial means, the pupils on the one hand had to live with this injustice, and on the other hand produced knowledge in finding strategies to compensate for their difficulties in being admitted to the universities due to lack of proficiencies in French and lower grades (Foucault, 1977).

Developing an entrepreneur mentality
In the struggle between macro level discourses and their effect on a micro level the science stream pupils developed a competing mentality and problem solving skills. In the oppressive power relation the pupils faced, they did not give in, but found loopholes in the governmental educational system in order to have a chance at getting what they want The pupils were fighting to have access to the ‘right’ foreign languages (or making choices strategically to compensate for not having it), in order to be accepted to and gain belonging to the most desirable engineering schools and thus ameliorate their chances to succeed on the job market - and their life. The outcome of the control mentality of power is thus not rational, and therefore it is not possible to foresee its results (Larsson, 2001). On
the one hand neo-liberal values such as the individual’s choice and privatization were obstacles to achieving their goals, and on the other hand a neo-liberal competing mentality was developed, as a result of governmentality, which is not mentioned in the previous research. The interviewed pupils were for example excluded from the student-centered learning discourse, and had furthermore not the right to, for example, criticize the teachers (Foucault, 1981). The methods used in class were principally teacher-centered, where the teachers talked and the pupils listened. However, the pupils expressed dissatisfaction with the classroom practice and the teachers’ role, and furthermore they considered that the teachers were lacking professionalism. They advocated a more democratic relationship between teachers and pupils; where the pupils would have the right to criticize the teachers and the applied teacher-centered methods. This could be interpreted as though a discourse concerning student-centered learning somehow has reached the pupils, and that they tried, or wished to, negotiate the meaning of it. Student-centered methods were contested by the teachers but supported by the pupils, which exemplifies the culturalist model that effects of education systems are transferred but not predictable when local forces respond to them. The teacher’s role as authoritarian was negotiated and to some extent both accepted and contested. Pupils seemingly wanted the teachers to adopt a more student-centered approach; that is listening to the pupils and providing their needs. The pupils seemed to try to negotiate student-centered learning, such as expressing opinions, and using new technology and methods. The teachers’ methods and attitude were contested by the pupils – but there was no forum yet to express it. There seemed to be a tension between the teacher’s discourse on how to interact with pupils – and the pupils’ discourse on how they wanted to interact with the teacher; thus two struggling discourses (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2012). In this struggle knowledge was produced; where the pupil reconstructed the pupil’s role and identity from a passively accepting role to actively claiming one; and thus gained a new understanding of themselves. The pupils thus constructed their role as someone who should not passively receive but actively take part in the learning process. Furthermore, the pupils acted, and searched solutions of classroom problems outside the school establishment; such as taking evening classes, learning more languages, and turning to the Internet, instead of depending on the teachers for information and help.

There were signs of emancipatory practices among pupils of different science streams who worked on long term strategies in order to cope with and avoid negative effects of the policy’s goal and visions on a micro level. They expressed a flexible, entrepreneurial and competing mentality looking for solutions to succeed, and navigate around major obstacles. However, this mentality that pupils learned strategies to get around problems and to reinforce a competing mentality, the pupils claimed, was not taught at school but learnt in spite of school - just through facing the obstacles in their every-day life at school. The pupils expressed self-governance strategies; they constructed themselves as flexible and competing, in the given authoritarian school environment. Knowledge and identity was thus produced in the power relation between the macro and micro level (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2012). The pupils, all of them the first generation studying at upper-secondary, and all of them with mothers lacking formal education, did consider that they belonged in formal upper education. The pupils constructed themselves as hardworking and belonging. They were suffering from injustices within the educational system, such as effects from the post-colonial era and of neo-liberal values such as privatization, though.

In the teacher-pupil power relation the teachers’ absenteeism weakened the pupils’ power and reinforced the teachers’. If student-centered learning had been successfully implemented – one
assumption would be that the pupils might not have relied as much on the teachers’ physical presence in class, and the teachers’ absenteeism would not have empowered the teachers. Rather the contrary; it would have empowered the pupils’ autonomy in the learning process, and the teachers role as authoritarian might have been at stake. One taken-for-granted knowledge produced in the pupils’ discourses was that the teacher’s presences in the classroom was imperative for the pupils’ learning process. However, personal qualities such as a problem solving as well as competing mentality, made them, in one way or another, resist the injustices. In spite of considering themselves being victims to injustices they refused to be victimized; and thus showed an entrepreneurial spirit well matching the future citizen on the neo-liberal global job market, which is in accordance to the culturalist model theory that local effects can never be fully predictable. The subjects need, Larsson (2001) argues, to be able to recognize what freedom is - before they can emancipate themselves. On the contrary to the teachers, the pupils seemed to recognize what freedom could be. The pupils seem to have recognized that freedom is to have possibilities to express themselves and to criticize the teachers as well as their methods, to have the same chance to succeed no matter of social class, and to acquire a good level of the language of instruction used at the university. Hence they had started to emancipate themselves – which is not mentioned in the previous research.

What can be learnt from Morocco?
There is an international educational reform movement, which is powerful both in regards to political and ideological influence through financial aid. In spite of this something happens when global reform meets a local context – both in terms of resistance and support. A discourse on the analytical understanding of power states that power never is total, and this is what the Moroccan example shows; reform – even if global – is implemented and made locally. The culturalist model of educational reform emphasis that local forces respond to the effects of the global reforms in ways that are not predictable, and thus result in a crossing between the local and the global. Hence the example with Morocco gives some insights about national as well as international reform contexts.

For example, the Moroccan government’s need to fulfill measurable outcome of education, led to pupils in primary school passing from one level to another without having the requested proficiency, and thus the donors’ discourse of Education for All has led to a general decrease in pupils’ proficiency.

Furthermore the importance of English in particular is underlined in policy to gain access to the international job market. For many countries with a history of colonization, which resemble the Moroccan example, other foreign languages than English might be more important for the national market, such as French and Spanish in Morocco. Hence the pupils will probably put more emphasis on those languages.

Another example from Morocco is that, in spite of the policy’s aim to form workers for the international market, the result rather seemed to provide workers for the national job market. Furthermore the pupils - due to the Islamophobia in the West, did not naturally feel that they fit into the global job market. One assumption is that the latter might be the case in other Muslim countries borrowing global educational reforms.

Another insight is that in Morocco where there is an influential local cultural tradition of teacher-centered methods and a colonial history with formal education with strong teacher-centered traditions, there was a considerable resistance to student-centered learning methods, both on policy
level as well as among the teachers. Hence, both on a macro level as well as a micro level, student-centered methods were negotiated and accommodated in order to fit the local cultural context. Even though Moroccan reform policy advocates student-centered learning, the national dialogue did not exclude a teacher-centered approach – one assumption is that this might be the case in other countries with strong teacher-centered traditions as well.

Furthermore, group work could be thought of differently, such as that group work was considered as a split class with approximately 20 pupils. In the Moroccan context, teachers did not regard group work as student-centered, but as teacher-centered group learning.

Finally, teachers and pupils responded differently to the student-centered discourse due to their different positions. In spite of the case that student-centered learning was not taught in the classroom practice, the pupils had somehow taken up the discourse and tried to negotiate their right to more democratic and student-centered methods – and tried to actively take part in the learning process. Furthermore, even though it was not taught in school, the pupils had developed a problem solving mentality due to every-day-obstacles they faced in their school environment. In countries other than Morocco, the wish to switch from authoritarian teacher-centered methods into the application of more student-centered ones might come from the pupils.

**Methodological discussion**

My research has focused on aims and visions in education policy in a Moroccan context and how teachers and pupils relate to them. Discourse analysis has helped me to move my focus from the individual teacher and pupils towards discourses, power relations and knowledge construction. Discourses are not fixed but constantly transformed through discursive struggle. Identities and knowledge is relatively fixed in a particular context, but not determined; the knowledge is thus context bound. One important approach in discourse analysis is to have a critical approach to taken-for-granted knowledge.

Three difficulties the researcher has to deal with while theorizing and analyzing the interview material are *the Holistic Mistake*, *Going Native* and *the Elitbias* (Dalen, 2007). The latter is when too much importance is put on certain respondents; I have been very conscious that all informants have been quoted and tried to balance the importance of them all.

The Holistic Mistake is when the researcher believes knowing the domain and therefore risks analyzing from a wrong pre-understanding. When I prepared my interview guide, I had decided to ask the pupils what they thought it was like to go to school when their parents went to school, and compare with what it is like for them today, and thus see what they might know about changes in school and the reforms. I quickly had to change this strategy; when it turned out that some of the pupils’ parents had never gone to school. A more appropriate strategy turned out to be: Did either of your parents, or anyone that you know in their generation go to school? Has this person ever talked about what it was like? What do you think the differences are between going to school about a generation, and today? These questions illustrated a cultural clash between the Moroccan context and my Swedish one. It was an eye-opener. I had carried out my pilot interview with a pupil from a private school. This made me very aware of the impact of presumptions, and made me very focused trying to be open-minded during all the interviews, and while analyzing and theorizing the findings.
Going Native means that the researcher is utterly familiar with the field he or she is studying, and that patterns and nuances thus might remain undiscovered. I am a teacher of English in Morocco and I am married to a Moroccan man, thus on the one hand I belong to the Moroccan context. I am also a foreigner - a Westerner - and my given name indicates that I am not Muslim; hence on the other hand I do not belong. My belonging or not belonging had probably both advantages as well as inconveniences in my research. However my experience as a teacher has to a great extent helped me to connect with both teachers and pupils, and I believe that teachers, pupils and myself were at ease during all the interviews. My experience as a teacher is in a private language center, and not in a municipal school, though. There are several differences, such as that municipal schools struggle with misplaced pupils, multi-level classes, and bigger classes. I thus do not have much experience of this, which some of the teachers also pointed out to me; making a point that I was a teacher – but not one of them. At the language center where I work, classes are no bigger than 20 students, student-centered methods such as student-centered group work, self- and peer-correction are imperative, and my experience is that the students enjoy studying and are motivated. To some extent I share experiences of teaching English to Moroccan pupils with the teachers I have interviewed, but the teachers might also take for granted that I shared certain values and experiences with them – such as maybe the pupils’ lack of motivation. Carrying out the study in municipal schools constantly reminded me that I am not a municipal school teacher facing many of these issues – and hence kept me from going native. The teachers also repeated well-known discourses, but also contradictions and resistance. With the teachers I felt that some of them, although on a few occasions, gave political correct responses, and answered what was “expected”, as for example accounting for the application of student-centered methods but then quickly adding, underlining that they were not applied and that they could never be applied.

To some extent the pupils saw me as a representative for the teachers, and they were all eager to give a good impression, underlining that they worked hard. On the other hand I was not one of the Moroccan municipal school teachers, and my lack of proficiency in Arabic as well as my imperfect French, indicated that I also struggled with languages – and thus we had something in common that they do not share with their regular teachers. I had a strong feeling that they wanted to tell me about their experiences, and that they enjoyed being listened to. From that point of view I believe that it was an advantage that I was a foreigner. The fact that I am a woman might have made the girls feel more confident and be more outspoken than if a man had interviewed them.

Eventually, the validity should, according to Kvale & Brinkmann (2012), permeate the seven phases – which I consider has been done through the systematic account of the presented research.

**Suggestions on further research**

The result of my study has actualized certain questions suitable for further research. In order to limit my study I had chosen not to focus on the classroom practice such as for example teaching the four skills and the textbooks; this would however be important to do.

According to both teachers and pupils there are considerable differences between humanities pupils and pupils of various science streams. In my study I have interviewed science stream pupils who in general are considered to be successful pupils; some of them being Science-Maths pupils, considered to be the elite of the upper-secondary school pupils. It would be interesting to broaden the research, also to include pupils of humanities, and compare their experiences.
Pupils’ lack of motivation and student-centered learning have been two major discourses. In my B.A. thesis (Rönn, 2011), I showed that girls had difficulties connecting to self-assessment and putting the focus on themselves in the learning practice – while the boys easily connected to it. Seen in the light of the results from the teachers, and the lack of student-centered learning in the classroom practice, this might reinforce the assumption that the highly teacher-centered classroom practice to a greater extent suits the girls more than the boys. One interpretation is that a more student-centered classroom practice might suit the boys better than a teacher-centered one – and one conclusion that might be drawn is that the drop-out rates might decrease with a more student-centered approach. Further research on this would be interesting - covering both pupils of humanities and science, as well as gender differences. Also differences between municipal and private establishments would be of great interest for further research, comparing the implementation of student-centered methods as well as the pupils’ motivation and competiveness.

One fifth of the world’s population is Muslim, and many Muslims live in the West. A cross-cultural study would be of great importance in accordance with this, such as comparing gender differences in motivation and how pupils experience and connect to student-centered learning in for example Morocco and Sweden. A quantitative poll and qualitative interviews with upper-secondary pupils of different streams, could be one starting point.

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APPENDICES

Interview guide for the teachers

Theme 1: The reform

**Main question:** How would you describe the reform from 2000?

Suggestions to follow-up questions, or questions to be covered: What do you consider to be the central parts of the reform? What are the biggest changes in practice? How has the reform been communicated to you? How does the system hinder or prevent the reform? What are the advantages – and for who – and what do you consider to be the disadvantages with the reform? What does the resistance against the reform look like? Who gains and who loses with the reform? Who has access to the discourse on the reform?

Theme 2: The classroom practice

**Main question:** Can you describe an ordinary lesson, from the moment you walk into the classroom until the moment you walk out?

Suggestions to follow-up questions, or questions to be covered: How do you prepare the lesson? What are the aims with the lesson? What do you see as challenges, possibilities, problems and hindrances in practice? How is the problem that needs to be “fixed” described? What makes you motivated to teach English? What do you think makes the pupils motivated to learn English? How willing are the teachers to change the classroom practice? How does the teacher construct his/her role?

Theme 3: Student-centered learning

**Main question:** What do you talk about during a lesson?

Suggestions to follow-up questions, or questions to be covered: How do the teachers and pupils express their experiences in the classroom? Where does the responsibility lie for the fact that the pupils learn? Whose voice is heard? Are the pupils shut out from the discourse about student-centered learning? Who is talking the most?
**Interview guide for the pupils**

**Theme 1: The reform**

**Main question:** Did either of your parents, or anyone that you know in their generation go to school? Has this person ever talked about what it was like? What do you think the differences are between going to school about a generation, and today?

Suggestions to follow-up questions, or questions to be covered: Have you heard about educational reform in Morocco? How has the reform been communicated to you? What is important in school today? What do you think will be important in a future job-market? What, of what you learn at school today, do you think will be important for you after you have obtained the A-level? Who has access to the discourse on the reform, and what parts of the reform?

**Theme 2: The classroom practice**

**Main question:** Can you describe an ordinary lesson, from the moment you walk into the classroom until the moment you walk out?

Suggestions to follow-up questions, or questions to be covered: What makes you motivated to learn English? What do you think is the most important with learning languages? How do you think you will use English after the A-level? How does the pupil construct his/her role?

**Theme 3: Student-centered learning**

**Main question:** What do you talk about during a lesson?

Suggestions to follow-up questions, or questions to be covered: How do the teachers and pupils express their experiences in the classroom? Where lies the responsibility for the fact that the pupils learn? Whose voice is heard? Are the pupils shut out from the discourse about student-centered learning? Who is talking the most?