



**The Centrality of the English Textbooks in the Palestinian  
Secondary Public Schools and its Impact on the English Teachers**

مركزية الكتاب المدرسي للغة الانجليزية في المدارس الثانوية الحكومية  
ال فلسطينية وأثر هذه المركزية على معلمي ومعلمات اللغة الانجليزية

By

Ibaa Abu Younes

Advisor

Dr. Jihad Alshwaikh

Birzeit University

Palestine

June, 2015

The Centrality of the English Textbooks in the Palestinian  
Secondary Public Schools and its Impact on the English Teachers

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Master Degree in Education from Birzeit University

Signatures of Committee Members:

Dr. Jehad Alshwaikh .....Thesis Advisor

Dr. Maher Hashweh .....Committee Member

Dr. Anwar AbdelRazeq.....Committee Member

Birzeit, Palestine

June, 2015

## **Table of Contents**

<b><u>List of Figures</u></b>	<b>vi</b>
<b><u>List of Tables</u></b>	<b>vi</b>
<b><u>Acknowledgment</u></b>	<b>vii</b>
<b><u>English Abstract</u></b>	<b>1</b>
<b><u>Arabic Abstract</u></b>	<b>3</b>
<b><u>Chapter One: Research Problem and the Theoretical Framework</u></b>	<b>4</b>
1.1. Introduction	4
1.2. Research problem	5
1.3. The significance of the study	7
1.4. Scope of the study	8
1.5. Theoretical framework	10
1.5.1. The role of the textbooks	10
1.5.2. Controlling teachers' work by textbooks	12
1.5.3. The impact of this control on the teachers	15
1.5.4. Teachers' reactions towards this centrality of the textbooks	18
<b><u>Chapter Two: Literature Review</u></b>	<b>22</b>
2.1. The role of the standardized textbooks in the classroom	22
2.2. Intensification of teachers' work	31
2.3. Teachers' cooperation and social relations	34
2.4. Teachers' reaction to the imposed textbooks	36
<b><u>Chapter Three: Research Methodology</u></b>	<b>40</b>
3.1. Introduction	40
3.2. Context and Participants	40
3.2.1. Teaching and Learning English in Palestine	41
3.2.2. The English Textbooks “Curriculum”	44
3.2.3. English Teachers	47
3.2.4. English Supervisors	48
3.3. Data Sources	49

3.4. Data Collection Instruments	49
3.4.1. Classroom Observations	49
3.4.2. Standardized open-ended in-depth interviews	52
3.5. Data Collection Procedures	56
3.6. Data Analysis	59
3.6.1. Analysis of the classroom observations	59
3.6.2. Analysis of the interviews with the English teachers and supervisors	60
3.7. Trustworthiness of the research	62
3.8. Ethical considerations	63
<b><u>Chapter Four: Results</u></b>	<b>64</b>
4.1. “How do the English Textbooks play a central role in the Palestinian public classrooms?”	65
4.1.1. Indicators of the centrality of the English textbooks from classroom observation	65
4.1.2. Indicators of the centrality of the English textbooks from interviews with the English supervisors	77
4.2. “How do the pressures to follow the textbooks affect the English teachers?”	89
4.2.1. Teachers' role in planning for their lessons	89
4.2.2. The level of social relations between teachers	101
4.2.3. The intensification of the teachers' work	105
4.2.4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook	108
<b><u>Chapter 5: Analysis and Discussion</u></b>	<b>119</b>
5.1. Themes of Analysis	120
5.1.1. The textbook is the dominant power in the English classrooms	120
5.1.2. Moments of shifting powers between the textbooks and the English teachers	124

5.1.3. Deskillling teachers: You do not need to be skillful to teach English! Anyone can do the job!	127
5.1.4. “We are not teaching. We are preparing students for tests.” Teaching for the tests	130
5.1.5. English teachers are burning-out	135
5.1.6. English teachers have waved the white flag! : The surrendering of the English teachers	137
5.2. Conclusions and Recommendations	141
5.2.1. Recommendation for policy and practice	143
5.2.2. Recommendation for research	146
5.3. Limitations of the study	146
<b><u>References</u></b>	<b>148</b>
<b><u>Appendix 1: The template used for classroom observations</u></b>	<b>151</b>
<b><u>Appendix 2: Transcription of classroom observations</u></b>	<b>152</b>
<b><u>Appendix 3: Transcription of English teachers’ interviews</u></b>	<b>167</b>
<b><u>Appendix 4: Transcription of Supervisors’ interviews</u></b>	<b>205</b>

## **List of Figures**

Figure 1.1: Summary of Apple’s Theory	11
Figure 2.1: Summary of the literature review	23
Figure 3.1 Structure of the Tenth Grade English Textbooks	46

## **List of Tables**

Table 3.1: English Teachers Sample Properties	54
Table 3.2: Analysis of Question 5	61
Table 4.1: Answers of the supervisors on question (a)	79
Table 4.2: Answers of the supervisors on question (b)	80
Table 4.3: Answers of the supervisors on question (c)	82
Table 4.4: Answers of the supervisors on question (d)	83
Table 4.5: Answers of the supervisors on question (e)	85
Table 4.6: Answers of the supervisors on question (f)	86
Table 4.7: Answers of the supervisors on question (g)	88
Table 4.8: Answers of the teachers on question 1	90
Table 4.9: Answers of the teachers on question 2	93
Table 4.10: Answers of the teachers on question 3	95
Table 4.11: Answers of the teachers on question 4(a)	98
Table 4.12: Answers of the teachers on question 4(b)	98
Table 4.13: Answers of the teachers on question 5	100
Table 4.14: Answers of the teachers on question 6	101
Table 4.15: Answers of the teachers on question 7	104
Table 4.16: Answers of the teachers on question 8	108
Table 4.17: Answers of the teachers on question 9	109
Table 4.18: Answers of the teachers on question 10	110
Table 4.19: Answers of the teachers on question 11	112
Table 4.20: Answers of the teachers on question 12	113
Table 4.21: Answers of the teachers on question 13	115

## **Acknowledgment**

I would like to thank all my professors, friends, and colleagues at Birzeit University, past and present, for being inspiring and helpful. You all enriched me and my work with your ideas, efforts, patience and guidance.

I would like to sincerely and gratefully thank my supervisor Dr. Jihad Alshweikh for his endless support, patience and encouragement. His high expectations was the secretive power that pushed me towards achieving this lifetime dream. Dr. Jihad has inspired me since my second year at college until I finished my MA degree. I feel proud to have the chance to work with such a great person and professor. He has made the long journey sweet.

I am, also, thankful and grateful for my professor and committee member, Dr. Anwar Abdel Razeq, for his insights in TEFL education in Palestine. Dr. Anwar has also taught me to shoot high to the moon.

I am grateful for Dr. Maher Hashweh who has kindly given his valuable time to read this work and give critical feedback. His input has contributed greatly to my work.

A special note of appreciation is extended to all the English teachers and supervisors who accepted to participate in this study.

An everlasting appreciation and acknowledgement goes to my family, my parents and brothers. They always helped me with the love, support and encouragement. A gigantic amount of appreciation goes to my brother, Amer Abu Younes whose calls and talks brought optimism to my darkest life moments.

I would like also to acknowledge the patience and the big heart of my husband Raed Hanafieh. His great encouragement, help, support, and company in

the late nights of typing and formatting have helped me in realizing this dream and were a source of happiness for me.

Finally, may this work make the future of my “future children” a better place to learn English.

## **Abstract**

This study investigated how the English textbooks imposed by the Palestinian Ministry of Education have gained the central role in teaching English in the Palestinian public classrooms. It also explored the effects of this centrality on the Palestinian English teachers; their skills, work pressure, social relations and their reaction towards the textbooks. To meet these goals, I used two qualitative data collection instruments, namely, classroom observations and interviews. Twelve English periods for the grades from the seventh till the twelfth were observed. In addition, twenty standardized open-ended interviews were conducted with English teachers who teach in secondary schools in Ramallah directorate. To explore the pressures that the supervisors may exercise on the English teachers to follow the textbooks, all of the five English supervisors in Ramallah directorate were interviewed as well. All of the observations and interviews were then transcribed, coded and categorized which helped me in organizing large amounts of data around specific themes.

The results of this study suggested that the English textbook is the main and basic reference of the English teachers in almost all the aspects of the teaching process; planning, interacting with students, and assessment. Pressures on teachers to follow the textbooks resulted mainly from students' achievement exams and from supervisors who require teachers to cover all of the material of the English textbook. As a result, teachers complained of huge amount of written works, of having no time to cooperate with colleagues, of worries to finish the material, of teaching for the tests, and of feelings that they are burning out.

Teachers also announced that they are losing their creativity and skills and that they are not upgrading or developing themselves. Many of these teachers expressed their hope of leaving schools and changing their careers. This is because they admitted that they cannot fight against these imposed textbooks since the whole system of assessment depends on them.

The study recommended that teachers should be given their autonomy and freedom when they deal with teaching materials specially the textbooks. They should be trained on how to adapt, modify, criticize and evaluate the content of the textbooks they are using.

### ملخص الدراسة

هدفت الدراسة الحالية الى التعرف على الدور المركزي الذي يلعبه الكتاب المدرسي في تدريس اللغة الانجليزية في المدارس الحكومية الفلسطينية. كما سعت الدراسة الى البحث في آثار هذه المركزية على معلمي/ات اللغة الانجليزية من حيث مهاراتهم، وعلاقاتهم الاجتماعية، وضغط العمل وتعاملهم مع هذه المركزية للكتاب. ولتحقيق اهداف الدراسة، تم استخدام طريقتين للبحث الكيفي وهما المشاهدات الصفية والمقابلات، حيث قمت بمشاهدة اثنتي عشرة حصة للغة الانجليزية للصفوف من السابع وحتى الثاني عشر. كما وقمت بمقابلة عشرين من معلمي/ات اللغة الانجليزية. بالإضافة الى ذلك، فقد تم مقابلة جميع مشرفي/ات اللغة الانجليزية في محافظة رام الله. من ثم قمت بتقريغ جميع المشاهدات والمقابلات وتم تصنيفها ضمن فئات محددة وملاحظة الأنماط في البيانات.

وبحسب نتائج الدراسة، فإن الكتاب المدرسي يعد المصدر الرئيسي والمرجع الاساسي لمعلم اللغة الانجليزية في كافة نواحي العملية التعليمية سواء في التخطيط، والتفاعل مع الطلبة، وكذلك في التقييم. كما وتوصلت الدراسة الى ان هناك العديد من الضغوط على معلمي/ات اللغة الانجليزية لاتباع الكتاب المدرسي كالاختبارات الموحدة والمشرفيين التربويين الذين يتابعون تغطية المعلمين/ات للكتاب المدرسي. هذا أدى الى تدمير معلمي ومعلمات اللغة الانجليزية من ضغط العمل والاعمال الكتابية المطلوبة منهم ومن عدم وجود وقت كاف للتعاون مع زملائهم ومن شعورهم بالتعب والارهاق النفسي والجسدي. كما وتدمير المعلمون والمعلمات من تراجع مهاراتهم وعدم شعورهم بالتنوع المعرفي. حيث بين المعلمون والمعلمون بأنهم لا يستطيعون مواجهة هيمنة الكتاب اذ ان نظام التقييم يعتمد على الكتاب المدرسي بشكل اساسي.

وبناء على تلك النتائج، فقد أوصت الدراسة على ضرورة اعطاء المعلمين/ات الحرية والاستقلالية في التعامل مع الكتاب المدرسي وضرورة تدريبهم على كيفية تعديل ومراجعة وتطوير الكتب المدرسية التي يستخدمونها.

## **Chapter One: Research Problem and the Theoretical Framework**

### **1.1. Introduction**

"Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime". This old Chinese proverb comes to my mind every time I start to think of the textbooks that are used in our classrooms. Teachers in the Palestinian public schools are provided with the textbooks that they use in their interaction with their students. However, I think using these ready-made textbooks does not necessarily mean that teachers have learned how to "fish". It is more worthwhile to teach someone to do something than to do it for them. In Palestine, the curriculum is determined by the state and is imposed on the teachers and the students to follow. Palestinian schools are all provided with grade level specific textbooks in mathematics, science, social studies, languages, arts and so forth. These textbooks are used in all public schools across the West Bank, Gaza Strip and parts of Jerusalem. All of the English teachers use the same English textbooks regardless of the different public schools they teach in or the levels of the students they interact with.

In the Palestinian public schools, English teachers use English language textbooks called "English for Palestine" series which extends from the first to the twelfth grade. These English textbooks are designed, produced and published outside the classrooms and schools. As a result of being outsiders who occasionally interact with the community of the textbooks' designers, English teachers appear to have less engagement with and authority over the textbooks

they are following. Moreover, English teachers who are using these textbooks may know very little of its forms of production, the goals, and the standards around which these textbooks are being designed. However, English teachers depend on these textbooks in teaching English in the Palestinian public schools. As a result, the purpose behind this research is to investigate how the Palestinian English textbooks prescribed by the Palestinian Ministry of Education have gained the central role in the Palestinian classrooms. It aims to explain how the pressures on teachers to follow the textbooks get built through the policies followed by the ministry of education. It also analyzes the effects of these pressures on the English teachers; their skills, work pressures, social relations and their reactions towards these textbooks. In the following few pages of this chapter, I define my research problem more clearly and explain Apple's theory that forms the theoretical framework of my research.

## **1.2. Research problem**

One of the major problems that I have suffered from during my three years of teaching English as a foreign language is the limitations that are imposed on by the textbooks that I am obliged to follow. There are various pressures on me to follow the English textbooks so I have started to realize that the textbooks have the main or the central role while my students and I have the peripheral roles in the classroom. Since the goals, the material, the activities, the time and the assessment tools are specified and predetermined for me in these textbooks, I felt that I do not need to be skillful to do my job and that I do not need to be an

English teacher to teach or to execute the textbook activities. I feel that the ministry of education is spoon-feeding me as a teacher with all the information, classroom activities and assessment procedures that I am using with my students and that are specified in the textbooks. As a result, I felt that my role has turned into spoon-feeding my students with the textbook content. The school principals, English supervisors, and the policy of exams are all forcing me to follow the textbook. It is my responsibility that the textbook should be covered by the end of the semester. What is more serious is that I start to feel that I am losing my creativity, flexibility, and problem solving skills. I feel that I am not upgrading or developing my knowledge as I repeat the same textbooks every new semester. I have become restricted by the limits of the textbooks. This is because there is no time to go beyond the assigned textbook, to cooperate with other teachers and to introduce to my students what I think suits their evolving needs and to fulfill the role I aspire to. These limitations have badly influenced my attitudes towards teaching and my motivation to do the best for my students.

Consequently, I have determined to investigate how the English textbooks play central role and that turn the teacher into an implementer and merely a follower of a book. This also includes inquiring into the effects of these pressures on the English teachers themselves. Accordingly, my research questions are:

- Firstly, how do the English textbooks play a central role in the English classrooms?
- Secondly, how do the pressures to follow the textbooks affect the English teachers?

### **1.3. The significance of the study**

I am choosing to study this problem because I think that it is important to better understand why many teachers and I keep complaining of “wasting our brains” in teaching. I am one of the teachers who keep complaining that teaching in schools is killing my creativity and limiting my knowledge. I need to understand the reasons that turn teachers into machines and that resulted in what we hear that “those who can’t, who teach”. In this research, I try to illustrate the idea that being a teacher is so much more than a job. The passion, the mission, and even the identity of the teachers are influenced by their jobs.

Besides being personally very interested in the topic, the issue of textbook imposition is a serious one. The idea of texts does not only include what students are to read in the classrooms or what teachers confront in making or (not making) choices. It also includes books and proposals made available to teachers by specific groups such as "experts" who are outside of the schools and away from the actual teaching and learning processes. The goal is to influence the decisions about what should be taught in schools and what teachers' jobs should look like (Apple, 1982). Apple also declares that the textbook often becomes an aspect of systems of control. He explains that textbooks become more intrusive into the kinds of knowledge that must be taught or what can be called the "legitimate knowledge", the end products and the goals of that teaching, and the ways it must be carried on. Therefore, the choice of a particular content and ways of approaching it in schools is related to both to existing relations of domination and

to struggles to change these relations. Using Apple's words in his book about education and power (1982), he states that:

social institutions such as school perform a vital role in the recreation of the conditions necessary for ideological hegemony to be maintained. Thus, schools are important agencies in social reproduction. The way the curriculum was organized, the principles upon which it was built and evaluated, and the very knowledge itself, all of these are critically important if we were to understand how power was reproduced, not just the economic power but the cultural power as well. (p. 12)

Hence, this centrality of the textbooks has serious ramifications on the teachers and on the society and social relations in general. These textbooks guarantee the reproduction and the maintenance of the existing power relations culturally, socially and economically. Thus, it is worthwhile to investigate this topic.

#### **1.4. Scope of the study**

This research tackles the centrality of the English textbooks only in the Palestinian public schools and investigates its effects only on the English teachers through focusing on the grades from the 7<sup>th</sup> till the 12<sup>th</sup>. It also uses Apple's theory as a theoretical framework.

Firstly, I have decided to study public schools because I assume that this centrality is more obvious in the public schools than the private schools which as a result of the different administrations may vary in its perception of the

textbooks. Secondly, the research also focuses on the effects of the textbooks only on the teachers' skills though it would be interesting to investigate (may be in another research) its effects on students' learning and attitudes. Thirdly, the centrality of the English textbooks can be observed at all school levels. However, I have chosen to work with the grades from 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> and the teachers who teach these grades. This is because I have noticed that the closer the teachers are to the 12<sup>th</sup> grade, the more they attach themselves with the textbooks. To understand this phenomena, I have adopted Apple's theory (1982, 1989) because he gives analysis of the process of the imposition of the textbooks and of the important ramifications of this centrality on teachers.

Finally, I have decided to study how the textbooks play a central role in teaching the English language and not any other school subjects. This is because after teaching English for three years, I have noticed that English teachers depend on covering the textbooks rather than on encouraging their students to communicate in the target language. Moreover, they depend on these textbooks as their sole reference of information and classroom activities. These practices contradict with modern theories of teaching English such as the Communicative Teaching Approach that focuses mainly on encouraging students to communicate in English to acquire the language in addition to encouraging teachers to use the different contexts and materials available for them to stimulate their students to talk and interact.

## **1.5. Theoretical framework**

My theoretical framework depends on Apple's theory about the relationship between teachers and the imposed curriculum. Apple investigates the relationship between the curriculum and teaching in the formal institutions of education. He is mainly interested in curricular form, not curricular content. That is, his focus is not on what is actually taught, but on the manner in which it is organized and imposed on schools. In his theory, Apple mainly talks about the following themes: (1) the role of the textbooks, (2) the control of teachers' work by the textbooks, (3) the impact of this control on teachers and (4) teachers' reactions towards this centrality. This chapter further explain these five areas. Figure 1.1 gives a summary of Apple's theory.

### **1.5.1. The role of the textbooks**

Apple sheds light on the important role of the textbooks that are used and imposed on schools. He explains that this role of knowledge is not objective or neutral as these textbooks reflects the reality from the point of view of a certain dominant group. These textbooks also define the "legitimate knowledge" that shapes the present and the future of the students. Thus, textbooks do not only include what the students are to read in classrooms but they also shape the work of the teachers and the choices and decisions that they can or cannot make. Apple asserts that the selected knowledge in textbooks play a vital role in maintaining and reproducing the existing relations of power and exploitation in the society (Apple, 1982).

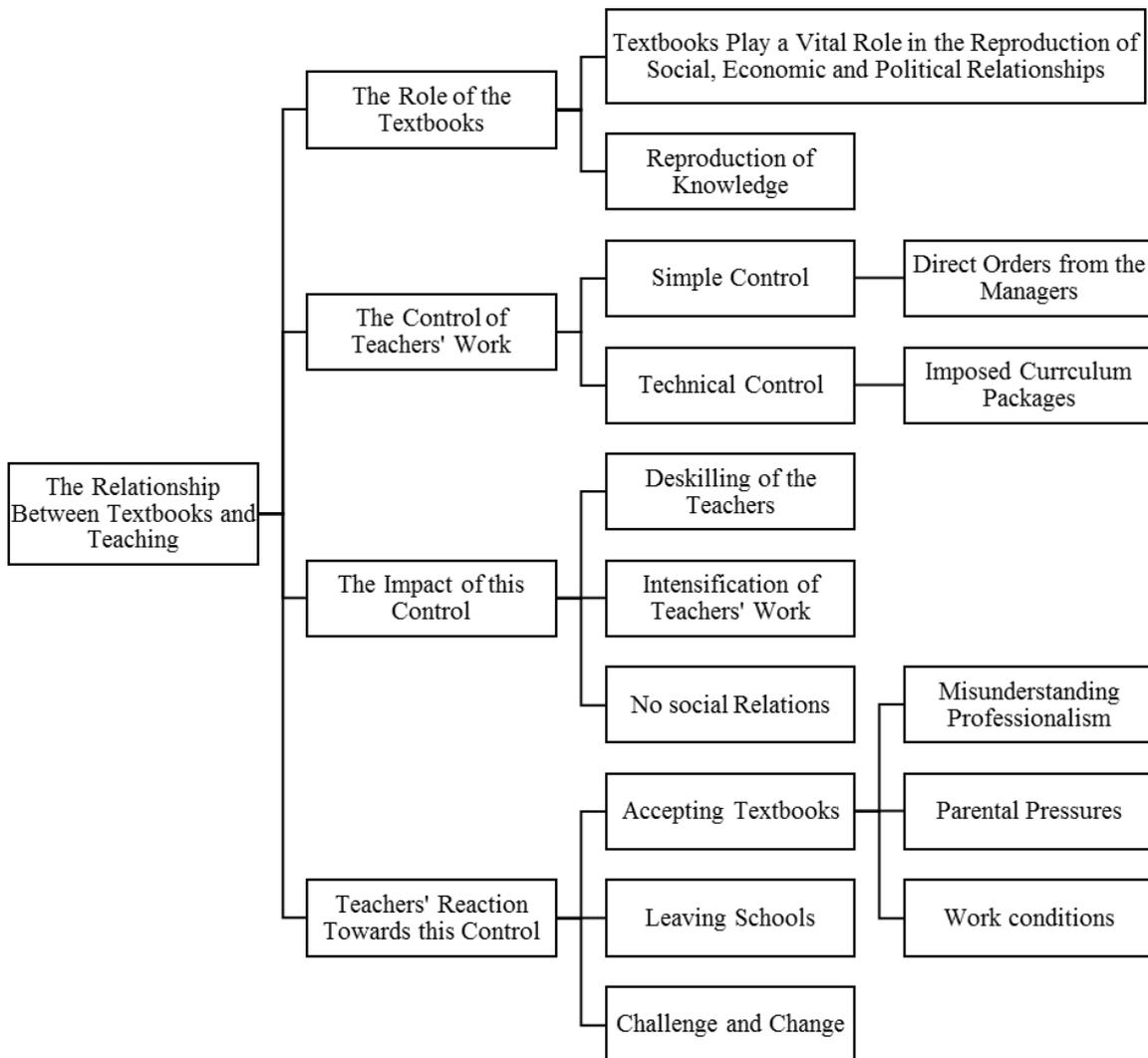


Figure 1.1: Summary of Apple's Theory

Apple points that the way the curriculum is organized, the principles upon which it was built and evaluated, and the knowledge that is chosen, all of these are critical to understand how power relations was reproduced, not only the economic power but the cultural power as well. Apple (1982) explains that the social institutions such as school play an essential role in the recreation of the conditions necessary for ideological hegemony to be preserved. He points that schools are important agencies in social reproduction.

Therefore, the struggle over texts was linked to concerns who should control curriculum packages in schools. Apple points that many of politically active teachers seek to have control of what they teach. These teachers think that choosing the teaching material is a democratic right that one should fight for. These active teachers are aware that without this right of choosing material, they would be equivalent of factory workers whose every move is prescribed by the management.

### **1.5.2. Controlling teachers' work by textbooks**

Apple distinguishes between two kinds of control that the state exercises on the educational process. These two kinds are simple and technical control. Simple control is direct and clear while technical control is invisible and hidden. Simple control is simply telling someone that you prescribe and determine everything and every move that should be done and workers should follow or they will be fired out of work. Technical control, on the other hand is less obvious. These technical controls are controls are built and established in the physical structure of the job. Thus, workers obey without being aware that they are controlled (Apple, 1986).

Apple (1986) explains that the state tried to legitimate intervention in the educational process and to impose a particular ideology of management and control both on the public and on employees and workers. Thus, the direct power of patriarchal relations of authority that can be seen in simple control were replaced and transformed into more efficient forms of organizing and controlling

the daily activities of the workers. The state legitimated the new forms of control and greater state intervention using technical models. This legitimation has resulted in a new and more sophisticated attempts at overcoming teachers' resistance. It is a re-articulation of the dynamics of patriarchy in the school and the society. This control of curriculum packages and teaching documents the close relationship over time between patriarchal relations both inside and outside the school.

Apple (1986) points that the best examples of the domination of technical control procedures are found in the use of and huge dependence on the prepackaged sets of curricular materials that are imposed on schools by the state "experts". These curricular materials are also accompanied by systematic integration of testing, repeated exams, strict and reductive accountability systems, behavioral goals and curriculum, competency based instructions and appropriate student response.

Thus, he asserts that schools in America are witnessing two important tendencies. Firstly, restructuring the work of teachers so that it is linked more directly to specific behavioral outcomes and directed by managerial techniques and ideologies. Secondly, there has been a rapid growth in curricular "systems" in the United States and that is now spreading to other countries. These curricula have goals, strategies, tests, textbooks, worksheets appropriate student responses, etc integrated together. The creation of these administrative techniques guarantee standardized outcomes and behaviors. These curricula also help in avoiding

failures, partial successes and resistances that accompanied the earlier approaches to simple control

As a result, Apple illustrates that a person who enters many classrooms in America is struck by the power of the existing curriculum content and teaching. The important status of these curriculum materials is apparent from the characteristics of these classrooms. In these classes there is a lot of teacher talk and a lot of students listening. Students are responding to teachers' questions or working on written assignments; that are almost invariably closed and factual questions. There is little corrective feedback. There is no guidance, and students and teachers work with many traditional activities which are from the textbooks.

Apple asserts that this power of the textbooks in the American schools is reinforced and fostered by the educational reports that the American ministry of education issues. These educational reports are as much political as they are educational documents. The reports are attempts at rebuilding a consensus over education. They use a language that seeks to have something in it for everybody such as "we" "our people" so that as many people as possible with power can fit under their umbrella. These educational reports use a language that make the textbooks the main reference of the teachers and make following the assigned curriculum a duty not a choice. To sum up, Apple states that the work of classroom teachers is being controlled and determined by the imposition of the school textbooks, the behavioral objectives, the standardized tests, and the different strict ways of accountability. This control impact teachers' work in different ways.

### **1.5.3. The impact of this control on the teachers**

Apple (1986) talks about the impact of the imposed curriculum packages on teachers. He talks about the impacts of this imposition on teachers' skills, their work pressure, social relations and their reactions to this curriculum.

The first impact of technical control on teachers is what Apple described as a deskilling process. Technical control and deskilling tend to go hand in hand. Deskilling is part of a long process in which the work is divided and then re-divided to increase productivity, to control the costs and to reduce "inefficiency" and failure. Apple explains that this concept has been used to describe the work of the workers in the American factories and that he is using it to describe the work of teachers at the public schools.

Apple explains that in this process, the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessing them are defined as precisely as possible by the state "experts". These specified actions with specified results do not require amount of skill and decision-making to be executed. Therefore, people who are not skillful or who are not "successful" can manage to do the assigned job. In other words, teachers do not need to be skillful to merely carry these plans out to the specification, and at the pace set by people away from the actual teaching situation.

Apple states the deskilling of the teachers occurs when administrators and or the State determined the educational goals and teachers were left to 'execute' these goals. He contends that pre-packaged curriculum materials used in schools both control and deskill teachers by separating their mental labour from manual

labour or execution. They both control and deskill teachers by separating conception from execution. This results in reducing teachers' capacities to devise and design curriculum materials that suite the local contexts and the needs of learners. As a result, teachers risk becoming only technicians in the teaching and learning process. They are becoming like machines in factories that are programmed to work.

Therefore, teachers are being deskilled as more and more of the curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation are standardized or prepackaged. Teachers suffer from being more and more deskilled because of technical control procedures into the curriculum in schools. The integration together of management systems, reductive behaviorally based curricula, and students' responses, and pre and post testing was leading to a loss of control and separation of conception from execution. This loss of control over work leads to negative attitudes towards teaching and the school. Thus, teachers reports in America showed high level of alienation, cynicism, and the sense of loss of control when 80% of teachers in the America say they would not choose the same job again given the choice.

The second impact that Apple discusses is something that accompanies deskilling and that is intensification of teachers' work. Aspects of intensification found in teaching especially in schools which are dominated by behaviorally pre-specified curricula, repeated testing, and strict and reductive accountability systems. Apple points that teachers suffer more and more from being stressed and worried because of the huge amount of work they need to finish every day. They

suffer from having to do paper work that is tiring and stressing for them. Teachers spend large portion of time evaluating students of each objective and recording the results for later discussion and decision making. Teachers can be found busy with these tasks before and after school and very often during lunch hour. Hours of work at home each night was not unusual as well. The situation seemed to push the workload of these teachers up.

As a result, teachers keep complaining from having no time to relax or even to keep up with one's field. Workloads have increased overtime. This in consequence has had the effects of increasing teachers' dependence on these prepackaged and predetermined curricula. Since teachers have no time to search and prepare new material as a result of the work loads, they find the prescribed curricular materials as an outlet and a comfort for them. Apple argues that this has led to an intellectual deskilling in which mental workers are cut off from their own fields and must rely heavily on ideas and processes provided by experts. As a result of this dependence, teachers' knowledge will be fossilized and they will not be motivated to learn new things.

Apple also discusses that one of the results of this intensification of teachers' work is reducing the quality of teachers' work. Getting done became the norm as a result of intensification. The challenge of the day is simply accomplishing what is specified. This requires nearly all of one's efforts. Teachers are no more interested in giving the best but in finishing the assigned work and getting a rest. This has a bad influence on the quality of the work that teachers

offer whether during teaching inside the classrooms or during doing the paper work.

The third point that Apple explores the impact of textbooks on teachers' social relations. Apple explains that intensification of teachers' work also acts to destroy the sociability of teachers. Teachers do not find time for leisure and self-directed activities. Teachers find no time in their busy schedules to interact with other colleagues at schools, to exchange experiences with them or to talk with them about different concerns. Thus, the risk of isolation grows as teachers find themselves separated from their colleagues and are busy doing the assigned duties.

Apple concluded that as a result of imposing a standardized textbooks, intensifying teachers' work, and separating teachers from their fields and colleagues, teachers have no time to be creative or imaginative. Moreover, teachers have been pushed towards having a negative attitude towards lowering the quality of their work.

#### **1.5.4. Teachers' reactions towards this centrality of the textbooks**

Apple (1986) explains that teachers often responded to this kind of technical control in a variety of ways. He points that teachers either challenge and try to change the imposed curriculum or they withdraw and leave schools. He also talks about a third group of teachers who accept the dominance of the textbooks in their classrooms.

Apple points that some teachers especially those who have a long history in teaching often try to subtly change the pre-specified curriculum. They insist on trying to find space for a relaxed discussion with students on topics of their own choosing. On the other hand, Apple says that the second group of teachers usually react to the imposed textbooks and intensification of work by leaving schools. For many committed teachers, existing structures within educational system and its differential power in decision- making, the lack of interpersonal contact among teachers and so on seem to produce what has been called "teacher burn –out" (teacher frustration and anger). Apple declares that many teachers who tend to react negatively to these prepackaged, standardized, and systematized curricular forms often leave teaching.

There is a contradictory nature of teachers' responses. Thus, the third group of teachers have accepted the dominance of the textbooks in their classroom and the intensification of their work. Apple interprets the reasons for the acceptance of certain aspects of intensification and the dominance of the textbooks in their classroom. Apple attributes it to the history of professionalism and to a number of other factors such as parental pressures and employment practices surrounding teaching.

Apple explains that many teachers interpreted (misrecognized) what was happening to them as a symbol of their increased professionalism or as being more professional. As responsibility for designing one's own curricula and one's own teaching has decreased, teachers' responsibility over technical and management concerns has largely increased. Teachers think that now they have to

acquire a new range of skills like grading large number of tests, managing time to finish the specified objectives, and making decisions based on students' results. They thought that the longer hours of work are evidence of their enlarged professional status. Teachers thought of themselves as being more professional to the extent that they employed technical criteria and tests. In other words, they increased their professionalism by learning new management skills. This has resulted in the acceptance of the longer hours and the intensification of their work that accompanied this situation.

Apple discusses parental pressure as another reason that pushed the teachers to accept this situation. Parents now are following the manual or the textbook too. They can observe the work of the teachers and expect the teachers to cover the textbooks at hands. Kids also know the direction of the teaching and expect the teachers to cover all the material in the textbooks. This gets to be routine that the teacher has to follow.

The third reason that made the teacher accept this situation is the employment practices surrounding teaching. The main criterion for hiring teachers is their agreement with the overall curricula, pedagogic, and evaluative framework which organizes the day-to day activities. If the teachers want to get the job and to continue working, they have to accept the determined curricula and the current policy of the ministry of education. These reasons depower the teachers and force many of them to agree with what is going on in their teaching career.

To summarize, in this chapter, I have given a summary of the main concepts of Apple's theory adopted in this research. This chapter has also defined

more clearly the problem of the current study. The next chapter investigates the status of the research problem in other related studies.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

This research tackles the problem of the centrality of the English textbooks in the Palestinian public schools and the effects of this centrality on the English language teachers. To understand this problem, I have adopted Apple's theory presented in his books (1982) and (1986). In this theory, Apple analyzes the role of the ready-made textbooks in the classrooms. He demonstrates the effects of these textbooks on teachers; their skills, work pressure and social relations. Moreover, he explains the reactions of teachers towards these textbooks. In the light of the adopted theoretical framework, the academic literature about the topic of my study is organized around the following themes: (1) the role of the standardized textbooks in the classroom, (2) the intensification of teachers' work, (3) teachers' cooperation and social relations and (4) teachers' reaction to the imposed textbooks. This chapter discusses these themes and the different perspectives presented about each one of them. Figure 2.1 summarizes these themes and the reviewed studies.

### **2.1. The role of the standardized textbooks in the classroom**

I have noticed that there are three different perspectives concerning the role of the textbooks in the classroom. The first perspective represents studies that are totally against any imposition of textbooks. The second represents studies that consider the textbooks to be important in teaching only if the teachers are well-trained on how to make use of them. The third perspective stresses the importance and the positive role that the textbooks play in teaching.

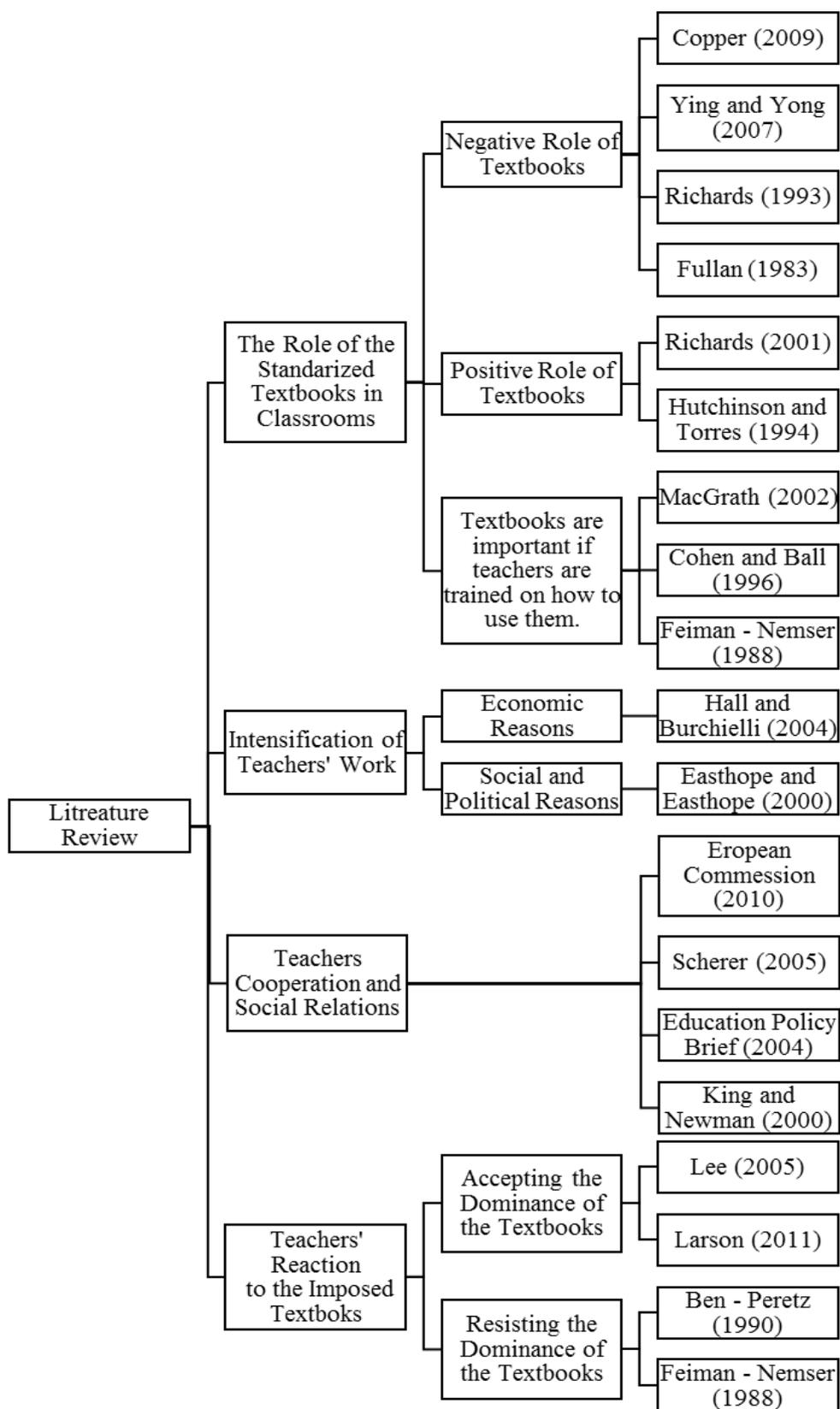


Figure 2.1: Summary of the literature review

Ryan and Copper (2009), Ying and Young (2008), Richard (1993) and Fullan (1983) represent the first perspective that consider the predetermined textbooks as a reason for controlling the teachers and deskilling them. Apparently, these researchers argue against the imposition of ready -made curriculum materials. Ryan and Copper (2009) argued that the hidden purpose of many of the ready-made curriculum packages is to keep for teachers the role of simply carrying out predetermined content and instructions. The role of the teachers is simplified to become follower and implementer of the textbook content. The researchers argued that the purpose behind this type of pedagogy is that the behavior of teachers need to be controlled and made consistent and predictable across different schools and student population. This aims to get standardized results in the different schools and districts to compare between the achievements of students in these schools.

This comparison aims to help making decisions concerning teachers, administrations and schools. Examples on these decisions is cutting off or increasing governmental spending on schools depending on the results of students on high stakes exams. This entails that the teachers lose the power to create new material or even go beyond the assigned textbooks. Ryan and Copper also criticized that in this approach there are experts who do the thinking while teachers are reduced to doing the implementing. He explained that this process has serious negative effects on the teachers. One of these effects is that teachers lose their skills and become deskilled. Moreover, when teachers do not design their own material, they will be removed from the process of deliberation,

planning and reflection. This will lead to "routinize" the nature of learning and classroom pedagogy. The routines of work kill the creativity of the teachers and make them follow the textbooks without any deliberation or reflection.

Ying and Young (2007) also explained that in Hong Kong government schools, there has been a long tradition of using textbooks in teaching. These commercially produced course books, teacher guides, student activity books and related additional support materials are the main references of teachers in Hong Kong government schools. The researchers used semi-structured interviews with teachers about their use of textbooks in their teaching. They pointed that the beliefs and work of Hong Kong teachers reflect the central role of the textbook in their work. The majority of Hong Kong government schools base their teaching and student learning on these commercial textbooks. These textbooks have been designed to prepare students for high stakes exams and so teachers are only teaching for the tests. This is because these teachers always try to finish the textbook with little regard for the learning needs of their students. The researchers attributed this huge dependence on commercial textbooks to the nature of teachers' pre-service training. This is because teacher training does not encourage the development of interpretive skills needed for adapting and enhancing the suggested teaching and learning materials, resources and assessments in the textbook beyond its obvious meaning. Pre-service training had not equipped teachers to be curriculum creators making informed decisions and acting on their knowledge of their students and textbook. Consequently, many teachers tend to perceive an authority invested in textbooks, which in turn functions to reduce their

ability to use the textbooks in ways that can support and encourage their creativity.

Richards (1993) also discussed the impacts of textbooks on teaching English-as-a-Second-Language courses. The researcher examined the role of commercial textbooks in instruction, reasons for their present status, and the consequences of that status. He pointed that textbooks have gained a high status in schools as teachers depend largely on them and so he attempted to shed light on some potential negative effects of the heavy dependence on textbooks in classrooms. One of the negative impacts is that they deskill teachers as the textbooks and the teachers' manual make the major instructional decisions. Thus, teachers are reduced to that of a technician whose function is to present materials prepared by others. Richards noticed that if teachers use course books largely, as the only source of material, if they follow pages and activities strictly in order, teachers gradually lose their skills in planning and end up only doing the textbook activities.

Fullan (1983) has also reviewed many teachers' school practices. The researcher conducted interviews with teachers of different subjects and reviewed their lesson plans. He explained that the textbooks play a central role in the planning of lessons by teachers. He noticed that the majority of the teachers admitted that they mainly depend on the textbooks to decide in which order to teach the different chapters and how much time to devote to each one. He pointed that this dependence on textbooks negatively affects the skills of the teachers in planning for their lessons. Over the years, the centrality of textbooks in the

planning process has deskilled teachers of their capacity to create new materials or to be creative in their teaching.

On the other hand, MacGrath (2002), Cohen and Ball (1996) and Ball and Feiman-Nemser (1988) represent the second perspective. They argue that the textbooks can have an important role in the classrooms if teachers are trained to learn from them and to engage with them. MacGrath (2002) explained that the ready-made teaching materials play a crucial role in the teaching process. He explained that when these teaching materials take the form of a textbook, it is essential that the textbook be carefully selected to meet both external requirements and the needs of the teachers. It is also important that teachers be able to mediate between the textbook and the learners, adapting and supplementing the book as necessary. He pointed that teachers can adapt and supplement the textbook material to fit their own students. For example, teachers can modify or replace the units that do not satisfy their students' needs by other ready-made, devised or authentic material. Moreover, teachers can modify the textbook material and update it with the new findings of science.

In a similar way, Cohen and Ball (1996) argued that the commercially published curriculum materials have dominated classrooms in the United States. These textbooks are becoming part of everyday routine of the American schools in many districts. The researchers stated that school curriculum plays an uneven role in the American schools. This can be attributed to different reasons. One of the important reasons is that curriculum developers have overlooked teachers. They have not taken account of teachers' need to learn in order to use the new

textbook. To bridge this gap, the researchers suggested that teachers should be encouraged to adapt not to adopt the materials to suite their own students. Teachers should be engaged with the curriculum materials. This can be done by integrating materials into programs of professional development aimed at improving these textbooks' capacity to teach the teachers. To turn the curriculum material into a resource of learning for teachers, there should be a basic re-conception of the designers' work. As a result, instead of thinking of curriculum as "something for the students" and the teachers' guide as an instructional manual, both could have been considered as resources for teachers' learning. Thus, Cohen and Ball argued that the curriculum should be created with closer attention to the process of curriculum enactment. They argue that while curriculum is often considered the textbooks or the materials, the enacted curriculum is jointly constructed by teachers, students and materials in a particular context. They recommend that written materials should be designed to be educative for teachers as well as students. Making textbooks educative for teachers would require ambitious new efforts, far beyond what curriculum developers typically do. For instance, including helpful material on students' thinking would require inquiry into students' response to particular topics and tasks in mathematics, science, social studies, language, history and so on. In such areas, when teachers try to elicit and respond to students' ideas, they must invent and learn a great deal with little assistance. By the same token, more research on teachers' knowledge and learning would be required to design curriculum as a resource for teachers' own understanding of the content.

Textbooks can also be beneficial for novice teachers if they are trained on how to use them. Feiman-Nemser (1988) have conducted a longitudinal study using classroom observations and teachers' interviews to investigate the using of the textbooks and the teachers' guide for beginning teachers. They argued that rather than telling "novices" or beginner teachers not to teach by the textbook, teacher educators should consider the limits and constraints of beginners' knowledge and skills and to teach novice teachers how to learn from the published textbooks. This can be done by developing sensible goals for the pre-service teachers' education programs. Teacher educators must confront dilemma about textbooks and learning to teach. For example, teachers' educators should train teachers on how to justify their choices. Beginning teachers need help in seeing that their decisions about what to teach students have important consequences. Moreover, teachers' education programs should emphasize teachers' content knowledge. Teachers need to understand what they are teaching, whether they use the textbooks or not. At the same time, teachers' education program should teach teachers how to develop curriculum independence. Teachers' educators should prepare teachers to go on teaching from their teaching experience. For example, beginning teachers can be pushed towards learning from teachers' guide and other curriculum materials in a way that allows them to move towards building their own units of study. These units should be responsible to subject matter goals and responsible to students. Generally speaking, the second perspective asks for training teachers to benefit from the textbooks and to be able to control the role of the textbooks in classrooms.

A third view of the textbook relation with the teachers and classroom is suggested by Richards (2001) and Hutchinson and Torres (1994). These researchers considered the role of textbooks in terms of the normal day-to-day use in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Their view challenged the first perspective that textbooks are of little value in classroom instruction. They explained that the textbook has an essential and positive part to play in EFL instruction on a daily basis. Richards (2001) pointed to the importance and advantages of using textbooks in teaching. He explained that textbooks provide a structure and a reference for the English teaching programs. Textbooks help standardize instruction. The use of a textbook in a program can ensure that the students in different classes receive similar content and therefore can be tested in the same way. He argued that If a well-developed textbook is used, students are exposed to materials that have been tried and tested and that are based on learning principles and so they maintain quality. They can provide effective language models and input. Textbooks can provide support for teachers whose first language is not English and who may not be able to generate an accurate language input on their own. Textbooks can train teachers. If teachers have limited teaching experience, a textbook together with the teachers' manual can serve as a medium of initial teacher training. Moreover, they are efficient. They save teachers' time, enabling teachers to devote time to teaching rather than material's production.

Similar to Richards (2001), Hutchinson and Torres (1994) claimed that the textbook has positive part to play in EFL instruction on a daily basis. Based their study on a questionnaire survey, the researchers explained that textbooks survive

because they satisfy certain needs. Basically, the researchers stressed the importance of structure in people's lives. Textbooks, they argued, survive and thrive because they are the most convenient means of providing the structure to the teaching and learning processes. They explained that a course book can serve as a tool for supporting teachers and as an instrument of modifications and alterations. Most teachers consider course books to be valuable aids that offer useful material and support. They pointed that learners also need course books to guide them towards the process of learning. Thus, this last perspective stresses the importance of the textbooks in teaching especially in teaching English.

To sum up, three different perspectives appear in the previous studies concerning the role of textbooks in the teaching process. While the first perspective represents studies that are totally against any imposition of textbooks, the second represents studies that consider the textbooks to be important in teaching only if the teachers are well-trained on how to make use of them. On the other hand, the third perspective stresses the importance and the positive role that the textbooks play in teaching.

## **2.2. Intensification of teachers' work**

The second theme that was apparent in the literature I reviewed is the intensification of teachers' work. Apple (1989) demonstrates that another process that accompanies the process of deskilling is the intensification of the teachers' work. He explains that intensification is the process by which the works of teachers are eroded. It has many symptoms, from being allowed no time at all to

relax or even to go to the bathroom, to having a total absence of time to be updated with one's own field. In school time, intensification requires that teachers spend a large portion of time evaluating students, grading, and recording the results. Teachers also become busy with these tasks before and after school, very often, during their lunch hour. Hall (2004) also added that teachers are complaining of not having enough time to cover what is expected from them or to explore new ideas with their classes. Interviewed teachers feel that their freedom to make decisions about their work has been constricted. Moreover, they talk about the amount of testing and number of examinations they have to prepare their students for. They also expressed suffering from rising levels of stress, reduced free and leisure time and that much of the fun or enjoyment has gone from their work. In other words, they have no time to update their knowledge of what is new in their fields or to relax and think of innovative ways for teaching.

Rosaria Burchielli (2006) has also studied work intensification in the Australian Public education sector. She used a case-study from an Australian Primary School to understand and analyze changes in teachers' work, work intensification and its causes. She found that there are increasing workloads and responsibilities in teachers' work. She argued that this work intensification is part of the exploitation and subordination processes exercised on teachers. This intensification of teachers' work results from following new approaches of work management. These approaches aim to exploit teachers. Moreover, they aim to control teachers and subordinate them. In other words, the intensification of teachers' work resulted from being required to do more in less time. The "more"

that the teachers are being asked to do involves an increase in work hours and getting more of the same work done in a shorter time. Moreover, it also encompasses an expansion of teachers' role, more non-teaching duties and activities, more deadlines, targets and responsibilities. These pressures are rising from external resources out of the control of the teachers themselves. This in turn led to a feeling of an erosion and decrease of teachers' autonomy in teaching, such as their autonomy in planning, decision making, and classroom management.

In a similar way Easthope and Easthope (2000) argued that teachers in Tasmania and Australia also reported increase in the workload in the 10 years between 1984 and 1994. Interviewed teachers reported longer working hours every day, increasing in the number of the students and having increased professional and administrative responsibilities. However, the researchers attributed this intensification of teachers' work to reasons that are different from the reasons predicted by both researchers Hall and Burchielli. According to Easthope and Easthope, the reasons for this increased workload include: Firstly, decreasing the amount of money that the public government spends on education. Secondly, changes in student assessment to a criterion basis instead of norm basis. Thirdly, a change in the student population. As a result, teachers reported that their workload was both increased and intensified which led to a more difficult workplace. Significantly, difficulty was also produced by the attempt of teachers to maintain their professional commitment and to preserve the high quality of their works while adapting to the new conditions of their work. However, as a result of the increasing difficulties in the work conditions and the stresses teachers

suffer from, many teachers decide either to have a part-time work as a teacher or to leave schools and to move to different jobs. On the other hand, teachers who remained in the system have to follow the survival mode in their work. This means that they start to get things done without focusing on the quality of their work. As a result, they had to reduce their professional commitment in order to continue in their careers.

The researchers (Apple, 1989; Hall, 2004; Easthope and Easthope, 2000) demonstrate that the work of the teachers is in a process of intensification. However, they contributed this intensity to different reasons. While Apple, Hall and Burchielli consider it as a result of mainly economic reasons as to exploit workers and increase their productivity, Easthope and Easthope attribute it basically to social and political reasons as cutting off governmental spending on education, the natural increase of population and the rise in the number of students in the classrooms.

### **2.3. Teachers' cooperation and social relations**

This control and intensification of teachers' work have an impact at the level of social relations and on how teachers involved in interaction. With the increasing employment of prepackaged curricular systems as the basic curricular form, virtually no interaction between teachers is required. If nearly everything is standardized and specified before execution, then cooperation among teachers about curricular matters is minimized. In essence, if everything is predetermined, there is no longer any pressing need for teachers' cooperation. Thus, teachers

become unattached individuals, divorced from both colleagues and the creative part of their work (Apple, 1989). At the same time, cooperating with other teachers and colleague inside and outside the school is one of the key characteristics of great teachers that are identified by Scherer (2005). The researcher pointed that great teachers depend on other teachers as a constant source of information and enrichment. For example, the teacher may help to identify areas of the curriculum that need attention and modification and coordinate or offer to serve on a committee to explore solutions to a problem.

This is also confirmed by King and Newman (2000). The researchers argued that teacher learning is most efficient when teachers collaborate with professional peers, both within and outside of their schools, and when they expand their experience through access to external researchers and program developers. Several characteristics of high quality teacher professional development are summarized by Education Research and Development Center at the University of Delaware (2004). One of the important points is that teachers' professional development should be extended and become part of everyday work. It should be based on cooperation and collaboration with other professionals inside and outside the school. On the other hand, The European Council and the European Commission (2010) set the common European principles for teacher competences and qualifications. One of the important competencies is that teachers should be able to work with others. They should also be able to work in ways that increase the collective intelligence of other teachers and co-operate and collaborate with colleagues to enhance their own learning and teaching. They also need to develop

their knowledge, to access all possible sources of information and to reflect on their practices. After all, teachers' education and learning should be a continuous process. Apparently, these different standards for teachers' competencies assert the importance of teachers' cooperation, collaboration, reflection and autonomy in their professional development. These standards and competencies contradict with the limitations and constraints that teachers suffer from as a result of the centrality of the textbooks in the classrooms. In consequence, these textbooks influence the ability of teachers to cooperate and work with other colleagues.

#### **2.4. Teachers' reaction to the imposed textbooks**

The literature reveals two different ways on how teachers deal with the pre-determined textbooks. While some teachers tend to accept the control of the textbooks and to cope with it, other teachers resist them and assert that good teachers do not follow textbooks but create their own materials. Apple (1989) argue that teachers try to resist the central role of the textbooks in their classroom. As a way of resistance, the teachers went through a process of reskilling. In essence, the teachers developed new skills, particularly, managerial skills. Apple considers these new skills as an attempt of the teachers to cope with the role of the textbooks and adapt to it. In a similar way, the majority of Hong Kong government schools teachers seek a survival mode in their work. They base their teaching and student learning on the commercial textbooks. These teachers try to finish the textbooks with little or no regard for the learning needs of their students (Lee, 2005). Moreover, Larson (2011) reflects on the teachers' situations in many

schools in the province of British Columbia, and Canada. She demonstrate that many teachers suffer from increasing workloads, growing in class sizes, increasing in the number of students with special needs and at the same time decreasing in specialist and support programs. These teachers as a result started to follow the routines and to choose the easy way in everything just to make it through the end of the day. In other words, these teachers only aim to get things done. This means that teachers are less willing to be creative, innovative, and less able to develop methods that will engage students. They become obedient and compliant. These teachers are ready to follow any advice from superiors in order to please them, than to challenge their ideas. They started to lose confidence and began to see themselves as failures and so they are more likely to prefer to follow routine.

To the contrary, some teachers believe that good teachers do not follow textbooks but create their own learning material. Ben-Peretz (1990) revealed that many interviewed teachers announce disdainfully that they do not follow textbooks. The researcher explained that teachers tend to cherish their professional autonomy specially their autonomy in choosing teaching materials. The researcher added that teachers who have this view believe that good teachers do not use textbooks but develop and create their own original materials. Based on data from a longitudinal study of teacher preparation conducted at a large Midwestern U.S. university, Ball and Feiman-Nemser (1988) described what elementary teacher education students were taught about textbooks, what they learned, and what they did with these lessons during student teaching. Although

the student teachers were enrolled in two different teacher education programs, all of them developed the impression that if they wanted to be good teachers, they should avoid following textbooks and avoid relying on Teachers' guides. These teachers believed that good teaching means creating your own lessons and materials instead. However, these ideas proved difficult to act on during student teaching when the student teachers worked in classrooms. This is because in these classrooms, textbooks formed the core of instruction. Moreover, these teachers confronted the fact that they were beginning teachers lacking knowledge, skill, and experience. As a result, these teachers kept referring to the material of the textbooks and showed high reliance on the teachers' guide.

To summarize, this chapter has introduced the previous studies around the following four themes. These themes can be summarized as: The role of the standardized textbooks in the classroom, the intensification of teachers' work, teachers' cooperation and social relations and teachers' reaction to the imposed textbooks. Generally speaking, multiple perspectives were noticed on the role of the textbooks in classrooms. This role is perceived to be negative on teachers and teaching by some researchers such as Ryan and Copper (2009) and Fullan (1983). Other researchers such as Cohen and Ball (1996) and Ball and Feiman- Nemser (1988) support overcoming the negative effects by training teachers to use the textbook efficiently. On the other hand, there are researchers such as Richards (2001) and Hutchinson and Torres (1994) who are more positive and appreciate the role of the textbooks in maintaining structure in classrooms. The studies also revealed that teachers are suffering from increasing work pressures and loads.

These pressures vary from having no time to relax to having to work at home to get done with the assigned works. Different economic, political and social reasons stand behind this intensification of teachers' work. Although social relations and cooperation among teachers is a building block in teachers' work and improvement, the increasing burdens of teachers negatively influence their social relationships. While some researcher such as Lee (2005) and Larson (2001) pointed that teachers appear to accept things imposed on them and cope with it, some researchers such as Ben-Peretz and Ball and Feiman-Nemser (1988) asserted that there are teachers who reject being controlled and resist the imposed textbooks.

The previous studies were different in their results in addition to their methodologies. For instance, Fullan (1983), Ball and Feiman-Nemser (1988) and Cohen and Ball (1996) have followed a qualitative methodology using instruments such as interviews and observations to tackle the research problem. On the other hand, Hutchinson and Torres (1994) followed a quantitative methodology using questionnaire survey in their research. Therefore, in the following chapter, I will present my own methodology.

## **Chapter Three: Research Methodology**

### **3.1. Introduction**

This research has investigated the issue of the centrality of the English textbooks in teaching English as a foreign language in the Palestinian public schools. It attempted to analyze how the English textbooks play a central role in the English classes and the effects of this centrality on the English teachers. The previous chapter has engaged with some of the literature related to the research problem and the adopted theoretical framework. It gave me an insight into the different research designs and procedures that researchers have followed. I have noticed that many of the researchers such as Ball and Feiman-Nemser (1988), Cohen and Ball (1996) and Ryan and Copper (2009) have followed qualitative research designs which enabled them to give complex descriptions of how teachers experience the current research problem. In consequence, my research followed a qualitative research design as well. This chapter gives a description of the context of the study, the data collection instruments and procedures, and ways followed for data analysis. It also tackles the issues of trustworthiness and the ethical considerations that I have followed while conducting the research.

### **3.2. Context and Participants**

This section describes the context and the participants in the current study. Firstly, it discusses teaching and learning English in Palestine. Secondly, it

introduces the English textbooks. Thirdly, it describes the Palestinian English teachers. Finally, it describes the English supervisors.

### **3.2.1. Teaching and Learning English in Palestine**

Teaching English as a foreign language in Palestine started during the British mandate over Palestine between 1917 and 1948. The mandate's educational administration imposed teaching English for the first time on Palestinian students in the lower primary grade levels, including students within the age category seven to twelve (Sabri, 1997). Since that time, the English language continued to be taught in the Palestinian schools.

Since 2004, English language has been taught as a compulsory subject at public schools, starting from the first grade. The Palestinian Ministry of Education considers English one of the main school subjects. While three class periods a week are devoted to teaching English to first, second, third, and fourth graders, four classes a week for the fifth, the sixth and seventh grades, students from the eighth to the twelfth grades have five English class periods a week (Hammad, 2014).

Palestinian teachers of English face many challenges in their work. Yamchi (2006) identified four different challenges that face the daily work of the Palestinian English teachers. These challenges are the constraints imposed on teachers by the textbooks, limited opportunities available for Palestinian students to practice the English language, the attitudes of the students towards learning the English language and the mixed abilities classrooms.

The researcher pointed that the first challenge that faces Palestinian English teachers is the institutional constraints resulted from the textbooks that the teachers are using. The new English for Palestine curriculum is still the only source of teaching material. The researcher interviewed teachers who declared that supervisors are very concerned that all the pages and all the exercises in the book are covered. The researcher explained that teachers, therefore, tend to fall back on traditional ways of treating the textbooks, namely, using them as sources of exercises and not materials to promote more communication in the classroom.

The second challenge that the Palestinian English language teachers face is the unified exam for Grade 12 students. All high school students have to pass a unified final exam called Tawjehi because its score will decide their choice of university and major. The researcher also added that this exam is prepared by the Ministry of Education. An examination of previous Tawjehi tests for English suggests that they mainly test students' knowledge of grammar, writing, and structure. Students are not tested on their aural/oral or critical thinking abilities. Teachers, therefore, face pressure from students, parents, and schools to emphasize curricular materials that are useful for the final exams, namely grammar, rather than communicative abilities. Furthermore, school principals encourage teachers to prepare students for the exam to improve the statistics of their schools.

The attitude of the students toward the English language constitutes a third challenge for teachers. The researcher added that there is limited opportunity for the Palestinian students to use English in real life, for example, through contact

with foreigners. Moreover, most of the students are not able to travel to English-speaking countries as their families cannot afford such expenses. As a result of the limited chances of using English in communication with others, Palestinian students perceive learning the English language as a difficulty for them.

The fourth factor is the mixed ability classes. The researcher pointed that there are different levels of performance of students in the English classrooms. With large number of students in classrooms and the responsibility of covering the whole textbooks, this makes it difficult for the English teachers to meet the different levels of their students. This, in turn, strengthens the gap of performance between students.

Moreover, Dajani (2009) discussed other difficulties that the Palestinian English teachers face in their daily work. The researcher pointed that there are few incentives for teachers to be motivated, energetic and creative in the classroom. This is because of the large class sizes, virtually no resources, unreliable Internet access and unreasonably low salaries. She also explained that the methods of teaching English that are followed in the Palestinian public schools has resulted in a local population which has generally poor communication skills in English. As a result of teacher dissatisfaction, with high school general exam (the Tawjehi) that has neither a listening nor a speaking component, the methodological teaching approach followed by the English teachers mainly focus on rote learning and repetition.

### 3.2.2. The English Textbooks “Curriculum”

After 1967 war and the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the existing curriculum was Jordanian in the West Bank and Egyptian in Gaza Strip. Before 2000, the *Hello* textbook series, designed by the Egyptian Ministry of Education, used to be taught at Gaza public schools, whereas the *Petra textbook series* designed by the Jordanian Ministry of Education was taught at West Bank public schools (Hammad, 2014). In 2000, the Palestinian Ministry of Education brought about a change in the all subject materials used at public schools including the materials used for teaching English. A team of local and international English language teaching experts in collaboration with Macmillan Publishing Limited, an international publishing company, has written and developed the new English textbooks. The new textbooks follow the Ministry of Education syllabus and are entitled *English for Palestine series* (Curriculum Center, 2014).

The form of the curriculum used in the Palestinian public schools is called “curriculum package” and is one of the most common curriculum which teachers encounter in their work. According to Ben-Peretz (1990) curriculum package consists of teachers’ guidebooks, students’ textbooks, audiovisual material and tests. The student text is accompanied by a comprehensive teachers’ guide. This guide lists teaching goals, the key ideas of each unit, and suggestions for teaching. Test forms, anticipated answers, and record- keeping charts are also part of the teachers’ edition. Supplementary materials are provided and consist of practice worksheets and cassette tapes. Ben-Peterz pointed that these fully developed

curriculum packages possess a structured character and show an inherent sequential hierarchy of topics and learning experiences.

Similar to this description, the components of the textbooks that are used from the 7<sup>th</sup> grade till the 12<sup>th</sup> grade are: Firstly, Pupils' book with workbook activities which presents the new language and provides classroom activities for practice and recycling. It also provides additional practice material for class and home use. Secondly, teachers' book that offers detailed, step by step lesson notes, as well as model tests for testing after revision units. Finally, Teachers' audio CD which presents all the listening activities, including prompts for speaking practice (Curriculum Center, 2014).

On the other hand, the inner structure of the pupils' textbook is very fixed. For example, the 10<sup>th</sup> grade textbook contains 12 units, which are divided to six units for the first semester and another six units for the second semester. Each unit is built around a specific theme. For example. Unit one is about Making Contact, unit two is entitled From Here to There, and unit three is about Free- Time Activities and so on. Each unit is then arranged in terms of periods "actual classroom periods". Since each unit has twelve periods, this means that each unit needs twelve actual periods to be covered. For example, period number one introduces the new vocabulary with a reading text. Period two offers exercises on the vocabulary and questions on the reading comprehension. Period three explicitly introduces a new grammatical point such as the present simple. Period four introduces another new list of vocabulary and a new reading text. Period five offers exercises on the vocabulary and questions on the reading comprehension

given in period four and so on. Figure 3.1 gives an idea of the structure of the tenth grade English textbooks.

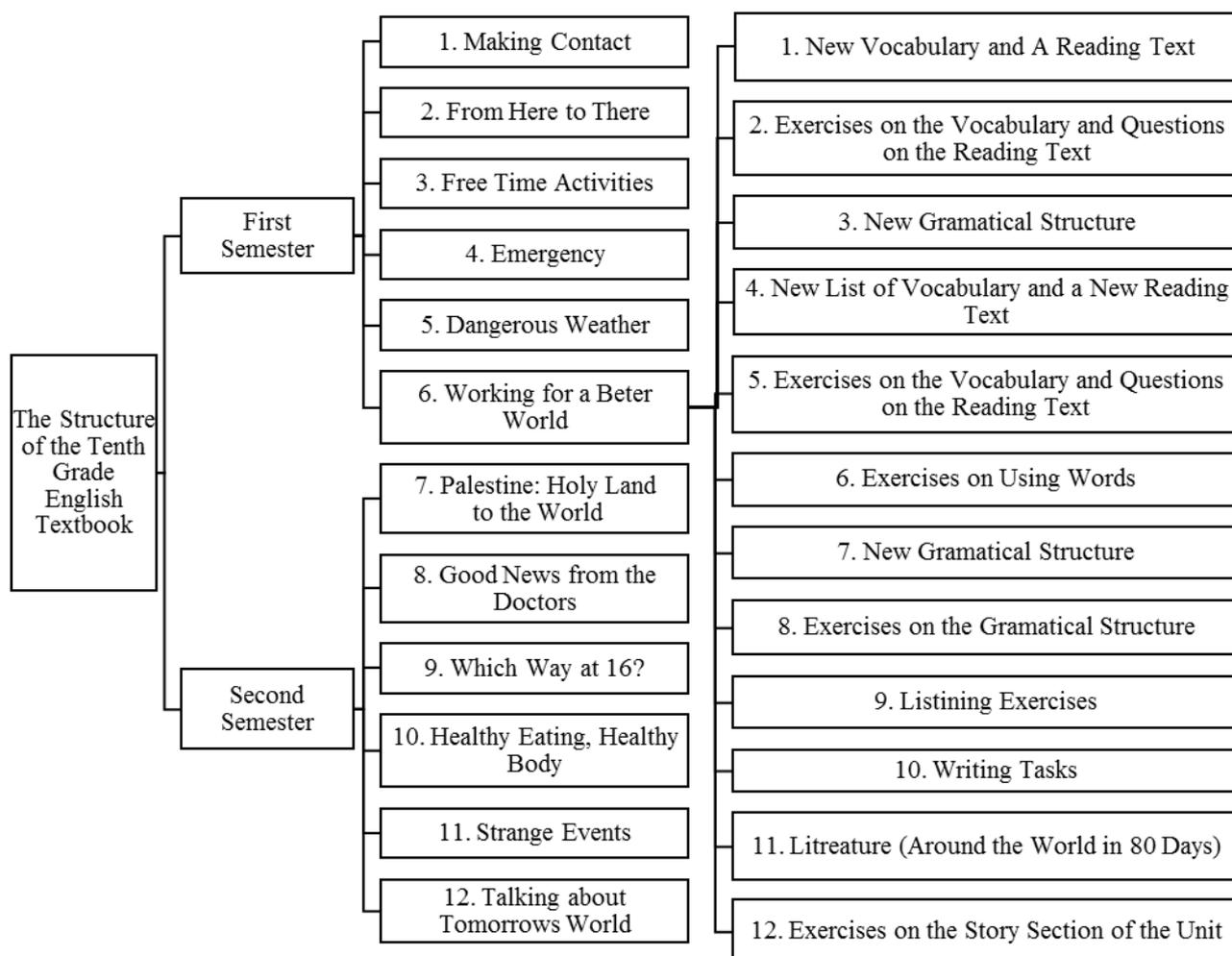


Figure 3.1 Structure of the Tenth Grade English Textbooks

In each period, there is from three to five exercises that ask the students to read or describe, to write or respond to questions. Many of them also ask the students to work in pairs. For example, period five has five exercises. The first exercise asks the students to replace the underlined words in a group of sentences with the new words that the students have just learned in the previous period. The second exercise asks the students to fill the blanks with the suitable words from

period four. The third exercise asks the students to read the passage again and say what the underlined words refer to or mean. In exercise four, students answer to detailed questions about the passage. The last exercise asks the students to think and discuss some general questions where students need to give their opinions.

### **3.2.3. English Teachers**

The Palestinian Ministry of Education requires that all teachers of English should have at least a bachelor degree in English literature or in Teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL). To enroll as an English teacher in one of the Palestinian government schools, an applicant needs to pass a pre-employment test with a particular score that the ministry of education determines every year. The English language pre-employment test is a formal test that measures both the applicant's pedagogical knowledge in addition to the applicants' language proficiency. After passing the written test, applicants make an oral interview with a committee from the ministry. Depending on the results of the exam, the interview, Tawjehi average, college average, and work experience, the English teachers are chosen to work in the public schools (Yamchi, 2006).

Concerning teachers' training, Qattan Centre for Educational Research and Development (QCERD) studied teacher-training programs on English language teaching methods that are offered by the Ministry of Education. The study found that these training programs focus on theory rather than feasible ideas for practical application in the classroom. The evaluation of teacher-training programs in Palestine finds that this focus on theory is not unique to English as a core

curriculum subject; indeed, the study concluded that many programs are overly theoretical and neglect the practical dimension of real school settings. The study found, moreover, that training focuses on the coverage of theories and facts more than developing critical and reflective practitioners (QCERD, 2001). On the other hand, Sabri (1997) called for improvements in Palestinian teacher training programs. He argued that skills and competencies related to the practical issues of classrooms are more important than other theoretical issues of education. Teacher-training programs in Palestine should, Sabri (1997) argued, place more emphasis on classroom applications and teaching techniques rather than concepts and theories of learning.

#### **3.2.4. English Supervisors**

There was only five English supervisors in Ramallah directorate at the time this study was conducted. There were four female supervisors and one male supervisor. The supervisors pointed that they try to visit each of the English teachers twice a year. Sometimes they make more than two visits if they notice that the teacher needs help. They supervise teachers in grades one to twelve. Four of them are holders of M.A. degree in teaching English as a foreign language, and one of them holds B.A. in English language and literature, with diploma in teaching and psychology. All of the supervisors have taught for a number of years in the public schools before they have become supervisors. Their teaching experiences range from 10– 19 years and their supervising experiences range from 1-8 years.

### **3.3. Sources of Data**

The first source of data was the 12 English periods that I have observed. Another important source was the 20 English teachers with whom I have conducted interviews. The five English supervisors in Ramallah directorate of education were also interviewed as a source of data.

### **3.4. Data Collection Instruments**

To answer to the first question of the research and that is "How do English textbooks play a central role in the English classrooms?" and to the second question of the research and that is "how does this centrality of the textbooks affect the skills of the English teachers?" I have followed two of the common qualitative data collection techniques. These instruments were classroom observations and standardized open-ended in-depth interviews. While the classroom observations and the interviews with the English supervisors helped me to answer to my first research questions, the interviews with the English teacher provided me with information to answer my second research problem.

#### **3.4.1. Classroom Observations**

Observation is a form of qualitative data collection that is fundamental to understanding the large picture or the context of the research. It is a way for the researcher to document everyday practices of the participants to better understand their experiences. It also helps the researcher to get feel for how things are organized and prioritized in a certain context (Silverman, 2001). An advantage of

this approach is that, the researcher can collect authentic data in their natural contexts. For ethical reasons, the research should request permission to collect and record data. Moreover, the researcher can obtain feedback from the participants in the research study (Johnson & Christensen, 2000).

The classroom observations that were conducted in this study can be described according to Baden and Major (2013) as structured and short term observations. The observations were structured because they were based on a predetermined observation protocol that was derived from Apple's theory that is adopted as a theoretical framework for this study. This means that I have used a template to record my observations which is derived from my own theoretical framework. The template appears in Appendix 1. Moreover, the observations lasted for two months from December 16, 2014 until February 27, 2015 which made it short-term observations.

I have observed twelve English classes from the seventh grade till the twelfth grades in five different secondary schools in Ramallah directorate. During the observations, I aimed to answer to the first research question "How do English textbooks play a central role in the Palestinian English teaching classrooms?" The indicators of this centrality are derived from Apple's theories (1982, 1986). These indicators were mentioned in Apple's own words when he wrote in (1986) that:

as a result, if on enters many classrooms one is struck by the power of the existing curriculum content and teaching. The empirical status of curricular is apparent from the characteristics of these classrooms. In these classes there is a lot of teacher talk and a lot of students listening. Students

are responding to teachers' questions or working on written assignments; that are almost invariably closed and factual questions. There is little corrective feedback. There is no guidance, and students and teachers work with many traditional activities most of them are all from the textbooks. (p. 56)

Thus, the issues that I have focused on during the observations were the documents that the teachers and students use, the timeframe of the English period, controlling and guiding interaction and assessment tools.

#### 1. The documents that the teacher and the students use

- a) What are the documents that teachers and students use in their interaction during the classroom?
- b) Do they use only the textbooks or is there other sources of information?
- c) Do teachers go beyond the themes suggested in the textbook? In what domains?  
Introducing ideas? Evaluating students?

#### 2. The timeframe of the English period

- a) How much time of the period do the teachers spend referring to the textbook during the period?
- b) How much time of the period do the students work only with the activities of the textbook?
- c) How much time of the period do the teacher and the students spend working on activities extra to the assigned activities of the textbooks?
- d) How much time do the teachers talk while the students are only listening?

### 3. Controlling and guiding interaction

- a) Who/ what controls the interaction between the teacher and the students? Is it the teacher? Is it the students and their needs? Is it the workbook exercises?
- b) Are the objectives of the period or the lesson clear for the students?
- c) How does the teacher move from one objective to another? Or from a task to the following task?
- d) Is there a common structure for the English classes? Does it go along with the structure suggested by the textbooks or the teachers' book?

### 4. Assessment tools

- a) What types of assessment tools do teacher use in the English classroom?
- b) Do they only adhere to the assessment activities determined in the textbook?
- c) Does the teacher assign any assignments, projects, worksheets? Are they from the textbook or extra-curricular material?

#### **3.4.2. Standardized open-ended in-depth interviews**

Interviews are common techniques of qualitative research. Interviews have different kinds and can be conducted in different ways. In this research, I have used what Patton (2002) refers to as the “standardized open-ended in-depth interview”. Using this type of interview, I have conducted individual interviews with the English teachers and the English supervisors. I asked the interviewees structured, focused, and pre-prepared number of interview questions, but at the same time allowed for a certain level of flexibility where participants had the

chance to respond openly and to express freely their own thinking and ideas. This level of flexibility was observed with the general framework of the specified interview questions and topics. The concept of “in-depth” means to allow deep reflection on participants' long experience, so as to arrive at each and every detail that might contribute to the research findings.

Furthermore, all the interviewees were asked the same basic interview questions and almost in the same order. Order of questions is regarded as actual strength in the standardized open-ended interview, because when each participant answers the same questions and in the same order, the possibility to compare data and analyze results is widely enriched and increased. In order to decrease the effect of the major weakness in this instrument, which is the tendency to limit the interviewee's natural responses due to inflexible order of the questions, a certain degree of flexibility were given for participants to respond freely, but were asked to keep the discussion around the basic interview questions. I also used follow-up questions for clarification and to capture the unfolding of the teachers' perspectives (Rossman and Rallis, 1998). The interviews were conducted with two groups. There were interviews with the English teachers and interviews with the English supervisors. The duration of each individual interview lasted from 13 to 20 minutes with the English teachers. The English supervisors' interviews needed time from 17-25 minutes.

### 1. Interviews with the English teachers

I have interviewed 20 of the English teachers who teach in 8 different secondary schools in Ramallah directorate. Table 3.1 shows the distribution of the sample according to gender, teaching experience and level of education.

Table 3.1: English Teachers Sample Properties

Total Number	Males	Females	Teaching Experiences			Holders of Bachelor Degree (BA)	Holders of Master Degree (MA)
			Less than 5 years	Between 5-10 years	More than 10 years		
20	10	10	5	7	8	13	7

The interviews with teachers aimed to collect data for the second research questions. The questions of the interviews are derived from Apple's theory (1982) in which he explains the symptoms of the centrality of the textbooks and its impact on the work of classroom teachers. Apple mentioned in his theory that this centrality leads to deskilling of the teachers, intensification of their works, decline in their social relations and cooperation, and negative attitudes towards teaching. Moreover, many previous studies such as Ryan and Copper (2009) and Fullan (1983) has also talked about these effects. Thus, the themes around which the interview questions with the English teachers revolved around were:

a) Teachers' role in planning for their lesson:

Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

- How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

- How do you write your daily lesson plans?
- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?
- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?
- How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

b) The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?
- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

c) The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?
- How do you usually spend your free time?

d) Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

- What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?
- What do you think about the standardized final exams?
- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?
- Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

## 2. Interviews with the English supervisors

To know the pressures that they may exercise on the English teachers to follow the English textbooks, I have decided to arrange interviews with all the English supervisors in Ramallah directorate. There were only 5 English

supervisors in Ramallah directorate at the time of this study. I wrote a group of questions that aimed to reveal how these supervisors expect the relationship between the English teachers and the textbooks they are following. The questions that were asked were the following:

- a) At the beginning of the semester, how do you expect the English teachers to prepare for their lessons?
- b) During the semester, how do you evaluate the progress of the English teachers and their performance?
- c) What are the indicators that you depend on by the end of the semester to evaluate the work of the English teachers?
- d) How do you think an English teacher may fail to fulfill her/his expected role?
- e) What do you think the purpose of final achievement tests?
- f) Do you think English teachers are expected to know the grade-specific objectives? Are these objectives important in their teaching?
- g) Do you think that the English textbooks can be covered within the time limits of the semester?

### **3.5. Data Collection Procedures**

Following the official approval of the research proposal by the Faculty of Education at Birzeit University, a formal letter to that effect issued by the faculty. I presented this letter to the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Ramallah directorate of education. The letter introduced mainly the researcher, the research purpose, and asked to provide her with assistance to meet with the listed

individuals and schools. Ramallah directorate replied positively and sent with me approval letters to the administration of the schools to allow me to conduct the interviews and the observations if possible. This formal process of research approval was necessary in order to gain access to the site of the study and conduct the interviews with the different research participants. Without this formality, research participants would have been reluctant to participate and share their views and perceptions.

Taking into account the ethical considerations of academic research, I explicitly informed the participants about the nature and the purpose of the study, and they were fully informed about the procedures, timing and instruments of the research. They were also informed about their rights, such as, their right to freely participate or withdraw. Before conducting the interviews, interviewed teachers and supervisors were thanked for giving this research some of their time, they were pre-informed that their opinions and beliefs are highly appreciated whether this research agreed or disagreed with them.

Another important step that was achieved before the actual field work was the implementation of a pilot testing for both instruments the interviews and the classroom observations. This was done with an English teacher who teaches in a local secondary school in Ramallah directorate. After conducting the pilot testing for the interview, changes were introduced to the interview questions as I decided to add two other questions. Moreover, after observing a class as a pilot testing, I have decided to write a template for the observations because I felt distracted while observing and could not focus on specific points and indicators. After I

wrote the template introduced in Appendix 1, I observed another class and introduced some modifications to the observation template. I think that implementing a pilot testing was a vital step in the process of conducting a study. Turner (2010) pointed that the pilot test will assist the researcher in determining if there are flaws, limitations, or other weaknesses within the interview design and will allow him or her to make necessary revisions prior to the implementation of the study. A pilot test should be conducted with participants that have similar interests as those that will participate in the implemented study. The pilot test will also assist the researchers with the refinement of research questions.

Field work and data collection lasted for about two months. The first meeting interview was conducted on December 16, 2014 and the last meeting was conducted on February 27, 2015. Arranging interviews with the English teachers was relatively easier than the supervisors because supervisors are visiting different schools all the time. Meeting the teachers occurred mainly in their free classes or in the recess while supervisors were interviewed in a scheduled time in their offices.

Most of the interviews were recorded using a recorder application in my mobile phone. Only three teachers and one of supervisors refused to have a recording and so the interviews were written in details using their words. Another supervisor did not prefer to conduct an interview and preferred to send the answers on the interview questions by email the next day.

## **3.6. Data Analysis**

### **3.6.1. Analysis of the classroom observations**

Drawing on Apple's theory (1982, 1986), I have used a recording template to record what I observed in the English classes. In addition to the template, I wrote some notes of the things that happened during the classrooms and were not classified in the template. The periods observed were then transcribed one at a time using the expressions that the English teachers used and the events that happened in their classes. The transcription of the classroom observations can be found in Appendix 2. After transcribing the observations, I then organized the data into categories that the theoretical framework, the recording template, the events and behaviors of the observed English teachers helped me to establish. Then, according to Baden and Major (2013), I named indicators in the passages and coded them (open coding) with the numbers of teachers who referred to each category in their practices.

For example, two of the English teachers I observed assigned homework for their students which were from the textbook exercises. The two teachers who gave a homework for their students from the textbook activities were coded under the category of "using the textbook material for assessment". I continued comparing the codes and passages to those already coded to find consistencies and differences. I also examined consistencies and patterns between codes to write clear categories. I continued the process until the categories saturated and no new codes related to it are identified. Establishing the codes and categories enabled me

to organize large amounts of data around specific themes. Examples of these themes are the sources that the teacher and students use, controlling and guiding interaction and the timeframe of the English periods. Finally, I reviewed these themes and produced the report (Baden & Major, 2013).

### **3.6.2. Analysis of the interviews with the English teachers and supervisors**

The interviews with the English teachers and supervisors were all recorded and then fully transcribed using the words of the interviewees. (See appendix 3). Depending on Apple's theory, I have explored through the interviews the effects that Apple has mentioned concerning the centrality of the English textbooks. After posing questions on each of these effects, data analysis then consisted of examining each interview to determine how many teachers complained of each effect. Thus, the data was coded into meaningful categories depending on the answers of the interviewees and Apple's frame work.

For example, in analyzing question number five in teachers' interviews "do you design your own classroom activities?" the answers of the teachers to this questions fell into two categories only. These categories are teachers who design their own classroom activities and teachers who depend only on the textbooks activities. Indicators that I depend on while writing the categories were also determined (more with this issue is in the results chapter). Table 3.2 gives an example of how question five was analyzed.

Table 3.2: Analysis of Question 5

The category name	Number of teachers	Indicators.
Teachers design their own activities	11	We have to use other activities. Yes, I design my own material. Yes, I do for comprehension and grammar. I develop my material for grammar. I like to design my own activities generally in grammar lessons. I design activities mostly for grammar. According to the grammar lesson, I write my own examples and explanation.
Teachers who depend only on the textbook activities.	8	I do not like to design my own activities. I think the textbook activities are okay and enough. I do not like to design my own material. I think it is necessary not to change.

Moreover, in my analysis, I tried to notice any effects or reasons of using textbooks that the interviewees mentioned and that Apple's theory did not take account for. For example, the interviewed teachers talked about the limited job opportunities in Palestine as a reason to accept their work pressure. This reason was not mentioned in Apple's theory when he explained the reasons of teachers' acceptance of their work pressures. However, I took this reason into consideration because I did not want to lose any important categories or data.

In a way similar to working with the observations, I compared the codes and passages to those already coded to find consistencies and differences. I also examined consistencies and patterns between codes to write clear categories. I tried to write concise categories so that no new codes related to it are identified. These codes and categories enabled me to organize large amounts of data around specific themes. Examples on these themes are the planning of the teachers, teaching resources and the usefulness of the textbook activities. Finally, I reviewed these themes and produced the report (Baden & Major, 2013).

### **3.7. Trustworthiness of the research**

Being a teacher who teaches English in one of the public schools in Ramallah directorate enabled me to enjoy the status of an insider in the contexts of the English teachers. I have gained an apparent acceptance from the teachers as a result of being a colleague for them. There was a unique atmosphere of comfort and openness while conducting the interviews and through classroom observations. English teachers appeared to be free, relaxed, opened and stress-free while giving their observed classes or giving their opinions. I have established a positive friendly relationship with these teachers to the limit that they used to discuss some shared teaching concerns with me during the classes or after the class. This relationship and positive perception that the participants shared with me as a researcher has helped in gaining trustful data and information. This is because qualitative data collection methods such as interviews and classroom observations are based on a personal interaction, who the researcher is and how the informants receive the researcher are likely to influence the kind of information received in a qualitative way (Brenner, 2006).

Another way that has improved the quality of the data and that supported its interpretation is using the strategy of triangulation. I have studied both the English teachers and the English supervisors in relation to the research problem. Moreover, the classroom observations that were conducted provided a bigger picture of the context of the research problem. Thus, the goal was to increase the validity of the findings by collecting data from multiple perspectives. It also added complexity and depth to the data and analysis. In this way, social

phenomena are approached as multi- sided narratives, each narrator's account is worthy of analysis in its own right (Marvasti, 2003).

### **3.8. Ethical considerations**

In general, I have followed Birzeit University regulations for academic research (Birzeit University, 2015). A formal permission letter was obtained from the Ministry of Education before visiting any school. My primary concern was the safety of the observed and the interviewed teachers and supervisors. I have obtained consent from each participant of the English teachers and supervisors. I explicitly informed the participants about the nature and the purpose of the study, and they were fully informed about the procedures, timing and instruments of the research. They were also informed about their rights, such as, their right to freely participate or withdraw. Before conducting the interviews, interviewed teachers and supervisors were thanked for giving this research some of their time, they were pre-informed that their opinions and beliefs are highly appreciated whether this research agreed or disagreed with them. The interviewees had the right to withdraw at any time. The privacy and confidentiality concerns were approached by protecting information from any unauthorized observation, and also by notifying the teachers of any unforeseen findings.

## **Chapter Four: Results**

In this research, I have investigated how the English textbooks used by the English teachers in Public schools play a central role in the English classes. I also tried to investigate the effects of this centrality on English teachers; their roles in planning for their classes, their social relations, their work pressure and their concerns about the textbooks. I have followed two qualitative data collecting instruments. The first instrument was classroom observations. I have observed 12 classes in Ramallah directorate. The second instrument was conducting semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conducted with both English teachers and English supervisors in Ramallah directorate.

This chapter consists of two sections. The first section is devoted to answer the first research question and that is “How do the English textbooks play a central role in the Palestinian public classrooms?” The second section tried to answer the second research question and that is “How do the pressures to follow the textbooks affect the English teachers?” The data collected by the classroom observations and the interviews with the English supervisors helped me to answer to the first research question. On the other hand, the data collected by the interviews with the English teachers helped to answer to the second research question.

#### **4.1. “How do the English textbooks play a central role in the Palestinian public classrooms?”**

##### **4.1.1. Manifestations of the centrality of the English textbooks from classroom observations**

I have observed 12 English classes from the 7<sup>th</sup> grade till the 12th grades in five different schools in Ramallah directorate. I have attempted mainly to answer to the first question and so to observe the central role of the textbooks in the Palestinian English teaching classrooms. I will report the results of this question according to the following manifestations: The sources that the English teachers use, controlling and guiding interaction, the timeframe of the English classes and the assessment tools used by the English teachers. These manifestations were mentioned in Apple’s theory (1982).

##### **a. The sources that the teacher use**

The English textbooks were the main source of the classroom activities that the English teachers used during the English classes. Moreover, none of the teachers used any teaching aids that were beyond the textbook itself. Throughout the 12 periods that I have observed, I noticed that the English textbooks were the only source of information that was used. Teachers depended totally on it as a source of the activities that they did with their students. For example, one of the classes I attended was for the 7<sup>th</sup> grade and the lesson was a reading text. Before reading the text of the textbook, the teacher worked with the students on the textbook exercises that are designed for pre-reading. Then, while reading, the

teacher asked short questions that the students can find their answers in the text itself. After reading the text, the teacher and the students worked on the textbook exercises that are designed for post- reading. Thus, the teacher did not introduce or use any activity or exercise beyond the textbook itself. This pattern was also clear in teaching listening, speaking and writing skills. They all took the form of doing the textbook exercises or more clearly doing the activities in this page of the textbook that tackles listening or speaking. Two of the teachers only used worksheets in these 12 periods as a support for the textbook activities. One of these worksheets was giving more examples on the grammatical rule that is discussed in the textbook. The second was a group of questions that asked about detail information that the students are expected to find from the comprehension text. Thus, these two worksheets were mainly given to enhance the understating of the students of the textbook material.

Moreover, the only teaching aids that were used in these 12 periods were the CD and pictures which were also from the textbook itself. Two of the teachers used the CD that is accompanied with the textbook as source for the students to listen to the new vocabulary and to listen to the conversations of the textbook. Two other teachers used the pictures of the textbook itself as visual aids. For example, one of these teachers wanted to explain the new vocabulary introduced in the lesson, one of these words was “hard hat”. The teacher asked the students to turn to page 63 to see the picture of a hard hat. This entails that that no one of the English teachers used any teaching aids that are beyond the textbook itself.

However, the only interference that teacher made as a source of information was in teaching grammatical structures. The situation was slightly different when it comes to explaining grammar lessons. No one of the teachers who explained grammar in their periods depended only on the textbook activities. These teachers tried to explain things using their own examples, or examples from other books to enhance the understating of the students of these grammatical structures such as the passive voice and the reported speech. After explaining the examples, teachers wrote rules and asked the students to copy these rules on their notebooks and to memorize them to be able to answer to questions on these grammatical structures. For example, in one of the 10th grade English classes, the teacher was explaining the passive voice. The teacher wrote the passive form of the sentence on the board. She explained how the sentence is turned from active into passive. She wrote “object + verb to be + verb 3 (Past Participle) + by+ subject.” Moreover, this teacher and many other English teachers stressed the need for knowing these rules by heart as a key to succeed in English exams. She said to her students “as I told you, you have to memorize the form to be able to answer the questions.” Thus, the goal behind this teachers’ interference with their examples was to provide the students with rules of grammar that help their students to memorize the structure.

To summarize, English textbook was the main source of the information and the activities that the English teachers used in their classes. It was also the source for the teaching aids that are used to help the students to understand the textbook material. Teachers left the textbooks only when they introduced a

grammatical structure. They referred to other references and to their own examples and sentences. They tried to provide the students with better explanation and clear rules for grammar to be memorized.

#### **b. Controlling and guiding interaction**

Finishing the whole page was the main objective that the English teachers set for their classes. Thus, I noticed that the observed English periods were organized and structured around the textbook activities; the sequence followed was always moving from one activity to the other rather than from one learning objective to the next. In the 12 periods I watched, none of the English teachers explicitly wrote or orally mentioned clear learning objectives. Instead of this, the English teachers used to point at the activities or exercises of the textbook they expected to finish during the classes. Thus, many of these teachers started their new lessons with asking “did we do this exercise the last class?” or “ have we finished page 10” and then the teachers used to start with the exercises they stopped at in the last class or with the new page they reached “ lets’ start with exercise number 1.” Or “now, open your work book on page 62.” Beginning with new exercise or page marked the start of a new period. Another example of using the textbook activities as an objective is what the following teacher did and said at the end of the class. The teacher started doing the last exercise in the page but the bell rang. The teacher said that even though the bell rang, they will continue this exercise to finish that page. The teacher finished the last exercise and then went out of the class saying that today they were supposed to finish the next page as

well. This was a clear example of how the English teachers set objectives to finish the whole page or the textbook activities instead of setting learning objectives.

Another example on setting the objective of covering only the exercises of the textbook pages is that two of the English teachers delayed explaining important points saying that the textbook mentions them in the other next pages. One of the 9th grade English teachers was doing the textbook exercises on a reading text. One of the words that the students needed to find from the text was “rebuild”. The teacher wrote this word on the board and said that they were going to take the use and meaning of the prefix “re” after 10 minutes when they reach the next page. However, when he moved to the next page, the bell rang before doing that exercise. The second teacher was a 12th grade teacher. While discussing the first paragraph, the teacher asked the students about the synonyms and the opposites of some words and one of them is normal. He pointed that they will take the opposite of this word and that is “strange” on page 76. Even though the contexts were suitable to introduce the two points, the two teachers decided to delay discussing them until they reach the page in which they are introduced to the students.

Moreover, the titles that the English teachers used for their classes was another clear indicator of using the textbook activities as targets for them. There were only three ways of writing the titles of the periods I have watched. In all the classes that did not tackle grammar lessons, the title was the number of the unit with either the number of the period or with the number textbook pages. For example, the teachers used the following titles “P. 62”, “Unit 7: period 3”, “Unit 7

SB (Student's Book) - 10&11" and "Unit 11, period 1". Three of the teachers also used the title of the units instead of its number such as "technologies", "Stress" and "First year students at the university". However, in the grammar lessons, the teachers used to write their own titles and that represent the grammatical structure that was going to be discussed. These teachers used titles such as "passive voice" and "conditional sentences." In general, these titles were all taken from the text book itself and they did not present any content or material that was discussed in these periods except for the titles of the grammar lessons.

Thus, the main determinant of the sequence that the English teachers followed in these classes was moving from one activity or from one page to the next rather than moving from one objective to the other. This sequence was clear by the expressions that the teachers used to mark the beginning of a new activity or exercise such as "now, move to the workbook page 45", "now, who can read the first sentence and answer it?", "the next exercise", and "let's move to exercise 5" and so on. They also moved from one page to the next without making any introduction or setting new objectives even though some pages tackled new topics. A clear example of this was the teacher who was giving a class for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. At the beginning of the class, she asked the students to open their textbook on page 13, exercise number 3. She did with the students a question about a grammatical structure and that was about comparative and superlative forms. Then she told the students that she was going to complete the listening on page 13. After she finished all the exercises of page 13, she told the students that they were going to move to the last period of the unit and that was about writing.

To sum up, I have noticed that finishing the textbook exercises and covering the pages was a clear objective that the English teachers set for their classes. They expressed this objective explicitly by using the number of the textbook pages as a title and by moving from one activity to the other until the end of the periods. The main structure that was apparent in these classes is moving from one activity to the next and sometimes from one page to the next without giving clear learning objectives of what is covered.

### **c. The timeframe of the English period**

It is clear from the discussion above that the English teachers spent most of the time of their classes referring to the textbook and its activities. The students worked most of the time with only the textbook activities in all the lessons except in grammar lessons where the timeframe of the English periods was slightly different. English teachers used to start their classes by asking their students to open their textbook. Thus, the English textbooks were kept open in all the time of the English periods. This was the situation in all the English classes except in the grammar classes. In these classes, teachers did not pay attention to the textbooks at the time of explanation and they also ordered their students to close their textbooks and to pay attention only to their teachers. One of the teachers shouted at the students while she was explaining and said “close your textbook tenth graders and pay attention to me!” Another teacher kept the 10<sup>th</sup> grade textbook closed all of the time in which she was explaining about the reported speech and she only asked the students to open it at the last seven minutes of the class to start

working on its activities. Thus, only in grammatical lessons, the light was shift from the textbooks to the English teachers.

There were times when the teachers appeared to be not well-planned or prepared for their lessons. This situation happened to three of the English teachers I observed their classes. Two of them were explaining new grammatical structures and the third teacher was discussing the reading text. After the two teachers did all of the textbook activities about the grammatical structure, the students complained that they have not understand the structure yet. The two teachers did not know what to do and appeared confused and behaved randomly without any previous planning. The two of them kept repeating the textbook exercises over and over again trying to help the students to understand the answers without any participation from the students. The third teacher was explaining the reading text and he did not know how to answer one of the textbook questions that are designed for post- reading. He kept looking at the textbook searching for the answer while appearing to be embarrassed. In these times, the three teachers appeared not well -prepared for the textbook activities or any additional activities beyond the textbook.

In most of the English classes, the discussion between the teachers and the students took the form of teachers asking or explaining the textbook activities and exercises and the students giving answers. Most of the answers that the students provided were also from the textbook texts and exercises. Moreover, many of these answers refer to certain lines in the reading texts. For example, in one of the classes for the 12<sup>th</sup> grade, the teacher was using a worksheet to discuss the reading

text in the textbook. In all of the questions of the worksheets, the students had only to provide the line where the answer is mentioned in the text. Therefore, in most of the English classes, the students listened to the teachers a lot and they only provided short answers that they easily found from the textbook itself.

As a result, the largest portion of the time of the English classes was devoted for doing the textbook activities. As I observed the periods, I noticed that the teachers were always busy with explaining and doing the textbook activities and exercises. Only in grammar lessons do teachers put the textbook aside for a while and tried to go beyond the explanation offered by the textbooks. Teachers talked in most of the time of the classes trying to explain the textbook material to the students while the students kept silent most of the time unless they are offering answers to the teachers' questions or the questions of the textbooks.

#### **d. Assessment tools**

Concerning assessment, the teachers used mainly three ways of assessing their students. They used their own questions and sentences, the textbook exercises and tests and exams. All of these assessment ways were only assessing the students' attainment of the textbook material. At the beginning of the English classes, the teachers used to make a quick revision of the material the students took the previous period. When teachers used their own questions about the textbook material, the students usually got the answers from the textbooks that were open in front of them. After asking few oral questions and listening to the students' answers, the teachers then used to ask their students to open their

textbooks on a new page or to the page that they worked on the last class to complete the rest of the exercises. In other words, the teachers used their own questions to assess the students about the textbook material that is covered. During the period, the teachers depended mainly on the textbook activities as an assessment for their students. For example, after the 9<sup>th</sup> grade teacher has explained the conditional clauses, he asked the students to open their textbook and to start doing the first exercise. However, only two of the students were able to answer some of the questions. Noticing that only two of the students can answer the questions, the teacher repeated the answers several times and tried to explain more to help the students understand them.

English teachers used also the textbook exercises as homework to assess their students. Two of the English teachers I observed assigned homework for their students and these two homework were from the textbook exercises. One of the teachers was the 9<sup>th</sup> grade teacher that I have just mentioned in the previous paragraph. He asked the students to write the answers of the questions they gave orally in the class as a homework. The second assignment was given by the 11<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. After the teacher has spent two periods explaining the details of the reading text, he asked the students to do the textbook exercise that requires them to summarize the whole text in their notebooks.

English teachers also used tests and exams to assess their students. Two of the English teachers gave short quizzes at the beginning of their classes. One of the quizzes was for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and was about the comparative and superlative forms. The second quiz was for the 10<sup>th</sup> grade and was about the reported speech.

Thus, these two exams were about the grammatical structures that the students took in the previous classes. Moreover, the English teachers gave great focus on helping the students to memorize the material for the final directorate or ministry exams especially the 12<sup>th</sup> grade teachers. The 12<sup>th</sup> grade teachers kept referring to the final exams several times during the lessons. They also justified their focus on specific points of the material saying that this material is usually asked about in the final exams. Moreover, one of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade teachers skipped some exercises that ask the students about their own opinions saying that this kind of open-ended questions are not usually used in the final exams written by the ministry. She also reminded the students that they need to memorize the spelling of certain words because the raters of the Tawjehi exams usually detect points for the misspelling of these words.

In consequence, the students kept asking the teachers about the exercises they need to memorize for their exams. Another teacher who was giving a reading text for the 11<sup>th</sup> grade students focused on helping the students to memorize all of the details of the reading text saying that it would be easier for them to answer to the exam questions on the reading texts. Another student in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade asked his teacher if he could write the answers in the exams using his own words but the teacher answered him that it is better to use the language of the textbook itself. Thus, the English teachers gave a special attention to the material that the students will be examined on and tried to help the students to memorize the material as well.

To sum up, the English teachers used their own questions, the textbook exercises and the tests to assess the learning of their students of the textbook material that is covered during the English classes. Teachers' questions tackled only the material of the textbook and these questions usually required the students to provide short answers from the textbooks. English teachers also gave great importance to the directorate and the ministry exams. They tried to help their students memorize the textbook material that the students are usually tested on. This emphasis on exams was mainly apparent in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade English classes. In these classes, teachers kept referring to the exams and to having to memorize the textbook material to pass the exam.

In conclusion, the goal behind making the classroom observation was to look for the indicators that highlight the central role of the English textbooks in these classes. The English textbooks played a central role as a source of all the information, the teaching aids and the classroom activities in the English classroom I observed. This was the case in teaching all the topics of English language except in grammar lessons where teachers used their own ways of explanation. Thus, the English teachers did not set clear learning objectives but instead they aimed to cover the pages of the textbook and the exercises of the textbook. Moreover, most of the time of the English classes was spent on doing the textbook activities and explaining its material. The English teachers talked a lot while the students were always listening. They only provided short answers from the textbook material. As a way of assessing the students, many teachers used the textbook activities as assessment whether in the classroom or as

assignments at home. One of the priorities of many of the English teachers was to effectively cover the textbook material that the students will be tested on whether in the directorate exams or the exams of the ministry.

#### **4.1.2. Manifestations of the centrality of the English textbooks from interviews with the English supervisors**

As an attempt of studying the pressures that the English teachers may encounter to follow the textbooks and that may help the textbook to play a central role in the English teaching classrooms, I have interviewed all of the English supervisors in Ramallah directorate. There were only five English supervisors who work in Ramallah directorate at the time of this study. They were four female supervisors and only one male supervisor. All of the supervisors were asked the same seven questions that tried to investigate the supervisors' expectations about the relationship between the English teachers and the English textbooks they are following. The centrality of the English textbooks were apparent in the following areas: supervisors' expectations on how English teachers prepare for their lessons, supervisors' assessment of the English teachers' progress and performance, supervisors' evaluation of the work of the English teachers at the end of the semester, supervisors' expectations on how English teachers fulfill or fail her/his expected role, the purpose of final achievement tests, English teachers' knowledge of the grade-specific objectives and their importance in their teaching, and covering the English textbooks.

**a. Supervisors' expectations on how English teachers prepare for their lessons**

English supervisors expected the English teachers to prepare for the semester by getting knowledge of the textbooks they are teaching, setting goals from the textbook and the lessons and putting a plan on how to carry out the textbook activities. The five English supervisors expected the English teachers at the beginning of the semester to know the material of the textbook they are teaching. This knowledge is gained by making content analysis for the lessons of the textbooks and through scanning the texts. One of them said “teachers should scan the text, and analyze the content.” Two of the supervisors also expected the teachers to write semester plans in which the teachers distribute the material of the textbooks time available. In other words, to show how the teacher will carry out the content within the available time. One of the supervisors said

to look at the material itself, to know the number of the days without the holidays, then to start writing their plans. Then to divide the number of contents according to the number of days. This can give them a first look how to carry out all the content within the available days.

Three of the supervisors mentioned that the English teachers should set goals and they explained that these goals are taken from the textbook and the lessons in the textbooks. One of the supervisors said “The outcome should achieve the goal they prepared for the students. The aim is set according to the

lessons of the textbooks and the content itself.” Table 4.1 summarizes the supervisors’ answers on this question.

Table 4.1: Answers of the supervisors on question (a)

The category name	Number of supervisors	Indicators
Teachers know the textbook material	5	To analyze the content. Prepare their lessons and textbook. To look at the material itself. To prepare for each lesson. Teachers scan the text, the material. Have a good idea of the material. Content analysis.
Teachers set goals from the textbooks	3	The aim is set according to the textbook. The goals are connected directly to the content.
Teachers write plans on how to carry out the textbook activities	2	Look how to carry out the content within the time. He should have syllabus distribution, how many units per week.

Thus, none of the supervisors mentioned any expectations for the English teachers to prepare any material beyond the textbook. The kind of preparation that the supervisors expected is that the English teachers know the material of the textbook they are teaching and from this material to set goals for the semester. In other words to plan how to carry out the material within the time.

#### **b. Supervisors’ assessment of the English teachers’ progress and performance**

The five English supervisors concentrated mainly on two indicators to assess the progress of the English teachers. Three of them mentioned the students’ achievement and interaction and three of them pointed to students’ knowledge of

the textbook material. Students' achievement and interaction with their teachers is one of the indicators that the supervisors mentioned about the progress of the English teachers. Three of the supervisors talked about the importance of the students' achievement as an indicator on the of the teachers' performance. This achievement can be observed either during the period and their interaction with their teacher or through tests and quizzes. One of the supervisors said "we also check their marks." Another important indicator of the teacher progress is that students' knowledge of the textbook material that is covered. Thus, one of the supervisors said "we stand up and assess the students by asking those questions about the previous material or giving them worksheets." Another supervisor added "I look at the students' achievement and ask them about the previous material." In consequence, both students' achievement and knowledge of the previous material are important indicators that the supervisors focus on to assess the performance of the English teachers. Table 4.2 shows a summary of the supervisors' answers on this question.

Table 4.2: Answers of the supervisors on question (b)

<b>The category name</b>	<b>Number of supervisors</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
Using students' achievement and interaction as an indicator	3	We check their marks. I look at students' interaction with the teachers. I look at the students' achievement. I mainly use class observation, interaction patterns.
Using students' knowledge of the textbook material as an indicator	3	Students should know the vocabulary they have studied. Asking questions about the previous material. She can assess the students from the textbook itself.

**c. Supervisors' evaluation of the work of the English teachers at the end of the semester.**

The supervisors focused on three indicators on the work of the teachers at the end of the semester. These indicators were covering all of the textbook material, covering the main points of the textbook and students' achievement. Two out of the five supervisors pointed that the teachers must have covered all of the material by the end of the semester as an indicator on the hard work of the teachers. The two supervisors declared their expectations of covering the material. One of them then said "the teachers should have covered the material." And another supervisor added

I cannot allow each teacher to pick and choose, so one of the teachers will say that he can finish only four units and another teacher will say that he will be able to cover six units. It is important to cover each unit because each unit has something important and that each teacher should be able to cover all the units.

Thus, there is an obligation on the teachers to cover the material of the textbook by the end of the semester. However, one of the supervisors did not expect the teachers to cover each point of the textbook but the main concepts of the textbooks. One of them said "I do not focus on covering the textbook as long as the teachers have covered the main concepts of the textbook." On the other hand, the other two supervisors said that they look at the students' achievement as a way to evaluate the teachers at the end of the semester. One of the teachers said

“depending on routine things, like looking at percentages and results of exams.”

Table 4.3 summarizes the collected answers on this question.

Table 4.3: Answers of the supervisors on question (c)

The category name	Number of supervisors	Indicators
Teachers have covered all of the textbook material.	2	Teachers ask questions about a certain material this means she has taught it. She has skipped or did not teach it. The teacher should have covered the material.
Teachers have covered the main points of the textbook	1	I do not focus on covering the textbook as long as the teachers have covered the main concepts.
Students' achievement	2	Learners' achievement in national exams. Looking at percentages and results of exams

**d. Supervisors' expectations on how English teachers fulfill or fail her/his expected role**

The Supervisors mentioned two different points that show the success of the English teachers. They expected the English teachers to develop themselves and to effectively cover the textbook material to the students. Three of the supervisors expressed that they expect the successful teachers to update themselves and use different strategies and to reflect on their practices. One of them said “if he is well planned, well prepared, and update himself with new learning strategies.” On the other hand, two of the supervisors expected the teachers to cover the textbook material to the students as an indicator of their successful roles. One of the teacher said “The same, depending on the results of the students and the students' response on general questions or specific questions about their material.” Table 4.4 summarizes the supervisors' answers on this question.

Table 4.4: Answers of the supervisors on question (d)

The category name	Number of supervisors	Indicators
Teachers develop and upgrade themselves	3	He uses different strategies, different materials. A habit of self-reflection, improving his performance. Update himself with new strategies.
Teachers cover the textbook material to their students	2	The teacher asks about all of the material in the exams. Students' response on specific questions about the material.

#### e. The purpose of final achievement tests

The majority of the English supervisors declared that one of the main purposes of the final achievement exams is to force teachers to cover all the material of the textbooks. Four out of the five English supervisors declared that the main aim behind the final directorate exams is to make sure that the teachers cover all of the textbook material while only one supervisor did not mention that purpose. The four English supervisors said that one of the main goals of these exams is to make sure that the teacher did not skip any material of the textbook lessons. These supervisors think that if the teachers are given the choice, they will not cover the material at all because they keep complaining of the length of the textbooks. Thus, having exams at the end of the year that test the students on all of the material will force the teacher to cover it to get high results in the exams. One of the supervisors said:

Obviously, one of the goals is to check whether the teacher has finished the material of the textbooks, sometimes you want to ask about basic things and you want to see if the teachers spent time during the class

giving this idea or explaining the material.” Another teacher added “teachers know they should cover the material because the exam covers all the material.

Moreover, the supervisors said that the reason of the low achievement of the students is that the teachers skip many important parts of the textbook material. One of the supervisors said “Some teachers do not give their students speaking at all or listening. So in our exams, we focus on the four skills. And that’s why students get low scores in these exams. We blame teachers for their low- achievement.” Only one of the supervisors did not mention this aim for the directorate exams and said that the main goal is to train teachers on how to write good exams and to give statistics to the ministry about the syllabus “the ministry uses statistics either to introduce modifications to the syllabus or to provide training programs for teachers.”

Thus, most of the English supervisors believe that teachers should be forced to finish the whole material of the textbook by imposing the standardized or the directorate exams on them. Table 4.5 summarizes the supervisors’ answers on this question.

Table 4.5: Answers of the supervisors on question (e)

The category name	Number of supervisors	Indicators
Forcing teachers to cover the textbook material	4	The curriculum is too long and it is difficult to finish, I do not support them. They should cover the material because the exam cover all of the material. We want to make sure that the teachers have covered such skills. To check whether the teacher has finished the material of the textbooks.
Other reasons	1	To measure how well the students can use the four skills to use statistics to introduce modifications on the syllabus or train teachers.

**f. English teachers' knowledge of the grade-specific objectives and their importance in their teaching**

All of the five supervisors pointed that it is important for the English teachers to know the grade –specific objectives. However, three of them said the teachers know these objectives and two of them pointed that the teachers lack knowledge of these objectives. All of the supervisors explained that the grade-specific objectives are very important in teaching English. They said that the teachers must know them because they are the cornerstone of English teaching. Moreover, they said that they are important to facilitate the learning of the students and to be able to deal with the textbooks. One of the supervisors said “the teachers should know these objectives clearly and that they should be given the freedom to choose the content to achieve these goals.” Three of the supervisors think that the English teachers know these grade- specific objectives. They pointed that the teachers know them either by the supervisors, the training programs or from the textbook and the lessons. One of the supervisors said “yes I

think they know, I think 90% or more of the teachers know that. The textbook will help you know the objectives.” Table 4.6 summarizes the supervisors’ answers on this question.

Table 4.6: Answers of the supervisors on question (f)

The category name	Number of supervisors	Indicators
Teachers should know the objectives	5	Teachers must know the objectives. If they want to facilitate things for the students. They are the cornerstone of the English teaching.
English teachers actually know the objectives	3	Teachers must follow them. I think yes they know, I think 90% of the teachers know them. Teachers are trained on them
English teachers lack knowledge of the objectives	2	Teachers lack knowledge of these objectives. Actually all of the teachers do not know these objectives.

On the other hand, the two other supervisors did not point that the teachers know these objectives. Both of them said that this lack of knowledge of the objectives made the teachers unable to deal with the curriculum. “The ministry is the responsible one, I think the objectives of the ministry are not clear. They give you a curriculum, and the way we teach it does not support the general goals or the standards.” Another teacher added

I think teachers lack knowledge of these objectives. They only know the content and that they have to cover the pages of the textbooks. However, there are some teachers who know the standards that are expected for their students. And when we tell them, they go back to the material and to covering the material, and they do not know that the content is only an aid

for teaching. When we talk to the ministry and we tell them that the teachers should know so and so, they tell us that you are spoon-feeding your teachers.

**g. Covering the English textbooks**

While three of the English supervisors pointed that the English textbooks cannot be covered within the time available, two of the supervisors asserted that if the teachers are well-planned they will cover the entire the textbook. Three of the supervisors said that the material of the textbook is too long to be covered within the time of the semester. They pointed that teachers need more periods to cover the material and that the ministry should reduce the number of the units required from the teachers. One of them said “no, I do not think that it can be covered. They need more periods. There are repeated subjects. The ministry should extend more periods or reduce some of the points. Teachers have no time to go beyond the textbook.” On the other hand, two of the supervisors said that the teachers need to know how to manage their time and to know what are the important material that the students will be tested on to be able to cover the whole material of the textbooks. One of the teachers said “good teachers should determine what the students are going to be asked about at the exams and to teach it. Most teachers have this experience and that is not to waste time. Sometimes, I attend classes and I notice that teachers waste time on things not important.” Thus, this supervisor thinks that teachers need to focus on the material the students will be tested on and not to go to

other not related material that wastes the time. Thus, to cover the textbook, teachers should stick only to material of the textbook and not to use any other not related material. Table 4.7 summarizes the supervisors' answers on this question.

Table 4.7: Answers of the supervisors on question (g)

<b>The category name</b>	<b>Number of supervisors</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
Teachers cannot cover the textbook during the semester	3	No, I do not think that the textbook can be covered. No, I do not think it can be covered. Covering the textbook is not a priority. Teachers need to decide what to cover.
Teacher can cover the textbook during the semester	2	I think if the teachers are well planned they can cover it. Yes, if we divide out texts into objectives.

In short, the interviews with the English supervisors aimed to explore the expectations of the English supervisors about English teachers' relation with the textbooks. The English supervisors expected the English teachers to plan in a way that will result in carrying out all of the textbook material within the available time. They also expected the English teachers to effectively cover content of the textbook to the students so they use the students' knowledge of the material as an indicator of the progress and success of the English teacher. At the same time, the English supervisors expected the English teachers to know the general objectives of the textbooks and to use them in their teaching though some of them asserted that teachers lack knowledge of these objectives. Finally, although most of the English supervisors said that it is difficult to cover all of the textbook material within the time of the semester, they expected the teacher to be able to cover all of the textbook material to prepare the students for the final achievement exams.

#### **4.2. “How do the pressures to follow the textbooks affect the English teachers?”**

The second section of this chapter answered to the second research questions. I have conducted 20 interviews with English teachers from eight different secondary schools in Ramallah directorate. The interviews with the English teachers aimed mainly to answer to the second research question and that was about the effects of the centrality of the textbooks on the English teachers; their planning to the lessons, their work pressures, their social relations and their concerns about the textbooks. In the following few pages, I describe the answers of the 20 teachers to the different interview questions. The results of the interviews questions will be discussed following the same sequence in which they were asked during the interviews.

##### **4.2.1. Teachers' role in planning for their lessons**

The first section or the first four questions of the interview tried to investigate how English teachers plan for their lessons in relation to the textbook. This planning included the goals, the process, the teaching material, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

##### **a. Writing yearly plans**

Three different ways appeared on how the English teachers deal with the textbooks when planning for the whole semester or year. There were teachers who write the plans depending on the textbooks as their main reference, others who do not write plans but use the textbook “content page” as their semester plans, and

some teachers who do not follow the sequence of the textbook. Table 4.8 shows the answers of the teachers on this question.

Table 4.8: Answers of the teachers on question 1

The Category Name	Number of Teachers	Indicators.
Teachers who do not write plans but use the textbook plans	2	Just use the first page of the book were all the contents written. I use the content page of the textbook and add to it the dates only”.
Teachers who write plans depending on the textbook	18	Title of the units, the time schedule of the textbook , the content of the textbook, go over the material, according to the lessons and the dates of the ministry, content of the textbook, teachers’ book , template that is put by the ministry , I follow the textbook itself, depending on the curriculum and to the time to each unit, I divide them according to the units, goals are written in the teachers’ book, I fill it yearly from the students’ book. I write my yearly plans from the teachers’ book, based on the number of the units and the time.
Teachers who do not follow the sequence of the textbook.	5	The teacher makes the book not the book makes the teacher. I do not follow the sequence of the textbook all the time, I do not follow the textbook as the Holy Quran. I just change the order of the lessons of the units.

Most of the teachers in the interviews pointed out that the English textbooks are the source and their main reference for writing the semester or the yearly plans. Eighteen of the English teachers said that they look at the units of the textbook “the material” and at the time schedules that are assigned by the ministry of education to distribute the units they have to finish during the semester over the available time. One of the teachers explained “I arrange my yearly plan or schedule according to dates stated by the ministry of education, I choose my goals according to the lessons and according to their needs and things we are obliged to follow by the ministry of education and other authorities.” In

consequence, fifteen of the teachers indicated that they abide themselves by the sequence of the textbooks. One of the teachers explained “I always abide myself to the sequence of the textbook because I think it is very well-examined in a way that help the students. The textbook is well-planned. The people who designed the textbook, the supervisors, are well trained, so I think it is very good to follow the sequence of the textbook.” All of the English teachers who teach the 12<sup>th</sup> grade also asserted that they follow the same sequence of the textbooks without making any change. One of the teachers declared “To be honest, in teaching Tawjehi in particular, I have to follow the sequence of the textbook but in other grades I did not stick to the regular sequence of the textbook because I sometimes consider students’ needs.” Another teacher added “I think we have to follow the sequence of the textbook because I teach the 12<sup>th</sup> grade even the 11<sup>th</sup> grade we cannot change because of the directorate or the final exams.”

The second category is about the teachers who do not write plans but use the content page of the textbook as their semester plan. Two of the teachers said that they do not write plans but use the “page of contents” which is at the beginning of each book as a plan by adding only dates to it. One of the teachers said “it is okay for the supervisors to just use the first page of the book, I mean the content page as a yearly plan.” Another teacher added “I use the content page of the textbook and add to it the dates only.

There was a third category of teachers who announced that they do not follow the sequence of the textbook when writing the semester or yearly plans. Only five out of the twenty teachers declared that they do not conform to the

sequence of the textbooks. However, I have noticed from their words that this change of sequence was a slight change between the lessons rather than the units themselves. Moreover, the lessons that are usually changed are the grammar lessons. One of the teachers said “I do not change the units of the textbook, I just change the order of the lessons of the units.” Another teacher said “I do not follow the textbook as the Holy Quran, there are some lessons that are repeated in other units so I see that it is better for the students to take them together like the passive voice. It is explained in unit 1 and they explain it again in unit 12, by that time the students would have forgotten everything, so I give it to them all in unit 1.” Thus, it is clear that teachers who do not conform to the sequence of the textbook make slight changes within the lessons of the units especially in grammar lessons.

#### **b. Planning for daily lessons**

Teachers’ answers were varied. Some of the teachers pointed that they plan for their lessons by only reading through the textbook or the teachers’ book. Other teachers do not prepare because they know the material of the textbook and some write the daily preparation every two or three days. Table 4.9 summarizes the teachers’ answers for this question.

The majority of the English teachers prepare for their daily lesson plans by reading through the textbook or the teachers’ book. Seventeen of the teachers said that they prepare by looking at the lessons in the textbook, reading the lesson or sometimes reading the steps mentioned in the teachers’ book on how to give the lesson. One of the teachers’ said “I try to take a look at the points I must cover in

my period, and I try to specify a period for each point I must teach.” Another teacher also said “I prepare lesson by lessons according to the goals, I get the goals from the textbooks and the teachers’ book.” Another teacher added “at first, I look at the text. In each lesson, we have more than one activity, I look at all of the activities and I depend on the activities. I do not skip any activity.”

Table 4.9: Answers of the teachers on question 2

The category name	Number of teachers	Indicators
Reading the textbook lesson or the teachers’ book	17	Depending on the textbook. Depending on the lesson at its objectives, look at the points I must cover. Look at the lesson. From the textbook and the teachers’ book. Reading the lesson aims from teachers’ book. I read the content of the lesson and the steps. I read the material. Things are written on the teachers’ book. I look at the lesson activities. I do not skip any activity. Look at the unit. I take points from the textbook content analyses.
No preparation at all	3	I have been teaching for 18 years. I do not look at the textbook. I make preparation in mind. Because of the years of experience. I know all the material. I have 13 years of experience in teaching, so I can give a lesson without preparation.
Written preparation	4	I write notes, write the steps and the procedure. I prepare weekly (write). Daily plans are written every two or three days and sometimes late. I write plans each 3 or 4 days.

On the other hand, there are teachers who do not prepare at all. Three of the teachers pointed that they do not need to prepare at all for their daily lesson. They explained the reason behind this that they have long experience in teaching the textbooks and so now they know everything in them. Some of them do not need to open or to take a look at these textbooks. Thus, one of the teachers said “I depend on the pupils’ book and on my own knowledge, I have 13years of experience in teaching so I can give the lesson without any preparation. Today I

explained without looking at the textbook because I know all the information.” Another teacher added that “Frankly, I have been teaching for 18 years. I only look at the titles and know what I am going to tell the students about whether grammar, or vocabulary. Sometimes, I do not look at the textbook at all so I make preparation in mind.”

Concerning written preparation, there are teachers who plan for a group of periods. Four of the teachers indicated that they usually prepare for a group of periods or for 3 or 4 days or weekly “I prepare weekly because some lessons take more than one period, so in a week, we achieve only two lessons. So I write the lessons and the number of periods it needs.” One of the teachers said that he sometimes writes the preparation after he gives the period or the class “the daily plans are usually written every two or three days and sometimes late.”

### **c. Sources of the material teachers give to their students**

All of the teachers mentioned “the textbook” in their answers about the sources they depend on for the material. Most of them indicated that they “basically”, “mainly” or “usually” depend on the textbook and its activities for presenting the material. Some of the teachers indicated that they use other sources of information in addition to the textbook. Many of them also mentioned using teaching aids in addition to the textbook material to facilitate the understating of the textbook material. Table 4.10 shows the answers collected for this question.

The textbook is the main source for the majority of the English teachers. Nineteen of the teachers in the interview pointed that the textbooks are their main

source of information and their basic reference. These teachers used words such “mainly, basically, or usually” when they described the textbooks. For example, one of the teachers said “I usually use the textbook and its’ exercises.” In addition to the textbook as a main or basic source, some teachers mentioned referring to other sources especially for grammar lessons. Seven of the teachers said that they refer to other sources of information in addition to the textbook. One of the teachers said “Many sources, sometimes the internet, grammar references, work sheet, I mainly depend on the textbook.” Another teacher added “I get extra information from other books, web pages and the internet.”

Table 4.10: Answers of the teachers on question 3

The category name	Number of teachers	Indicators
The textbook as a basic and main source	19	I depend basically on the teachers’ book. I depend on the lesson in the textbook. Mainly the students’ book. I mainly depend on the textbook. I mainly use the textbook. Sometimes in addition to the textbook, I... I depend on the pupils’ book. Students’ book. I depend on the textbook. I usually use the textbook and its exercises. Basically the textbook. Textbook activities. Textbook.
Other sources of information (internet, other books)	7	Gather literature from different places. Sometimes the internet. Sometimes the internet and grammar references. Other books. Some references. I go back to the internet for unclear points. Extra information from other books, and Web pages. Internet.
Teaching aids	11	Flash cards, LCD. Computer lab, pictures and realis. Post cards. I depend on things they can visualize. I always use the LCD. Overhead projector. Videos. The CD. YouTube videos.

There were teachers who mentioned using teaching aids when they were asked about the sources that they use for their English classes. Eleven out of the twenty teachers explained that they use teaching aids such as the LCD, the overhead projector, the computer lab, flash cards, posters and worksheets. The

teachers pointed that they use these “materials” to help make things easier to the students or to help in delivering the ideas of the textbooks. One of the teacher said “Many sources, sometimes the internet, grammar references, work sheet, I mainly depend on the textbook.” Another teacher added “There are lots of resources, for example, I mainly use the textbook or the students’ book and the workbook, I use the LCD and the lab here in the computer lab, and sometimes you have to bring from outside other material such as coins and photos in order to show them real things and authentic things.”

#### **d. English teachers’ attitude towards the textbook activities and towards designing their own classroom activities**

When asking the first part of the question and that was about the usefulness of the textbook activities, most of the teachers think that the textbook activities are helpful. On the other hand, some of them said that the textbook activities are sometimes helpful. Only one teacher thinks that they are not good and not helpful at all.

Thus, fifteen out of twenty teachers I interviewed reported that they think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful. One of the teachers said “yes, I think they are enough. It is not necessary to change the activities but if they change, I follow the change.” Another teacher added “yes, they are. I do not like to design my own activities.” Four other teachers think that the textbooks are somehow good or sometimes enough but not always. Only one of the teachers pointed that the textbook activities are not rich and helpful, she said “no, most of

them especially the grammatical most of them focus on sentence level. So we have to use tasks to improve our students' proficiency. We do not have to strictly abide by the exercises of the lessons. We have to use other activities.” The teacher explained that she needs to make activities especially for grammar. Tables 4.11 summarizes these answers.

Table 4.11: Answers of the teachers on question 4(a)

The category name	Number of teachers	Indicators
Yes (textbook activities are rich and helpful)	15	Yes, I think they are enough. The contemporary or the current textbook are good and helpful. Yes, mainly. Yes, they are. I think they are quite enough for them. Yes the material is almost enough. Yes, the textbook activities are rich and enough.
No (textbook activities are not rich and helpful)	1	No, most of them specially the grammar.
Sometimes (textbook activities are sometimes helpful)	4	Somehow, sometimes, most of the times. 80% helpful during the classroom. Actually most of them, not all of them, so sometimes. Not always, not all of them. Yes, sometimes.

When asking the teachers whether they design their own classroom activities, eleven of the teachers pointed that they like to design their own activities. On the other hand, eight other teachers said that they do not like to design their own activities and that the textbook activities are enough. Table 4.5 (b) shows the answers of the teachers on this question. The area of language that most teachers pointed need more activities is grammar and some of them said grammar and comprehension. Thus, eight out of the eleven teachers who design their own activities pointed that they design activities for the grammar lessons. One of the teachers said “I design activities mostly for grammar because textbook

activities are usually complicated and higher than the students' level." Another teacher added "In grammar for example, I like to give examples and then the rule. The 10<sup>th</sup> grade textbook does not give the rule, but personally I like to give the grammatical rules to the students to help them recognize what is in their textbooks." Another teacher added "yes, and I give extra worksheets specially worksheets for vocabulary and grammar." It is clear that most of the extra worksheets and activities that the teachers design are on grammar. One of the teachers said that there are many of the textbook activities such as listening activities that are not authentic and not interesting. However, he pointed that he thinks he is not allowed to make any change "I think the texts in the Palestinian curriculum is not good. However, I do not think that the ministry will allow us to change, I like to do that but the rules and the instructions do not allow us to do that. We need also listening lessons that are more real and interesting to the students." This teachers believe he is not allowed to design his own activities. Tables 4.12 summarizes these answers.

Table 4.12: Answers of the teachers on question 4(b)

The category name	Number of teachers	Indicators
Yes, (teachers design their own activities)	<p>11</p> <p>Activities on grammar : 8</p> <p>Activities on other parts of the language: 3</p>	<p>We have to use other activities. Yes, I design my own material. Yes, I do for comprehension and grammar. I develop my material for grammar. I like to design my own activities generally in grammar lessons. I design activities mostly for grammar. According to the grammar lesson, I write my own examples and explanation.</p> <p>I sometimes write worksheets. I like to give the grammatical rules for the students because the textbook does not give rules. I design activities in every part of the language. I give extra worksheets especially for vocabulary and grammar</p>

The category name	Number of teachers	Indicators
No (teachers depend only on the textbook activities)	8	I do not like to design my own activities. I think the textbook activities are okay and enough. I do not like to design my own material. I think it is necessary not to change.

#### **e. Assessing the learning of their students before, during and after the classroom**

There are teachers who use the textbook activities as an assessment for their students and teachers who depend on other ways of assessing the students such as questions and tests. Eleven of the teachers use the textbook and its activities as an assessment for their students' learning while nine teachers pointed that they use other ways of assessment. Therefore, many of the teachers depend on the textbook activities to evaluate their students whether before the lesson, during or after the lesson. After the classroom, teachers give usually homework most of them from the activities of the textbook. They also give quizzes, midterm exams and final exams to assess their students. One of the teachers said "If they take a certain grammatical point in previous class, I give a sentence example to check if they got it, and through questions and worksheets. I also use the textbook activities for assessment." Another teacher added "According to their participation, according to their questions and their needs. Of course, I use the textbook activities as assessment tool, we have to use them, and they say we have to use them." Another teacher explained "I mainly depend on observation and oral answers. While I am teaching, I try to depend on what the textbook is giving to

them, sometimes the textbook is giving some predictions, to be sure that the students with me and are applying what I want, after the lesson, I usually do the activities of the textbook, short tests, and final exams.” Table 4.13 summarizes the teachers’ answers on this question.

Table 4.13: Answers of the teachers on question 5

The category name	Number of teachers	Indicators
Using the textbook activities as an assessment	11	The exercises of the lessons help to evaluate the students. I use the textbook activities for assessment. Textbook activities. Yes, of course, I use the textbook activities as assessment tools. I usually do the textbook activities. I use the activities of the textbook. Giving homework from the textbook activities. I use the textbook exercises
Other assessment ways	9	Asking my own questions, through oral and written questions. Through questions and worksheets. General questions. I use activities on the board. I mainly depend on observation and oral questions. Discussions and questions. I ask them questions. Tests, worksheets, and questions on the board. Ongoing exams. Facebook page. Quizzes and tests. Homework

Therefore, the first part of the interview has investigated the role of the English teachers in planning for their lessons in relation to the textbook. This planning included preparing yearly plans, the daily preparation, the teaching sources, using textbook activities and ways of assessment. In all the aspects of planning, the textbook was a main reference for the majority of the English teachers. Teachers depended mainly on the textbook to write the yearly plans. The daily preparation for the majority of them meant reading through the textbook or the teachers’ book. All of the teachers also depended on the textbook as a main or basic source of information. They also expressed satisfaction of the textbook exercises and activities and many of them pointed that they use them in assessing

their own students. Thus, the textbooks play an important or central role in the planning process for most of the teachers.

#### 4.2.2. The level of social relations between teachers

This group of questions tackled the level of interaction between the English teachers and other English colleagues. It asked about the available time for interaction and the topics they like to discuss with their colleagues.

##### a. Interaction with colleagues during the school time

The majority of the teachers said that they like to interact with colleagues and that they try find time for interaction. However, there is a number of teachers who said that they do not have time for any interaction. Fourteen out of the twenty teachers said that they do interact with colleagues and that they like to exchange experiences with them while six of the teachers complained that they do not have time to interact. Table 4.14 summarizes the teachers' answers on this question.

Table 4.14: Answers of the teachers on question 6

The category name	Number of teachers	Indicators
English teachers interact with their colleagues during the school time	14	Yes, of course but not too much because of the limited time. Yes, sure. Yes, of course. Yes, often. Yes, we are cooperative. Yes, of course we have time. I think there is cooperation. All the time.
No interaction with colleagues during the school time	6 (all of them are females)	No time for any kind of interaction. Actually, I do not have time to see my colleagues. I find it very difficult to find time to work with others. No, there is no time. No, I don't have time because I give extra periods for the 12 <sup>th</sup> grade. No, most of the time no.

A large number of the English teachers pointed that they like to interact with their colleagues. However, most of the female teachers who pointed that they like to interact with other colleagues and to work cooperatively complained at the same time that they do not usually have enough time to do that. One of the female teachers said “yes of course we do interact, but not too much because of the limited free me that is available.” Meanwhile, all of the male teachers said that they interact and that they have a lot of time to do that, one of them said “yes, of course we have time.”

On the other hand, some English teachers said that they do not have time for interaction and cooperation with other colleagues. Six of the twenty teachers complained that they do not have enough time at all to interact and exchange experiences with other colleagues during the school time. All of these teachers were females. One of the teachers said “since the principal imposed on me 25 periods per week for this year, there is no time for any kind of interaction.”

The clear contradiction in answers was between a male and a female teachers who both work as the head deputy in addition to teaching the 12<sup>th</sup> grade in two different secondary schools in Ramallah. While the male teacher pointed that he has a lot of free time to interact with other teachers because of being a head deputy, his counterpart teacher pointed that she does not have enough time for any kind of interaction and communication with other colleague teachers because of the responsibilities of being the head deputy. Thus, the male teacher said “Because I am the head deputy, I teach the 12<sup>th</sup> grade and so I have a lot of free time.” On the other hand, the female teacher said “Well, if I want to talk

about myself, actually I do not have time to see my colleagues and to sit with them, partly because of my teaching load and second issue since I am the deputy of the headmistress so I have a lot of things and a lot of administrative responsibilities.” General speaking, there was a difference between female and male teachers considering the time available for interaction with other colleagues at school.

**b. The topics that teachers usually or that they would like to discuss with their colleagues**

The teachers talked about different topics that they like to share with their colleagues and to discuss with them. The most repeated topic was the teaching methods. Other topics that some of the English teachers mentioned were the content of the textbooks, the quizzes and the exams, and free discussions. The topic that most of the English teachers liked to talk about was teaching methods and specifically about teaching grammar. Thirteen of the teachers said that they like to ask their colleagues about how to teach the different language areas and most of them or nine of these teachers liked to discuss only grammar and how to teach grammar. One of the teachers said “mainly language, sometimes we help other and we take worksheets from each other but mainly we talk about grammar.” Six of the teachers said that they like to discuss the exams and the quizzes with their colleagues while only three teachers say that they discuss the content of the textbook. Another teacher said “I would like to discuss the content of the textbook, whether the time is sufficient to cover the textbook or not and in

general the content of the textbooks.” Some teachers said that they like to chat with their colleagues and to discuss different general topic with them. Table 4.15 summarizes the teachers’ answers on this question.

Table 4.15: Answers of the teachers on question 7

The category name	Number of teachers	Indicators
Discussing the content of the textbook	3	Discuss the content of the textbook. The material. Goals of contents.
Teaching methods	13 (9) discussing how to teach grammar	Suitable devices, methods and techniques. Mainly language (grammar). Grammar and sometimes literature. How to teach a new grade. Weakness of the students. Problems in teaching. How to teach reading, problems. Sometimes, you ask about a certain grammar. We discuss methods of teaching. I need to ask them about grammar. How to overcome students’ weakness. How to improve students’ achievement.
Exams	6	The midterms and exams. Quizzes and tests.
Free discussion	3	I do not have anything in particular. We can talk about different things. Activities in the morning assembly

This section of the interviews with the English teachers has investigated the social relations between the English teachers. More than half of the English teachers like to interact and cooperate with other colleagues despite the limited time available for them. Female teachers complained of having no time for interaction. The major topic of discussion between the English teachers was about the teaching methods especially teaching grammar. Discussing the content of the textbook or the material was a marginal topic that only one of the teachers mentioned.

### **4.2.3. The intensification of the teachers' work**

These two questions explore the free time available for the English teachers and the way the English teachers spend this free time.

#### **a. Teachers' free time during the teaching day**

The majority of the English teachers complained of having very limited free time while only few teachers said that they are satisfied with the free time they have. Sixteen out of the twenty teachers have only one to two periods that are free during the day while four teachers said that they have more than three free periods daily. Thus, Most of the teachers indicated that they have big loads of 25 to 23 periods weekly. One of the teachers said “One period only. I usually have 5 periods every day and only one free period. I only see my colleagues in the morning before classes or sometimes during the recess.” Only four of the teachers have more than three free periods a day and these teachers give about 21 periods every week. One of these teachers said “it is good, but it is very easy to waste them. This is the only year in which I have only 21 classes per week. But I waste them on written task I think I waste all of time on them though they are useless.”

Table 4.16 summarizes the answers on this question.

Table 4.16: Answers of the teachers on question 8

The category name	Number of teachers	Indicators
Teachers have free time from 1-2 periods	16	I usually have one period. One period only. I usually have 25 periods. Sometimes one class and sometimes two classes. Just one period or two periods. Almost one or two periods. Two periods every day. One or two periods daily. I usually one or two. Two periods only. One period and on Thursday two periods. 40 minutes or one period.
Teachers have free times more than 3 periods	4	I have only 21 classes per week. I have a lot of free time. I have much free time. 70-120 min.

### b. The way teachers spend their free time

Teachers explained that they spend their free time on either doing written works for the school, looking at the textbook for preparation or socializing with people. The majority of the teachers spend their free time on written works that are useless to them. Thirteen of the teachers said that they spend their free time on written works which include correcting papers, writing on the preparation notebooks, writing quizzes and exams, checking students' attendance, and writing plans and analysis. Meanwhile, all of these teachers indicated that they are not convinced with the benefits of these works but they feel that they are obliged to waste time on them. One of the teachers complained "Writing for the ministry, analysis, and nonsense things. I think this time should be used to design activities or writing worksheets. I do not benefit at all from that written work. It is just writing papers and these papers will be thrown in the rubbish basket. The only thing we benefit from are the worksheets but the other written works are with no use neither to the teacher nor to the students." At the same time, many of the

English teachers said that they need to work at home too because they cannot finish all of the things they have to do during the school time. One of the teachers said “I spend the free periods correcting papers, writing exams, writing in the preparation book, checking the attendance of the students, recording the marks, and it is not enough. Actually, if I do not work at home, I will not finish anything. I work for two or three hours at home as well. Sometimes, if it is the midterms or the final exams period, I work for three or four hours.” Thus, teachers said that they need to work hard at school and at home to try to finish the written works that are required from them. Table 4.17 shows the summary of the teachers answers.

Table 4.17: Answers of the teachers on question 9

<b>The category name</b>	<b>Number of teachers</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
Teachers spend their free time on written works	13	Correcting papers, Writing preparation, Correct notebooks, Writing quizzes, Writing marks, Writing worksheets, Writing....
Socializing with other colleagues	4	Socializing with people. Chatting. Using the phone. Discussing topics with colleagues.
Looking at the textbook for preparation	3	I look at the textbook. Going through the textbook. Reading for the lessons.

Few of the teachers said that they spend their free time interacting with the people around or preparing from the textbook. Only four of the teachers said that they socialize with people in their free time during the school time. Three of the teachers said that they look at the textbook during the free time to prepare for their classes “I usually go through the textbook.”

In consequence, the majority of the English teachers complained of having very limited free time. They also complained that they have to spend this free time doing exhausting written works that are useless to them. Because of the huge amounts of these written words, English teachers said that they need to work for hours at home to get done with these works. Few number of the English teachers said that they use their free time to prepare or even read through the textbooks.

#### **4.2.4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook**

This section of the teachers' interview tackled the main worries and concerns English teachers may have about the textbooks. These concerns included pressures of covering the textbook, pressures of getting ready for the standardized exams by covering all of the material, and pressures of the supervisors. The last question asked the teachers if they think of changing their careers as a result of these pressures.

##### **a. The main concerns that English teachers have about the English textbook**

The majority of the English teachers have concerns about covering all of the textbook material. While eighteen of the teachers expressed that they are concerned and usually worried about finishing the textbooks, only three teachers asserted that they are not concerned with covering the textbook. All of the seventeen teachers think that they are forced and obliged to cover the textbooks. They attributed this to many reasons. Most of them think that they have to finish the textbooks to prepare their students for the final directorate exams or for the for the ministry exams for some grades. These exams usually test the students on all

the lessons of the textbooks. Thus, one of the teachers said “I am usually concerned with the coverage of the textbook because we have directorate exams by the end of each semester and the whole book is expected to be covered. I have this problem with all the grades. I teach from 8<sup>th</sup> grade to 12<sup>th</sup> grade and I think all teachers suffer from this problem. If we do not teach the whole textbook, the students may fail in the exams.” Another reason that many of the teachers mentioned is the pressures on them by the supervisors. They explained that supervisors like and want them to finish the whole book “yes, I always finish the textbook because there are important grammar points and I am obliged to cover it by the supervisors.” One of the reasons that some of the teachers mentioned is that they feel more satisfied and comfortable when they cover the whole book. They pointed to some inner feelings that they could not sometimes explain. Thus, one of the teachers said “if I talk about the unconscious of myself, I feel unconsciously that I have to complete all the texts.” Another teacher explained “it is very important to finish it. I think it is psychologically very important to me to finish the book.” As a result, directorate final exams, English supervisors, and inner satisfaction are the pressures that force the English teachers to be concerned about covering the textbook material. Table 4.18 summarizes the teachers’ answers on this question.

On the other hand, some of the teachers expressed that they are often in a conflict between either focusing on students’ understanding and using the language or covering the textbook on the assigned schedule. In other words a conflict between focusing on quality or quantity in their teaching. They explained

that they attempt to help their students master all the important points and to give them enough time to practice the language but at the same time they know that they have to rush to finish the textbooks. One of the teachers said “better less but better. You have to focus on quality but they do not give us the chance to do so because they are making the directorate exams, you cannot decide what to give. So we are obliged by these tests. But my own feeling, I do not think we should cover the textbook.”

Table 4.18: Answers of the teachers on question 10

The category name	Number of teachers	Indicators
Teachers concerned about finishing the textbooks	18	The English textbook is very long for both teachers and students. Yes of course, because the students need to be ready for the final exams. We have too many lessons, this frustrates us. I am concerned with covering the material. You have to cover the material. I am concerned with covering the textbook. The only concern I have is how to cover the material in an appropriate way. The number of periods are not enough to cover the material. Yes, of course. Yes, and I do my best to cover it. Yes, I always try to cover it. I have to finish all the material.
Teachers are not concerned about finishing the textbook	2	No, I am not I care about quality not quantity. I am not concerned, I only covered 5 units out of 7 during the first semester. No, I usually cover the textbook

Two of these teachers appeared to have overcome this conflict by not giving attention to the number of units they finish but instead to the quality of their instructions. Thus, they said that they take the responsibility to ask their students to delete or to change the questions of the directorate exams that they have not reached by the end of the semester. One of the teachers said “no, I am not concerned. I only covered 5 units out of 7 during the first semester. I focus on

quality not quantity. I can finish 7 units but without focusing on the quality of students' learning." Another teacher said "no, I am not concerned. I care about quality and not quantity. I told them from the beginning that 12 units are too much. They should be less, if there is a material in the final exam that is not covered, I ask my students to delete its questions."

**b. The way English teachers think about the standardized final exams**

Most of the English teachers said that they disagree with these exams that they have to give to their students and that these exams work as a pressure on them to cover the material. Thirteen of the teachers complained about the final directorate exams and expressed that they disagree with these exams. Most of these teachers or eleven out of these thirteen explained that these exams work as pressures on them to finish the textbooks. One of the teachers said "they can cause pressures on us because we have to finish the textbook to prepare the students for them and for most of the grades it is very difficult to cover the textbook." Other teachers said that these exams have many problems and that they do not accurately evaluate their students, a teacher said "they have many mistakes, they are not perfect and sometimes they are not suitable for our students' level. Moreover, these exams are a force on teachers to cover the textbook and they sometimes concentrate on minor things or not important details and they leave the main topics." Another teacher complained about these exams because he thinks that they have changed the role of the teacher from teaching to preparing students' for exams. Using his words, he said "I do not think we are teaching, we are only

preparing students for exams.” Table 4.19 summarizes the teachers’ answers on this question.

Table 4.19: Answers of the teachers on question 11

The category name	Number of teachers	Indicators
Teachers do not agree with the standardized exams	13 (11) Think that they only a pressure on teachers to finish the material	They cause pressure on us. They do not evaluate our students efficiently. The worst part is that they require you to finish the book. They have many mistakes. They force teachers to cover the material. We need to finish the material. It is a pressure. The main aim is to force teachers to finish the textbook. I think they made our roles to prepare students for exams only. They focus on covering the material. They are non-reliable and force teachers to cover the material. I do not think students should have exams at all.
Teachers support standardized exams	7 (5) Support them because they think teachers should be forced to do things.	They are good. I try to cover every point of the textbook. Now they have the responsibility of finishing the book and I think his is good. They are good. I think all these exams are good. I agree with them. They are good. I do agree with them. I do not have a problem with them.

On the other hand, there were teachers who supported these exams. Seven teachers pointed that these exams are good and that they support such exams. Many of them or five out of the seven teachers believe that these exams are good because they force many teachers to cover the textbooks and that people sometimes need a forcing power to do things. One of them explained “I do agree with them. They tackle all the material from unit 1 to the last unit. This encourages the teachers to complete all the units. Sometimes, you need to force people to do something, otherwise this will be useless.” Another reason for supporting these exams is that they help the students to practice and to get ready

for the Tawjehi exams in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. One of the teachers said “I think all these exams are good. I do agree with them, this is because some teachers do not write perfect exams, here over there, many teachers write all the questions and they must cover all the textbook and this is the first point. The next point is that 11<sup>th</sup> grade student should get prepared and ready on how to take such exams and how they are evaluated. This will make the 12<sup>th</sup> grade exams easier for them because they have got used to these exams.” Thus, although most of the teachers do not agree with these exams and think that they work as a pressure on them, some teachers support these exams for forcing teachers to finish the textbooks and for giving the students’ opportunity to be trained on the Tawjehi exams.

### **c. English supervisors’ pressures on the teachers**

While half of the teachers think that the English supervisors are a source of pressure on them, eight other teachers think that they are not a pressure at all. Only two of the teachers said that the English supervisors are sometimes a pressure depending on their personalities. Table 4.20 summarizes the teachers answers on this question.

Half of the English teachers said that the English supervises pressurize them. The ten teachers gave different reasons that make the supervisors a source of pressure on them. Six of them said that the supervisors exhaust them by requiring written works. One of the teachers said “They focus on written work like worksheets and content analysis and preparation. I think these works are just big punishment on us.” Teachers complained that these written works are useless

and that they waste the time of the teachers. A second reason that the English teachers mentioned is that the supervisors are a pressure on them to finish the textbook. Four of the teachers said the supervisors keep asking them about covering the textbook. One of the teachers said “they blame you that you did not cover the material even if you could not because of external circumstances such as moving to the new school after a month!. Three other teachers said that the supervisors focus and stress only negative points. One of the teachers said “they focus on negative points and ignore the positive points.” Thus, the English teachers indicated that requiring a lot of written works, and forcing teachers to cover the material are two main reasons that cause pressures on them by the English supervisors.

Table 4.20: Answers of the teachers on question 12

The category name	Number of teachers	Indicators
Supervisors are a pressure on the English teachers.	7 (Requiring written works)	They also require a lot of written work. They ask for plans, preparation. They focus on written works like worksheets. They ask a lot about written works. They focus on written works. They focus on written works that are useless.
	3 (Focus on negative points)	Ignore positive points. Focus on students who participate. Interfere in everything.
	4 (Asking about covering the material)	Tell us we have to over the material. They blame you for covering the material. Yes, of course, because they ask where you did reach.
Supervisors are not a pressure on the English teachers.	8	No, we can't say this, No, I do not think so. They are good. They are great. I have a friendly relationship with them. No, not all of them. No she does not. Supervisors are gentle.
Supervisors are sometimes a pressure.	2	Sometimes. Not all of them.

Meanwhile, Some English teachers think that the supervisors are not causing them any pressure. Eight of the teachers indicated that the supervisors are

not a pressure on them. They said that they do what they require them to do, get ready for everything and so they have a friendly relationship with them. One of the teachers said “according to me No, I am good with all of them. I have a friendly relationship with them. They focus on written things and on everything but I like to prepare everything for them. I like to get everything required from me ready all the time.” Only two of the teachers pointed that the supervisors are sometimes stressful for them depending on their personalities. One of the teachers said “it depends on their personalities, on the person himself, some people like to do this, depends on their character. Some supervisors we feel that you get help from them but others just stress you.”

#### **d. Changing their career as teachers**

Many of the English teachers think of changing their career. Fourteen of the teachers think of changing their career as English teachers while only six of them said that they do not think of changing their works. Teachers who want to change their career gave different reasons for this. One of these reasons is that they are exhausted and overwhelmed by the increasing written works they have to do. One of the teachers said “yes, I thought a lot and I tried to find any other job. This is because teaching is a heavy burden over my shoulders and that they require everything from us, and the things that we have to do are increasing every year.” Another reason is the routines of the work. Some teachers said that they got bored repeating themselves every year and that they do not feel that they are developing or upgrading themselves and their knowledge. One of the teachers said

“this is because I sometimes feel that we are repeating ourselves each day and each year, you are not doing anything new. I feel sometimes that I am not upgrading myself and that I am still in the same stage nothing new.” Other reasons that the teachers mentioned are the pressures of the system, the rule of the ministry, the psychological and physical pressures, the bad salary and the boredom they suffer from. Table 4.21 summarizes the teachers’ answers on this question.

Table 4.21: Answers of the teachers on question 13

The category name	Number of teachers	Indicators
Teachers want to change their career	14	Blaming teachers, exhausted, it is tough. The system cause pressures. There are routines. The salary is bad. Not well-paid. No development. Written works. Physical pressures. Tiring. I am disappointed. I am not developing. Ministry rules. Burdens. Increasing things to do. Psychological pressures. No relaxation. Bored.
Teachers do not want to change their career	6	No alternatives. Like dealing with kids. Having a family and responsibilities it is not easy to change work.

On the other hand, teachers who do not think of changing their career gave some reasons. One of these reasons is that there is no alternative job and that job opportunities are limited. One of the teachers said “I do not have any other alternative.” Having responsibilities towards their families is another reason that makes it difficult to change their careers “I stopped thinking of changing my career because I have a family now.” And the last reason is to get used to pressures and to be able to handle it. One of the teachers said “no, even though teaching is difficult and tough, and I suffer from a lot of pressures, I feel satisfied and I do my best.” Thus, these six teachers stopped thinking of changing their career as English teachers.

In consequence, teachers have many concerns and worries about the textbook. The main concern they have is having to cover all the material of the textbook. This concern resulted from the pressures exercised by both the directorate exams that test the students on all material and the English supervisors who check if the teachers have covered the textbooks or not. One of the concerns that teachers also talked about was the huge amount of the written works that they are obliged to waste time on them. This made teaching English physically exhausting and psychologically unsatisfactory for many of the teachers. As a result of these pressures, many teachers hoped to leave teaching and schools.

To sum up, the interviews with the English teachers tried to reveal the effects of the centrality of the English textbooks on the English teachers in terms of four aspects. These aspects were teachers' role in planning for their lessons, teachers' interaction and social relations, teachers' work pressures, and teachers' concerns and worries. The effects of this centrality of the textbook was clear in the planning processes that most of the teachers talked about. The English textbooks were the source of the yearly plans, the reference for the daily preparation, the basic source for the information and classroom activities and an important way for assessing the learning of the students.

On the other hand, English teachers' suffer from having very limited free time. This free time is usually spent on the obligations that teachers have to do such as the huge amount of written works. Even though many of the English teachers expressed that they like to cooperate with other colleagues especially in

teaching methods and teaching grammar, limited time is available for teachers to achieve this cooperation during the school time.

English teachers complained also about having many pressures and mainly pressures to cover the textbook material. These pressures get built as a result of the final directorate and ministry exams, the English supervisors and the inner feelings of no satisfaction if they do not cover the textbook. These pressures and concerns resulted in having a desire of leaving schools and teaching for the majority of the English teachers.

In conclusion, this chapter attempted to answer the two research questions. The following chapter offers further discussion and analysis for these results.

## **Chapter 5: Analysis and Discussion**

In this concluding chapter, it is worthwhile to reiterate that the main objective behind the implementation of this research project was to investigate how the Palestinian English textbooks have gained the central role in teaching English in the Palestinian public schools. It also tried to shed light into the effects of this centrality on the English teachers. The results of this study suggest that the English textbook is the main and basic reference of the English teachers in almost all the aspects of the teaching process. The ultimate goal of the English teachers' plan is to cover the textbook material. The basic reference of the classroom activities and information is the textbook content. The largest portion of the time of the English classes is devoted to the textbooks. The skeleton of the assessment process is the textbook exercises and the attainment of the textbook material. The textbook is the main concern of the English teachers and its pages and long units are a pressure on them. It is also clear from the results that the English teachers are always in a hurry to cover its pages before the students are tested and evaluated on them.

This makes many teachers complain of having no time. They complain of having no time to finish the huge amount of written works required. No time to fully interact and cooperate with colleagues. No time to update themselves with new knowledge and ideas. No time to relax or to reflect. Besides, many of them are full of stresses and worries about directorate and students' achievement exams. Worries about supervisors who check their progress and ask about the reasons of being late. Worries about the final high school exams "Tawjehi" that

they know will evaluate their ability to make the students memorize the details of the textbook material. As these worries and stresses accumulate, English teachers hope to find an escape away from the borders of the schools and the siege imposed around them by the textbook.

### **5.1. Themes of Analysis**

This chapter is devoted to further discussion and analysis of the abovementioned research results. Reading into the qualitative findings presented in the previous chapter, in light of the main theoretical arguments discussed in the literature review, I reformulated the results into six themes. These themes are: (1) the dominant power of the English textbooks in the classrooms, (2) shifting powers between the English teachers and the textbooks, (3) the deskilling of the English teachers, (4) teaching for the tests and (5) English teachers are burning out, (6) the surrendering of the English teachers. Conclusions and recommendations bring down the curtains at the end of this chapter.

#### **5.1.1. The textbook is the dominant power in the English classrooms**

Reading through my research results, I have noticed that the English textbooks have gained the central power in the English classrooms. In most of the time of the English classes, the power of the English textbook has conquered the power of the teachers and the students. English teachers depend totally on the textbook to plan for their instruction, and most of their planning is focusing on covering the material that the textbook specifies for them. They make their best efforts to ensure that the time of the semester is enough to cover all of the

textbook material. Thus, no time is left to think of any material that is beyond what the textbook imposes. One of the teachers said “I have to go over the material and try to pick the most important things I must teach, a good teacher must try to put an eye on time to finish the textbook material in the suitable time.” Moreover, most of the teachers abide themselves by the sequence in which the material presented in the textbook. They teach the units in the way they are arranged in the textbook. Similar to the current study, Fullan (1984) has reviewed many teachers’ school practices. He explained that the textbooks play a central role in the planning of lessons by teachers. The textbooks also decide in which order to teach the different chapters and how much time to devote to each one.

In all the classes, the teachers are also working hard to finish all the exercises and activities, to read and explain all the reading texts, to expose their students to all the listening materials, and to allow the students to speak what the textbook activities want them to talk about. They also pointed that the textbook material is what the students and them are always assessed and evaluated on. This makes them depend heavily on these ready-made textbooks. The main structure and sequence of the English classroom is always moving from one activity to the next and from one page to the other. English teachers keep moving in this direction until they reach the goal they are aspired to achieve and that is to cover the textbook before the time of the final exams. In consequence, it is apparent how the textbooks have a dominant power over the English teachers in all of their practices. Cohen and Ball (1996) have a similar view of the relation between teachers and textbooks. They argue that the commercially published curriculum

materials have dominated classrooms in the United States. These textbooks are becoming part of everyday routine of the American schools in many districts. Textbooks have proved to play a central role in teachers' work also in the majority of Hong Kong government schools. The beliefs and works of the teachers in Hong Kong have reflected the centrality of the textbooks (Lee, 2005).

Apple (1982) has described these teachers who face the dominant power of the textbooks in their classrooms as suffering from technical control. Technical control is a hidden kind of control that has replaced the simple direct control that was apparent in the society and schools. He explains that the state tried to legitimate intervention in the educational process and to impose a particular ideology of management and control both on the public and on teachers. Thus, the direct power of patriarchal relations of authority that can be seen in simple control were replaced and transformed into more efficient forms of organizing and controlling the daily activities of the workers. Apple adds that the best examples of the domination of technical control procedures are found in the use of and huge dependence on the prepackaged sets of curriculum materials that are imposed on schools by the state "experts". These curricula have goals, strategies, tests, textbooks, worksheets appropriate student responses, etc. integrated together. It is a re-articulation of the dynamics of patriarchy in the school and the society. This control of curriculum and teaching documents the close relationship over time between patriarchal relations both inside and outside the school. Apple explains that these textbooks are hidden powers that control and direct the teachers in their teaching and interaction with their students. The aim behind controlling the

teachers and the teaching process is to reproduce the power relations that are dominant in the society. This is because Apple believes that the curriculum, its design and knowledge is designed to preserve the power of a certain political or cultural groups.

In consequence, to preserve and reproduce the power relations in any country, education and teaching need to be controlled. Instead of making a direct control over teachers which will be faced with resistance, governments started to use more hidden and accepted ways of control. By imposing textbooks on the schools, teachers are being directed and controlled in all the materials, goals, activities and assessments they use with their students. This will guarantee obedience of the teachers. In a similar way, when the English teachers were asked about the reasons that force them to abide by the material of the textbooks, they pointed to the accountability systems imposed on them by both the students' achievement exams and by the English supervisors. The teachers mentioned another important reason which many of them could not fully describe. This reason related to their inner feelings and the unconscious. I think that the English teachers appear to have internalized the power exercised on them by the textbooks, exams and supervisors and they start to monitor themselves. These teachers have internalized this control and start to force and to blame themselves for any disobedience. This internalization of power was apparent when many of the English teachers interviewed explained that they have an inner feelings that they must cover the material of the textbooks. They explained that they do not feel comfortable or satisfied if they skipped any of the textbook material. This is

similar to what Foucault (1975) described when he wrote in his book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* that:

he who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection. (pp. 202-203)

In other words, I noticed that English teachers have internalized that they are responsible of covering the textbooks and so they started to police themselves.

### **5.1.2. Moments of shifting powers between the textbooks and the English teachers**

Although the textbooks are the dominant power in the English classrooms, there are short times in which the English teachers attempt to regain a sense of power and control over their teaching. These humble attempts are mainly in grammar lessons. The tone of their voices while talking about grammar lessons differs from other tones of their teaching. They have clear loud voices that are full of certainty and pride. They are telling the facts or the rules that the “ignorant” textbooks do not say though they are crucial in their students’ learning. Thus, they did not hesitate to exercise their power over the textbook itself and to revenge for the long time of oppression as they shout at their students to close the textbooks and to give their attention to them only. At these times only do English teachers admit that the textbooks do not understand the needs of their students as one of

the teachers said “In grammar for example, I like to give examples and then the rule. The 10<sup>th</sup> grade textbook does not give the rule, but personally I like to give the grammatical rules to the students to help them recognize what is in their textbooks.” The secret key they have to unlock the dark rooms that the textbooks have left is to provide the students with rules to memorize. Thus, they listed rules of grammar for the students and asked them to copy these rules on their note books. For example, in one of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade English classes, the teacher was explaining the passive voice. The teacher wrote the passive form of the sentence on the board. She explained how the sentence is turned from active into passive. She wrote “object + verb to be + verb 3 (Past Participle) + by+ subject.” Moreover, this teacher and many other English teachers stressed the need for knowing these rules by heart as a key to succeed in English exams. One of these teachers said “as I told you, you have to memorize the form to be able to answer to the questions.” Other evidences on that English teachers tend to cherish their autonomy in teaching grammar is using other references of information for grammar. They also write worksheets that include grammatical points beyond the one determined for the students in the textbooks. It is clear that the Palestinian English teachers give a special status for grammar lessons in their teaching.

Though Apple in his theories talked about teachers who totally resist the imposed material and make changes, this kind of outrageous resistance was not observed in the English classes and did not said by the English teachers who were interviewed. Therefore, the only area that witnessed attempts of resistance against the dominant power of the textbooks was in grammar lessons. My own

interpretation of this emphasis on grammar by the English teachers is that many of the English teachers still follow and believe in the Grammar Translation approach while teaching. In this approach, Richards (2001) explains that teachers use the first language of the learners, which is Arabic in the current study, as a medium of instruction. Teachers' explanation focus on the sentence level such as the English teachers who wrote sentences on the board and started to explain its structure without mentioning the context at all. Teachers also teach language grammars deductively by giving clear rules of grammar. This kind of teaching depends on making the students memorize the rules of grammar. Richards points that this approach requires from the teachers few professional skills and abilities in the target language as teachers are only explaining about the language and its rules rather than using the language in authentic contexts. They could also get objective scores for learners by testing grammar rules.

Rodgers (2014) also adds that Grammar Translation approach is a way of studying the language through detailed analysis of its grammar rules. It hence views language learning as consisting of memorizing rules and facts. He points that there is no literature that offers a rational justification for it or that attempts to relate it to issues in linguistics, psychology, or educational theory. However, its continued use in some parts of the world may be due to firstly, the limited speaking skills of the English teachers. Secondly, the fact that this way the method their teachers used. Thirdly, it gives the teachers a sense of control and authority in the classroom. Finally, it works well in large classes. In the light of these studies, I can say that English teachers in the current study can have a sense

of authority and control over their classrooms while explaining grammar rules. Grammar lessons are their only outlet from the oppression of the textbooks. Thus, English teachers were only initiative in teaching grammar lessons.

**5.1.3. Deskillling teachers: You do not need to be skillful to teach English!  
Anyone can do the job!**

As apparent from the previous two themes, English teachers have almost surrendered to the material of the textbook to take control over the English classes. This huge dependence on the textbooks as a main source and reference for planning, instructions, activities and assessment prevents teachers from developing their knowledge and skills. Since the textbook is the power that controls the planning process, that imposes the material, that selects the classroom activities and that determines the assessment procedures, English teachers appeared to have a peripheral role in the teaching process. This role is summarized in carrying out and performing what is determined and prescribed for them by the “experts” who wrote the textbooks. This process of carrying out the specifications does not require a huge amount of knowledge or skills to be done. Thus, less skilled people can do the “routinized” works of the English teachers. As a result, English teachers start to think that all the skills and knowledge they need lay down in the textbooks at hands. Thus, some of the observed teachers appeared to be not well- prepared or planned in giving their classes.

Moreover, many of the teachers interviewed declared that they no longer need to prepare or to open the textbooks before going to the class. One of the

teachers said “frankly, I have been teaching for 18 years. I only look at the titles and know what I am going to tell the students about whether grammar, or vocabulary. Sometimes, I do not look at the textbook at all.” The reason that these teachers gave is that they know all the material of the textbooks since they have long experience in teaching them. I think this results in teachers who are not motivated to improve their skills or to keep their knowledge up to date. To the contrary, as Apple expects that these teachers are gradually losing their skills and missing the developments in their fields.

Apple explains that this dependence on the ready-made material ultimately results in teachers losing their own skills. This is because these specified actions with specified results do not require amounts of skill and decision-making to be executed. Therefore, people who are not skillful or who are not "successful" can manage to do the assigned job. In other words, teachers do not need to be skillful to merely carry these plans out to the specification, and at the pace set by people away from the actual teaching situation. Apple calls this process as a deskilling of the teachers. Apple states that the deskilling of the teachers occurs when administrators and the State determined the educational goals and teachers were left to ‘execute’ these goals. He contends that pre-packaged curriculum materials used in schools both control and deskill teachers by separating their mental labour from manual labour or execution. They both control and deskill teachers by separating conception from execution as teachers are deprived from setting the goals, selecting the material or the evaluative criteria and instead are required to perform these goals and teach the selected material.

This results in reducing teachers' capacities to devise and design curriculum materials that suite the local contexts and the needs of learners. As a result, teachers risk becoming only technicians in the teaching and learning process. They are becoming like machines in factories that are programmed to work.

In a similar way, Richards (1993) discussed the benefits and costs of textbooks on teaching English-as-a-Second-Language courses. He pointed to some potential negative effects of the heavy dependence on textbooks in classrooms. One of the negative impacts is that they deskill teachers as the textbooks and the teachers' manual make the major instructional decisions and teachers are reduced to that of a technician whose function is to present materials prepared by others. Teachers gradually lose their skills in planning and end up only doing the textbook activities.

Ryan and Copper (2009) also argued that the underlying rationale in many of the ready-made curriculum packages reserves for teachers the role of simply carrying out predetermined content and instructions. The researchers argued that the underlying theoretical assumptions that guides this type of pedagogy is that the behavior of teachers need to be controlled and made consistent and predictable across different schools and student population. This entails that the teachers lose the power to create new material or even go beyond the assigned textbooks. Ryan and Copper also criticized that in this approach there are experts who do the thinking while teachers reduced to doing the implementing. The effect is not only to deskill teachers, to remove them from the process of deliberation and reflection, but also to "routinize" the nature of learning and classroom pedagogy.

Moreover, Brown (2008) pointed that in the United States, a perennial complaint of the school teachers is the potential loss of the “art” of teaching. He means by the art of teaching the freedom of the teacher to emphasize what he or she judges to be important and instead giving attention to the competencies determined in a course unit. I think that this has made many teachers sufficed by the knowledge that the textbook determines and so they do not to try to search for other sources of information.

#### **5.1.4. “We are not teaching. We are preparing students for tests” : Teaching for the tests**

This quote was said by one of the English teachers who teaches the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. He was complaining about the way his role has changed from teaching the English language to helping the students memorize the information of the textbooks to pass the exams. This great emphasis on exams by the English teachers is the expected result of an educational system that depends mainly on exams to assess the learning of the students. In the English subject as well as other school subjects more than 90% of the students’ total score that is out of 100% depends on the exams that the students take. These exams include daily quizzes, a midterm, and a final exam. Around 30% of the total score is given to the midterm exam only while 40% is given to the final exam. The rest of the points are distributed as 20 % for the daily quizzes and 10 % for classroom participation (Alshwaikh, 2012). Thus, exams is the main assessment tool that is used to assess

the learning of the students of the English language at the Palestinian public schools.

In addition to using exams as the main assessment tool, these exams help to enhance the power that the textbooks enjoy as they mainly assess the students' attainment of the textbook material. English Supervisors who were interviewed pointed that final exams for English in Ramallah directorate of education are always unified for all the schools. These exams are called final directorate exams and usually written by a committee of English teachers from different schools under the supervision of the English supervisors. One of the supervisors said "these exams are written in a committee of good teachers under the supervision of the supervisors. This is good for the teachers who will have ready exams and good for the students. Moreover, all the teachers know that they should cover the material because the exam covers all the material." As the majority of the supervisors pointed, one of the major aims behind unifying the final exams in all the schools is to force the English teachers to cover the textbook material. They pointed that one of the goals of the directorate exams is to check the coverage of the textbook material. Moreover, one of the supervisors frankly declared that the good teacher is the one who knows the material of the textbook that the exams ask about and teaches it to the students. This entails that these exams assess the attainment of the textbook material not any other material beyond of what is mentioned in the textbooks. English teachers also confirmed this idea when they talked about the pressures of covering all the material of the textbooks to prepare the students for the exams.

On the other hand, supervisors admitted that these exams check the coverage of the material and so these exams are a way of accountability on teachers. Many of the supervisors pointed that English teachers should not have the choice concerning the material they cover and instead they should be forced to cover all of the material. One of the ways to force English teachers to cover all the material of the textbooks is by imposing unified final exams on them. One of the supervisors said “I also think that when you have a system and the system tells you that you are to finish the whole textbook, then you will finish. I think if it is left to the teacher, there will be a big mess.” Apple clearly states that textbooks are usually accompanied with standardized or unified exams as a way of accountability. The goal behind these exams is to test if the teachers have covered the material or not. He demonstrates that these standardized tests are strict ways of accountability on teachers. Their aim is to control the work of teachers and to force them to follow the material imposed on them. As a result, Apple states that teachers become accountable for the results of their students. In a similar way, many of these supervisors did not hesitate to blame the English teachers for the low –scores of their students whether in directorate exams or national exams. They pointed that the English teachers are accountable for the results of their students in the exams. One of the supervisors said that:

many teachers skip listening and writing. We want to make sure that teachers have covered such skills. So in our exams, we focus on the four skills. And that’s why students get low scores in these exams. We blame teachers for their low- achievement.

Since exams is the main assessment procedure that is followed in teaching English and that the material of the textbook is the main focus of these exams, it is not surprising to find that covering the material for the exams was one of the main concerns that most of the English teachers talked about. Knowing that these exams assess the students mainly on the textbook materials, English teachers pointed that they are always in a hurry to cover the material before the final exams. All of these indicators point that with the imposition of these ready-made textbooks, teachers have to play a different role and that is teaching for the tests.

These pressures pushed the teachers towards narrowing their instructions to the textbook material because it is the material that the students will be tested on. English teachers depended only on the material of the textbook as a source of information for their students. In their teaching, they tried to help the students memorize the material of the textbook and its exercises. Observed teachers also played that role of only trying to make their students memorize all the details of the reading texts to help their students pass the exams. In consequence, test-driven teaching becomes another reason that reinforces the power that the textbooks enjoy and negatively affect the teachers and the teaching process.

Smith (1991) studied the role of external testing in elementary schools and the effects of these tests on teachers. Data from interviews suggested that teachers experience negative emotions as a result of the publication or the announcement of test scores and decide to do what is necessary to avoid low scores. Teachers believe that scores are used against them despite the fact that many of them doubt the validity of these tests. From classroom observations, Smith concluded that

these tests substantially reduce the time available for instruction. They narrow curricular offerings only to the material of the tests and enhance teacher-centered modes of instruction. As a result, these exams potentially reduce the capacities of teachers to teach content and to use methods and materials that are incompatible with standardized testing formats.

Smith helps in understanding what is happening with the English teachers in the current study. In order to avoid being blamed for the low scores of their students, English teachers determine to teach only for the tests and so they make their students memorize the details of the textbook material. They avoid tackling any material that is beyond the textbook. Moreover, during classroom observation, there was a lot of teachers' talk and little students' interaction. This enhances teacher-centered instruction. Because of the announcement of the results of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade students on these exams, this memorization was highly stressed in the classes of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Moreover, there was also fragmentation of the material into pieces that the students can easily retain. This was clear with how the observed English teachers have fragmented the grammar lessons into forms and rules that the students can memorize. Au (2007) explained this as a primary effect of these tests. One of the major results of external exams is that curricular content is narrowed to tested subjects, subject area knowledge is fragmented into test-related pieces, and teachers increase the use of teacher-centered pedagogies. In consequence, these tests have negative consequences on the teachers and teaching. They impose constraints on the methods of teaching that the teachers employ and the materials that they use (Cheng, 1997).

### **5.1.5. English teachers are burning-out**

As a result of the pressures exercised on the English teachers by the textbooks, supervisors and exams, the majority of the English teachers who were interviewed expressed negative feelings towards their careers. Feelings of dissatisfaction and frustration because of the prescriptions they have to follow. English teachers also explained that they both physically and psychologically exhausted. The routine of work is killing their creativity and hindering their development as one of the teachers said “as you know, here in the Palestinian schools, routines kill you. We follow the same books and you cannot source or bring any new or different material. So you stay where you stand, you cannot improve.” They suffer from having to waste long time in doing huge amounts of written works that they think to be useless. They talked about long hours of work without a rest and wished if they have enough time to communicate and cooperate with colleagues. They complained about the time they need to spend at home to complete school works. English teachers described themselves as machines that are doing prescribed things only to satisfy the ministry and to abide by its rules and regulations. One of the teachers said “what bothers and hurts me is that huge amount of written work that we have to do. You know I have pain in my right hand because I am writing and writing all the time, so I start to have health problems and that is why I am seriously thinking of changing my career.” These teachers are desperate and hope to find an escape from schools and the rules imposed on them.

In a similar way, Hall (2004) also adds that teachers are now complaining of not having enough time to cover what is expected from them or to explore new ideas with their classes. They feel that their freedom to make decisions about their work has been constricted. Moreover, they talk about the amount of testing and number of examinations they have to prepare their students for. They also suffer from rising levels of stress, reduced free and leisure time and that much of the fun or enjoyment has gone from their work. In other words, they have no time to update their knowledge of what is new in their fields or to relax and think of innovative ways for teaching. Burchielli (2006) also uses a case-study from an Australian Primary School to understand and analyze changes in teachers' work, work intensification and its causes. Using teachers' reports of extended working hours, work overload and perceptions of pressure and exploitation, the paper concludes that there is an increasing workloads and responsibilities in the teachers' work. This intensification of teachers' work results from following new approaches of work management. These approaches aim to exploit and subordinate the teachers. In a similar way, (Easthope, & Easthope, 2000) argue that teachers in Tasmania and Australia also reported increase in the workload in the 10 years between 1984 and 1994. The teachers reported longer working hours every day, increasing in the number of the students and having increased professional and administrative responsibilities.

Apple (1989) gives an explanation of this increasing of work -loads and the intensification that most of the teachers suffer from. He demonstrates that another process that accompanies the process of deskilling is the intensification of

the teachers' work. Intensification is the process by which the works of teachers are eroded. It has many symptoms, from being allowed no time at all to relax, to having a total absence of time to keep up with one's field. In school time, intensification requires that teachers spend a large portion of time evaluating students, grading, and recording the results. Teachers also become busy with these tasks before and after school, very often, during their lunch hour. For many committed teachers, existing structures within educational system and its differential power in decision- making, the lack of interpersonal contact among teachers and so on seem to produce what has been called "teacher burn –out" (teacher frustration and anger). Apple declares that many teachers who tend to react negatively to these prepackaged, standardized, and systematized curricular forms often leave teaching.

#### **5.1.6. English teachers have waved the white flag! The surrendering of the English teachers**

Despite Suffering from all of these pressures and negative attitudes towards teaching, many of the English teachers avoid the battle and do not dare to resist. English teachers are obliged to follow and implement the textbooks. The system of testing beside the other pressures that are mentioned make the teachers feel frustrated and stressed. There was a lot of complaining and negative attitudes expressed by the English teachers I interviewed. However, there was not outraging resistance of this intensification of works and the exploitation they suffer from. At the contrary, most of the English teachers said that they do these

works though they are not convinced of them. Moreover, in the observed English classes there was an atmosphere of surrendering to the textbook power and its hegemony except for the moments of regaining power that some of the teachers attempt in teaching grammar. Thus, there was a mode of acceptance and surrendering for the dominant power of the textbooks and the policy of the ministry of education. One of the teachers said “I do not change, but if the ministry changes, I follow the change.” Another teacher added “I do not think that we are allowed to change the material even if it is not interesting.” Teachers appeared to be committed to do what is expected from them at any cost even if that cost means suffering from inner conflicts and feelings of frustration.

In a similar way, the majority of Hong Kong government schools base their teaching and student learning on the commercial textbooks. These teachers try to finish the textbooks with little or no regard for the learning needs of their students (Lee, 2005). Moreover, Larson (2011) has studied a number of schools within the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF), the union of professionals representing 41,000 public school teachers in the province of British Columbia, and Canada. She demonstrates that many teachers suffer from increasing workload so that teachers start to seek only survival mode. Teachers are less willing to be creative, inventive, and less able to develop methods that will engage students. They become obedient and compliant. These teachers are ready to follow any advice from superiors in order to please them, than to challenge their ideas. They started to lose confidence and began to see themselves as failures and so they are more likely to prefer to follow routine.

Apple offers an explanation of this surrendering of the teachers. He points that many of the teachers have accepted the dominance of the textbooks in their classroom and the intensification of their work. Apple interprets the reasons for the acceptance of certain aspects of intensification is due to the history of professionalism and it is heightened by a number of other factors such as parental pressures and employment practices surrounding teaching. I think that these reasons can explain the acceptance of the English teachers in the current study to the depowering forces they suffer from. These reasons depower the teachers and force many of them to agree with what is going on in their teaching career.

Apple explains that many teachers interpreted (misrecognized) what was happening to them as a symbol of their increased professionalism or as being more professional. As responsibility for designing one's own curricula and one's own teaching has decreased, teachers' responsibility over technical and management concerns has largely increased. Teachers think that now they have to acquire a new range of skills like grading large number of tests, managing time to finish the specified objectives, and making decisions based on students' results. They thought that the longer hours of work are evidence of their enlarged professional status. Teachers thought of themselves as being more professional to the extent that they employed technical criteria and tests. In other words, they increased their professionalism by learning new management skills. This has resulted in the acceptance of the longer hours and the intensification of their work that accompanied this situation. The second reason that Apple thinks has pushed the teachers to accept this situation is parental pressures. Parents now are

following the manual or the textbook too. They can observe the work of the teachers and expect the teachers to cover the textbooks at hands. Kids also know the direction of the teaching and expect the teachers to cover all the material in the textbooks. This gets to be a routine that the teacher has to follow. The third factor that made the teacher accept this situation is the employment practices surrounding teaching. The main criteria for hiring teachers is their agreement with the overall curricula, pedagogic, and evaluative framework which organizes the day-to day activities. If the teachers want to get the job and to continue working, they have to accept the determined curricula and the current policy of the ministry of education.

In addition to the three reasons of acceptance that Apple talks about, the interviewed English teachers mentioned another important reason that is related to the special economic conditions in Palestine. The major reason that forces most of the English teachers to accept what is going on in their career is the limited job opportunities available in their society. Many of the teachers indicated that they hope and try to change their career but they cannot find other suitable alternatives. Moreover, when Apple points to teachers' reaction towards the deskilling and the pressures they suffer from, he describes two ways of reacting to the problem. Teachers either accept what is going on or try to change and resist. However, the English teachers who were interviewed are not ready for any kind of resistance or change. They expressed that they suffer from these pressures and that they have to accept and deal with them. The only outlet that the teachers talked about is hoping to leave their career. They do accept to suffer from the oppression of the rules but

they do not dare to change or to resist against them. Since they cannot change, the only way that the teachers think of to get rid of these pressures is by getting rid of the teaching career itself. Thus, these teachers expressed a sense of hopelessness and despair of any attempts of changing the system imposed on them.

In consequence, Apple's theory has helped in understanding the problem in the Palestinian situation. However, some of the reactions of the Palestinian teachers can be attributed only to the special structure of the Palestinian society and so they need to be explained within its own context. Generally speaking, Apple has helped in understanding the role that the imposed English textbooks play in the classrooms and in shedding light on the pressures that force the teachers to surrender to the textbooks to take control over their classes. Moreover, he helped in understanding the deskilling, the work intensification and the alienation that the English teachers suffer from as a result of this centrality of the textbooks.

## **5.2. Conclusions and Recommendations**

In this research, I tried to shed light on the Palestinian English teachers who are deprived from their right of being autonomous in their teaching and are punished to be a follower of ready -made textbooks. Though designed by experts, these textbooks appeared not to satisfy the needs of the English teachers. To the contrary, they have become a source of pressure on them. Teachers have different contextual needs that these textbooks may not take into account. This is because no book is perfect for a particular class or an individual student. Language

teaching and learning are complicated processes; teachers cannot be satisfied with a prepackaged set of decisions that can be found in ready-made teaching materials (Allwright, 1981).

Moreover, English teachers need to be motivated to keep the pace with the updates in their field. The European Council and the European Commission set the common European principles for teacher competences and qualifications in (2010). One of the important competencies is that teachers should be able to work with others. They need to develop their knowledge, to access all possible sources of information and to reflect on their practices. Teachers' education and learning should be a continuous process. These different standards for teachers' competencies assert the importance of teachers' cooperation, collaboration, reflection and autonomy in their professional development. These standards and competencies contradict with the limitations and constraints that teachers suffer from as a result of the centrality of the textbooks in the classrooms.

Thus, I think Palestinian English teachers should be given a chance to raise their voices and play a different role in their relationship with the textbooks. Apple held a view of opposition against textbooks, against restricting teachers by the imposition of ready-made materials. Apple is against any imposition of the curriculum. To empower the teachers and enhance the teaching process, Apple recommends giving teachers curricula autonomy. Thus, the question now is “should the Palestinian English teachers be set totally free from any textbooks?”

### **5.2.1. Recommendation for policy and practice**

I think that the responsibility of qualifying the teachers to be autonomous in their teaching is on both the universities and the ministry of education. Universities need to teach students how to continue learning and how to critically use knowledge available in all the different resources of information. On the other hand, the ministry of education should give the teachers a chance to adapt to the textbooks, to change, to add, to interpret and to modify. They should be given a chance to make decisions and be responsible about their students' learning. If the ministry insists on imposing textbooks, these textbooks should be flexible enough to preserve the power of both the English teachers.

To preserve the power of the teachers, Cohen and Ball (1996) point to the importance of taking teachers' need into account when designing these textbooks. They explain that textbooks are becoming part of everyday routine of the American schools in many districts. The researchers states that school curriculum plays an uneven role in the American schools. This can be attributed to different reasons. One of the important reasons is that curriculum developers have overlooked teachers. They have not taken account of teachers' need to learn in order to use the new textbook. To bridge this gap, teachers should be encouraged to adapt not to adopt the materials to suite their own students. Teachers should be engaged with the curriculum materials. This can be done by integrating materials into programs of professional development aimed at improving their capacity to teach the teachers. To turn the curriculum material into a resource of learning for teachers, there should be a basic re-conception of the designers' work. As a result,

instead of thinking of curriculum as "something for the students" and the teachers' guide as an instructional manual, both could have been considered as resources for teachers' learning. Thus, Cohen and Ball argue that the curriculum should be created with closer attention to the process of curriculum enactment. They argue that while curriculum is often considered the textbooks or the materials, the enacted curriculum is jointly constructed by teachers, students and materials in a particular context. They recommend that written materials should be designed to be educative for teachers as well as students.

McGrath (2002) has a similar view of the expected relation between teachers and textbooks. He points the ready-made teaching materials play a crucial role in teaching-learning. When these take the form of a textbook it is essential that the textbook be carefully selected to meet both external requirements and the needs of the teachers. It is also important that teachers be able to mediate between the textbook and the learners, adapting and supplementing the book as necessary. To free teachers from the tyranny of the textbooks, Ben-Peretz (1990) suggests that teachers should be trained on how to interpret the curriculum, to criticize, analyze and adapt to the curriculum. They must understand that the curriculum provide the raw material from which they can craft and shape the instruction of their students. The researcher asserts that no curriculum is adequate because it cannot anticipate the infinite variation of the students, teachers and contexts. Thus, teachers have an important role and many serious decisions to make.

In consequence, English teachers in Palestine should be trained on how to adapt, interpret, criticize, analyze and modify the material of the textbooks. All books have certain limitations and deficiencies and they all acquire evaluation, selection, adaptation and supplementation. There is no course book that can work in all situations or can be applied to all teachers and students (Sheldon, 1987). The Palestinian system of education should allow the teachers to enjoy a sense of freedom in teaching English as well as other school subjects. They should be trusted and respected for the learning goals they expect, the content and the teaching material they choose, the time schedules they set, the teaching methods they follow, the assessment procedures they adopt and ultimately the decisions they make.

On the other hand, it is clear in this research how the Palestinian educational system gives a great value for exams and tests to assess the learning of the students of the English language. This has resulted in test-driven teaching and negatively influenced both teachers and teaching. These exams are a pressure on the English teachers and a burden on them. As a result, the ministry of education should consider the fact that tests are not the only available procedure for assessing the learning of the students. Assessment encompasses wide a range of possibilities. I do suggest using other alternatives in assessment such as portfolios, journals, observations, interviews, self- assessment and peer-assessment. These assessment tools can replace tests or can be used in addition to testing to triangulate data about students' performance. These alternatives in assessment require the students to create, produce, or do something. They use the

real-world contexts and stimulations. Most importantly, they call on teachers to perform new instructional and assessment roles. They allow teachers be autonomous in the material they use and the way they assess their students (Brown, 2010)

### **5.2.2. Recommendation for research**

English teachers should enjoy their autonomy to be able to produce autonomous learners. This is because creative activity is not a superimposed, extraneous task against which the body or brain protests, but an orchestration of joyful doing. If the teachers are deprived from autonomy and freedom in their teaching, we cannot expect them to produce creative or autonomous learners. To the contrary, I expect their students to be bound to the textbooks and to the prescriptions of their teachers. Thus, textbook- bound teachers will have a great influence on the learning of their students.

This research has only investigated the effects of the centrality and the dominance of the English textbooks on the English teachers and their skills. After conducting this research, I still wonder what kind of effects this centrality of the English textbooks can have on the learners of English; their learning strategies, their knowledge, their language and their attitudes towards learning in general and learning English in particular.

### **5.3. Limitations of the study**

As mentioned above, one of the limitations of this study is that it did not tackle the effects of the textbooks on the learning of the students. Moreover, all of

the interviews and classroom observations about the current research problem were conducted in Ramallah directorate. This limits the generalizability of the results of the study. Moreover, if I had interviewed school principals in addition to teachers and supervisors, I would have got a clearer picture of the pressures exercised on teachers to follow the textbooks. On the other hand, this research has tried to study the actual using of the English textbooks by the teachers in their classrooms and the perception of the supervisors of the role of the textbooks in teaching English. It gave only a brief description of the inner structure of the Palestinian English textbooks. However, a deeper analysis of the structure of the textbooks and the way the material is introduced may also offer better understanding of how the textbooks limit the autonomy and freedom of the English teachers.

## References

- Allwright, R. L. (1981). What do we want teaching materials for? *ELT journal*, 36(1), 5-18.
- Alshwaikh, J. (2012). *Alseyassat Altarbwya Fee Aldaffa w Qetaa Gaza: Altaalom w Alhawya*. [Educational Policies in the West Bank and Gaza Strip: Learning and Identity]. Paper presented at the 'Curriculum and Identity' conference, Birzeit University, 1 December 2012 .
- Apple, M. (1982). *Education and power*. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Apple, M. (1986). *Teachers and texts: A political economy of class and gender relations in education*. Psychology Press.
- Apple, M. W. (2004). Cultural politics and the text. *Sociology of Education*, 95-179.
- Au, W. (2007). High-stakes testing and curricular control: A qualitative metasynthesis. *Educational Researcher*, 36(5), 258-267.
- Ball, D. L., & Cohen, D. K. (1996). Reform by the book: What is: Or might be: The role of curriculum materials in teacher learning and instructional reform? *Educational Researcher*, 6-14.
- Ball, D. L., & Feiman-Nemser, S. (1988). Using textbooks and teachers' guides: A dilemma for beginning teachers and teacher educators. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 18(4), 401-423.
- Ben-Peretz, M. (1990). *The teacher-curriculum encounter: Freeing teachers from the tyranny of texts*. SUNY Press.
- Birzeit University. (2015). *Academic Ethical Instructions*. Retrieved May 4, 2015 from <https://ritaj.birzeit.edu/university-laws/#>
- Brenner, M. E. (2006). Interviewing in educational research. In J. L. Green, G. Camilli & P. B. Elmore (Eds.), *Handbook of complementary methods in education research* (357-370). London: Taylor & Francis Group.
- Brown, H. D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2010). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. Pearson Education.
- Burchielli, R. (2006). The intensification of teachers' work and the role of changed public sector philosophy. *International Journal of Human Resources Development and Management*, 6(2), 146-160.
- Cheng, L. (1997). How does washback influence teaching? Implications for Hong Kong. *Language and education*, 11(1), 38-54.
- Chien, C. Y., & Young, K. (2007). The centrality of textbooks in teachers' work: perceptions and use of textbooks in a Hong Kong primary school. *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 16(2), 155-163.

- Curriculum Center. (2014). *English for Palestine*. Retrieved November 6, 2014, from <http://www.englishforpalestine.ccom/>
- Dajani, D. (2009). Implementing the first Palestinian English language curriculum: A need for teacher empowerment. *Mediterranean Journal of Educational Studies*, 14(2), 27-47.
- Delaware Education Research & Development center. (2004). *Teacher professional development*. [http://www.losmedanos.edu/deved/documents/v15\\_May.pdf](http://www.losmedanos.edu/deved/documents/v15_May.pdf)
- Easthope, C., & Easthope, G. (2000). Intensification, extension and complexity of teachers' workload. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 21(1), 43-58.
- European Commission. (2010). *Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications*. Retrieved from [http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/principles\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/principles_en.pdf)
- Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. New York: Vintage.
- Fullan, M. (1983). Evaluating program implementation: What can be learned from follow through. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 13(2), 215-227.
- Hall, C. (2004). Theorizing Changes in Teachers' Work. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*.
- Hammad, E. (2014). Palestinian EFL Teachers' Attitudes Towards English Textbooks Used at the First Three Grades of Elementary School. *The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language*, 18(1).
- Hutchinson, T., & Torres, E. (1994). The textbook as agent of change. *ELT journal*, 48(4), 315-328.
- Johnson, B., & Christensen, L. (2000). *Educational research: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. Allyn & Bacon.
- King, B. M., & Newmann, F. M. (2000). Will Teacher Learning Advance School Goals? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 81(8), 576-80.
- Larson, J. (2011). Professional autonomy in teaching. *Teacher Newsmagazine*, 24(2).
- Lee, I. (2005). *English language teaching in Hong Kong Special administrative region (HKSAR): a continuous challenge*. *Teaching English to the world, history, curriculum and practice*. Erlbaum Associates, New Jersey: Mahwah.
- Marvasti, A. (2003). *Qualitative research in sociology*. Sage.
- MacGrath, I. (2002). *Materials Evaluation and Design for Language Teaching*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Patton, M. (2002). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods (3ed)*. U.S.A: Sage

publication, Inc.

- Qattan Center for Educational Research and Development (QCERD). (2001). *The Reality and Needs of the Educational Programs in the Higher Education Institutions: An Evaluative Study and a Vision for the Next Ten Years*. Ramallah, Palestine: QCERD.
- Richards, J. C. (1993). Beyond the textbook: The role of commercial materials in language teaching. *RELC Journal*, 24(1), 1-14.
- Richards, J. C. (n.d.). *The role of textbooks in a language program*. Retrieved November, 12(2), 2012, <http://www.professorjackrichards.com/wp-content/uploads/role-of-textbooks.pdf>
- Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Rossmann, G. B., & Rallis, S. F. (2011). *Learning in the field: An introduction to qualitative research*. London: Sage.
- Ryan, K. & Cooper, J. M. (2009). *Kaleidoscope: Contemporary and classic readings in education*. Canada: Cengage Learning.
- Sabri, K. (1997). In-service teacher training programs: the case of Palestine. *Journal of In-Service Education*, 23 (1), 113-118.
- Savin-Baden, M., & Major, C. H. (2013). *Qualitative research: The essential guide to theory and practice*. London: Routledge.
- Scherer, M. (Ed.). (2003). *Keeping good teachers*. ASCD.
- Sheldon, L. E. (1988). Evaluating ELT textbooks and materials. *ELT journal*, 42(4), 237-246.
- Silverman, D. (2011). *Interpreting qualitative data*. London: Sage.
- Smith, M. L. (1991). Put to the test: The effects of external testing on teachers. *Educational Researcher*, 20(5), 8-11.
- Turner, D. W., III (2010). Qualitative interview design: A practical guide for novice investigators. *The Qualitative Report*, 15(3), 754-760. Retrieved from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR15-3/qid.pdf>
- Yamchi, N. (2006). English teaching and training issues in Palestine. *TESOL Quarterly*, 40(4), 861-865.

**Appendix 1: The template used for classroom observations**

	Time	Teaching material	Questions the teacher asks	Tasks and activities	Teaching methodologies.
Introduction					
Presentation					
Assessment					

## Appendix 2: Transcription of classroom observations

### **Period 1: 8<sup>th</sup> grade**

The teacher entered to the classroom, she needed around 6 minutes to get the students' attention and make them ready for the English class. The students studying from their textbooks because they have a daily quiz on the grammar lesson about comparatives.

After the students got quiet, the teacher started the quiz which took around 13 minutes to be finished by the students. After collecting the papers, she pointed that they are going to answer to the quiz questions at the end of the period.

The teacher then opened the book and asked the students to open their books on page 7. The teacher started with the first activities in page 7 and that ask the students to listen and repeat new collections of vocabulary that are out inside a box at the top of the page. The teacher started the audio, the students are exposed 2 times to the audio, firstly, listening without repeating, then listening and repeating the words. Then, the teacher asked many students to repeat the word individually.

Then the teacher started using the board. She wrote the number of the page on the top of the board as a title, then she started to copy the new words on the boards. She started to give examples using the new words to help the students guess their meaning and then she get the meaning in Arabic from the students and write the meaning in both Arabic and English on the board. She asked the students about the opposites of some words such as thick, thin and safety, danger.

During explaining the meaning of the words, the teacher asked the students to turn into page 8, she pointed to a picture of a man who is wearing a hard hat and she explained the meaning of the word hart hat.

The teacher asked the students to give her examples on who wears the uniforms, and the students started to give examples such as students and policemen.

The teacher gave example on the word comfortably, she gave examples using the words but she did not ask the students to give their own examples. The teacher asked some questions using the new words such as what is the capital of Canada, and what is the capital of Kuwait. She tried to check the geographical knowledge of the students.

After writing all the new words on the board, the teacher read them a gain and ask the students to repeat after her.

The teacher moved to the second activity: She only said now you will listen and fill the spaces with the words that you hear. The teacher played the CD and the students started to

write the answers, then the teacher asked the students work with their partners to check their answers.

Then the bell rang, and the teacher said we will continue the next class and got out of the class.

The teacher used only the textbook and her own example sentences using the words of the book. She did not mention any aims for the lesson neither for the activities. The whole class took the form of (teacher asking questions about the textbook material and the students answer). The students did not ask questions. The only written work that was done is writing the meaning of the words on the notebooks and filling the words in spaces for the second activity. The teacher kept using the textbook from the beginning to the end of the period.

### **Period 2 : 10th grade.**

The teacher entered the classroom and greeted the students, then she asked: so, where did we reach the last time? Are we in period number 3? Let's write the title on the board. And then the teacher wrote on the top of the board "Unit 7: Period 3.

The teacher reminds the students of the last thing they took the last period as she said : shall we start now, last time we differentiated between two types of verbs, verbs that take an object and verbs that do not take an object. Then the teacher asked: what are transitive verbs? One of the students gave the answer in Arabic and the teacher refused the answer reminding the students that they should only use English during the classroom. The teacher then asked the students to give her examples on transitive verbs, and the students gave her words like give and provide. Then the teacher asked for examples on intransitive verbs, and the students gave her some examples. Then she asked the students to clap for themselves as a reward for knowing the answer of the questions.

The teacher then asked : did we do exercise 1 page 7? The students answered "no". She said let's start with exercise number 1. She added that here we are going to deal with another topic that is passive voice.

The teacher asked one of the students to read the first example in the book and she wrote it on the board. The teacher asked one of the students to come to the board and underline the subject, verb, object. And then the teacher asked "Is it a passive sentence or an active one?", one of the students said "it is active". The teacher asked her how she knew it is passive. The students did not answer.

The teacher wrote the passive form of the sentence on the board. She explained how the sentence is turned from active into passive. She wrote "object + verb to be + verb3+ by+ subject.

The teacher looked through another textbook she has, may be from another curriculum, and she copied a sentence from it on the board. The sentence is “farmers feed the animals” and she started to explain in terms of steps on how to change an active sentence into passive.

The teacher asked why we use the passive form in English. To help the students answer, she gave a sentence using the name of one of the students “Nada broke the window”. The teacher said that all the students must follow the rule and the steps to successfully turn a sentence from the active form to the passive form. The teacher keeps talking and the students are listening they did not talk except for answering to some questions.

The teacher used the same steps in all different verb tenses and asked the students to write the rule and the steps on their notebooks to memorize it.

Then the teacher gave a worksheet on passive voice (all kinds of passive even the kinds that are not mentioned during the period) and she told the students that tomorrow they will discuss the worksheet.

The teacher used the textbook, another textbook from another curriculum, the board and a work sheet. She kept talking and sometimes asked the students short questions.

### **Period 3: 12<sup>th</sup> grade**

The teacher wrote the title on the top of the board as she wrote P. 62. Then the teacher asked the students to open their workbook on page 62, and she read the question quickly, then she started to read the adjectives in the box and giving their meanings in Arabic and the students wrote the meanings on their books. The activity was about adjectives of feelings such as happy, shocked ...The first exercise asks the students to use the adjectives of feelings to describe the faces in the pictures, the students immediately asked whether this kind of questions usually used in the final exams written by the ministry. The teacher answered that they have never asked such questions but that students should study this question. The teacher skipped activity number 2 as pointed that it is deleted by the ministry and started talking about comparisons. She explained some points about the comparative and superlative forms and asked the students to memorize their forms. She explained the rule without giving any sentence as an example but giving only words such as easy, easier, easiest, and tall, taller, tallest.

Then she asked the students about a rule of spelling and that is about doubling the letters at the end of some words and pointed that students need to memorize the spelling of these words because the scorers of Tawjehi exams usually detect points for the misspelling of these words.

Then the teacher went back to the textbook and started reading the explanation of the rule from the textbook, she pointed at the words in the table and how they are changed into the comparative and superlative forms.

Then, the teacher moved to the next page of the students' book and she asked about the title. One of the students read "regular and irregular adjectives". The teacher did not write the title on the board. She started reading and the examples and explaining about these adjectives such as good- better- best. She said " look at the book, you can see that the comparative is better and the superlative is best ...." Then she copied on the textbook sentences on the board and started to explain the point. Then the teacher said " Now, move to the workbook page 45." The title is dealing with stress and said that here we need to give the opposites of these words. The students started to give the opposites and the teacher started to write the answers on the board. She reminded that the students that they need to memorize these opposites to be able to do the question during the final exam. I noticed that one of the students in the front was using the English guide to copy the answers but the teacher did not comment on that.

Then the teacher moved to the next activity, she only read the beginning of the question and did not complete as she said "complete the following sentences by adding the words..." The students started to give answers for each point and the teacher wrote the answers on the board.

Then she said " let's move to page 46, activity 3" and in this activity there is a group of phrases such as sort out, stress out... , the teacher gave their meanings in Arabic and reminded the students that they have to memorize their meanings otherwise they won't be able to answer in the final exam. The students gave the answers and the teacher wrote them on the board.

After that the teacher moved to another activity that ask the students to write what they would say in a number of situations. For example, if that happened, I will be very..... The students asked the teacher if this questions is usually asked in the ministry exams and she answered that she does not think so because "they" usually avoid open-ended questions as they have a predetermined key-answers for all the questions. The teacher then moved to another exercise that ask the students to complete the letter with words from the box such as architect, married, unhappy... The students gave the answers and the teacher wrote the answers on the board.

The bell rang and the teacher continued until she finished the exercise. There was not any kind of summative assessment.

#### **Period 4: 10<sup>th</sup> grade**

The teacher wrote the title of the lesson on the board and that was “passive voice”. She started the period saying “the last class we talked about transitive and intransitive verbs, again, what are transitive verbs and what are intransitive verbs? The students answered. She continued “who can give me an intransitive verb in a meaningful sentence?” One of the students said “Jerusalem is the capital of Palestine”. Then the teacher asked for sentences using transitive verbs and the students gave her sentences. The teacher then writes some examples on the board as her own examples but actually they are the same sentences mentioned in the textbook page 7. She started to explain the steps that the students have to follow to change a sentence from active into passive voice. The first step is to analyze the sentence determining the subject, verb and object, the second step is to put the verb in front of the sentence... then she shouted “close the books 10<sup>th</sup> graders”. And she continued explaining the tense of the sentences. She wrote another three sentences on the board without looking on the textbook but they were actually from the textbook except one sentence and she continued explaining the rules and the steps of changing a sentence from the active voice to the passive voice. She summarized the rule on the board and asked the students to copy the examples and the rule on their notebooks.

The teacher then her own examples and asked the students to pay attention to the kinds of verbs that take more than one object such as give. She wrote a sentence on the board using give and she asked the students to change the sentence into passive voice using one of the object each time. She called the students’ attention on how object pronouns are turned into subject pronouns when we change their positions in the sentence.

After that the teacher asked the students to open the book on exercise 2 page 7, and asked if they did it together or not. The students answered that they had it as a homework.

The teacher skipped the exercise and moved to the next that ask to tick the transitive sentences and to turn them into passive. The students started to answer and to change the sentences into the passive voice. She used this exercise as a summative assessment and the students wrote the answers on the board, then the bell rang and they stopped.

The teacher kept the students’ textbooks closed until the last 7 minutes of the period, she seems to know the examples of the textbooks by heart. She did not explicitly mention any goals for the period and she only used the textbook and the board.

#### **Period 5 : 9<sup>th</sup> grade**

The teacher entered the classroom, he asked the students to set quietly and open their textbooks. He said “open your textbook on page 11, have we finished page 10?” the students

answered “yes” and the teacher said that today the lesson is about conditional clauses type 2, and that they are going to revise type 0 and type 1 as well.

Then the teacher wrote the date on the board. The teacher wrote the title as “conditional type 2”. Then he said that they have learned two types of conditionals that are type 0 and type 1 and that now they will start revising type 0. He wrote a sentence on the board. The sentence was “if the water boils to 100 c, it evaporates.” He asked what the tense of the verb is in the of clause and the main clause. And he explained the tense of these verbs and that type 0 is used for facts. Then he started talking about type 1, he wrote an example on the board. The sentence was “ if you come to the party, you will meet your friends”. He explained that we should use present simple in the if clause and will+ infinitive in the main clause. The teacher said that he will start explaining type 2 of the conditionals, he wrote a sentence on the board “if I were a king, I would build a palace.” He explained the verb tenses and explained that this tense is used for imagination. He asked if the students can give a sentence, but no one gave a sentence. As I told you have to memorize the form to be able to answer to the questions. The teacher asked again for sentences, and the students gave some sentences such as “If I were a dad, I would build a house” and “If I were a price, I would defeat Bashar Elasad.”

The teacher said “now open your textbook on page 11 and let’s read the sentences” The sentences are examples on type 2. The students started reading the sentences and the teacher again pointed to the verb tense and the meaning of these sentences.

After the students have finished reading all the example sentences, the teacher said “Now, who can read the first sentence and answer it”. He meant the first sentence of exercise 2. The students answered the sentences orally without writing the answers on the board. There were 6 sentences and meanwhile the teacher sit on the chair and helped the students many times to use the correct verb tense. Most of the answers were given by two students only. After the students have finished, the teacher repeated the answers again orally. He asked the students again to repeat the answers but still students made many mistakes.

The bell rang and before leaving the classroom, the teacher gave the students a homework and that to write the answers of the sentences on their notebooks.

The teacher only gave his own examples and the example of the textbook. The students did not write anything except ticking the correct explanation for the first exercise.

### **Period 6: 7<sup>th</sup> grade**

The teacher entered the classroom, greeted the students and wrote the tilt on the board as “technologies” which is the tile of the unit. He asked some personal questions such as

“how old are you” and “how many sisters and brothers do you have”. Then he asked “ who can name some technologies” and the students named some technologies like the internet and mobile phones. He asked whether modern times with modern technologies are better than the past and the students answered with yes. The teacher said that today they are going to learn about reported speech.

The teacher wrote some sentence on the board such as “I have a new jacket”, “I am a teacher” and “there are boys”. He asked the students to report these sentences and he helped them reporting them and he wrote the “ he says: he has a jacket”, “he says: he is a teacher” and so on.

The teacher said “ now open you textbook on page 8, read Nidal” Nidal started reading and the teacher explained some points about pronouns and nouns. Then the teacher read exercise 2 and students started to answer. The students who answered wrote their answers on the board.

Then the teacher brought two students in front of the class and made them ask each other questions and the teacher asked the students to report their answers.

Then the teacher said “let’s do exercise number 3.” The question asks the students to work in pairs and to ask and answer questions to complete the table. The teacher asked the students to work in pairs for more than 5 minutes then he asked two students to come to the board to ask each other and to write the table on the board. The students copied the answers on their notebook though there are personal questions. Moreover, the students did not practice working in pairs in front of the teacher. The teacher said that only 6 to 7 students understand the lesson today and the rest did not understand anything.

Then, the teacher said “close the book, attention please.” He again asked another two students in to ask each other questions and the teacher asked the students to report their answers. There was no participation except for two or three students.

The teacher again wrote a sentence on the board and it was “Salma S. I am a teacher.” He asked the students to report the sentence and the one of the students said “ salma says she is a teacher.”

Again and for the third time during the same period, the teacher brought two students in front of the class and made them ask each other questions and the teacher asked the students to report their answers.

The teacher said “let’s now start a new page, page number 11. And he added “ Now, I will write some sentences from the textbook which you will turn into reported speech.” However, the bell rang and the teacher went out of the classroom.

**Period 7 : 12<sup>th</sup> grade**

The teacher entered the classroom, greeted the students and asked “what is the lesson about?” The students answered that it is about students at the first year of university. The teacher asked “How do you feel at the first day at the university?” and “what is required from you at the first year of the university?” the students answered from the text in the textbook. And the teacher continued asking questions which the students answer for from the text in the textbook.

The teacher said “let’s now go back to the book and answer the questions on the reading text.” Students one by one read the questions, gave answers and wrote them on the board. During doing the questions, the teacher asked the students questions on grammatical point such as “what is the function of the word well in this sentence” and so on.

The teacher moved to the next exercise that asks the students to read the passage and answer the questions while reading. The students started answering to the questions without reading the text, they gave oral answers without writing them on the board.

Then the teacher moved to the third activity that ask the students to tick the words mentioned in the text. Students mentioned words such as lecturer, lecture notes, and so on.

The teacher moved to the following activity that asks the students to complete the sentences with information from the text. The students wrote the answers on the board and the teacher asserted the number of the line of the text which gives the answer, for example, 1 is in line 34 ... and so on. During writing the answers on the board, one of the students asked if he can write the answer using his words, but the teacher said that it would be better to write exactly as the book.

The teacher moved to the next activity that asked the students to say what the expressions mean and what the words refer to. The students answered one by one and wrote the answers on the board. Again, the teacher pointed the number of the text lines that state the answers. The teacher asserted that the answer is in line 24 and the second answer is in line 34-35 and so on.

The teacher started doing the last exercise in the page, but the bell rang and the teacher said “even though the bell rang, we want to continue this exercise to finish this page.”

The teacher finished the last exercise and then went out of the class saying that today they were supposed to finish the next page as well.

### Period 8 : 11<sup>th</sup> grade

The teacher asked the students general questions about the weather and the match yesterday and then he writes the title on the board. The title was “Olympics ancient and modern” and it is the title of the reading text.

Then, the teacher draw a diagram of two circles, the first circle is for ancient Olympics and the second is for the modern. In the middle, the teacher wrote the words “time, flag, place, prize, flame, and kind”. Then, the teacher asked a students to come to the board and to start comparing between modern and ancient Olympics using the points in the middle, he compared between them in three aspects and another students then came and continued the comparison. What caught my attention is that students have memorized the text with all its details such as the number of competitors in each game, the dates, the places and many major and minor details. The teacher appeared to encourage the students to be able to memorize and rehearse the reading comprehension.

The teacher then said “yesterday we took the summary, and it was a homework, did you do your homework?” The students answered together that the homework is due to tomorrow not today. The teacher said that “you should all be able to summarize the text without looking at the textbook at all.” Then, the teacher asked a student to come and summarize the text for all the class and one of the students came to the front and started to mention all the details of the text without looking at the textbook.

The teacher opened the textbook on the page of the text, and asked about the meanings of some new words they had discussed yesterday such as “take part, united and represented” the students answered with meanings in Arabic. The teacher then said “today we will begin with vocabulary, it is easy, read them silently for two minutes. The teacher wrote the number s on board and one of the student answered and the teacher wrote the answers on the board.

Then the teacher said “move now to exercise 4, takes 2 minutes to work in pairs with your partner to find similar words or a word and its meaning in the same text.” Students started working together. The students had to find 8 words each word with its meaning in the same text. The students gave oral answers and the teacher did not write the answers on the board.

Then, the teacher said “let’s move now to exercise 5, read it silently.” The teacher wrote on the board three words “set, break and hold = record” He explained the different meanings of these phrasal verbs. Then he asked the students to read the question, and he gave them two minutes to do the 7 sentences of the exercise. One of the student started reading example 1 and the teacher interrupted him and asked him to go back and read the example

before the questions. Then, the students started doing the sentences and meanwhile the bell rang.

### **Period (9): 9<sup>th</sup> grade**

The teacher entered the classroom, greeted the students and wrote the title on the board as “unit 7( SB- 10&11).

The teacher started reviewing the vocabulary of the lesson as he asked about the meanings of some words such as “weather and let”. Then, the teacher said “ Let’s move and do the exercises page 10.” The first exercise requires the students to fill the spaces with the new words of the lesson. However, neither the teacher nor the students read the question of exercise number 1. Instead, the student immediately read the first sentence and gave the answer. The teacher wrote the answer on the board. Another student gave the answer for sentence two and so on, the teacher kept writing the answers on the board as “ 1. Captured, 2. Prevented, 3. Original and so on.” The students wrote the words on their textbooks.

When they finished all sentences of exercise one, the teacher said “let’s move to the next exercise, in which you have to bring new words from the text.” The students read the sentences, gave answers and the teacher wrote the answers on the board. The teacher also was looking on the textbook and searching for the answers with the students.

One of the words that the students needed to find from the text was “rebuild”. The teacher wrote this word on the board and said “we are going to take the use and meaning of (re) at the beginning of the words but after 10 minutes when we reach the next page.” And he continued writing other words on the board.

Then, the teacher said “I want you to imagine that you are going to the past or the ancient time and to pick someone who you wants to meet.” One of the students raised his hand and said “ I want to meet Einstein. Another student said that he wants to meet Salah Eldin because he wants to learn from him how he freed Jerusalem. The teacher commented on their answers by repeating their answers and then he said “okay, let’s now read activity number 5, who wants to read the captions of the two pictures?” The students read them, the captions are conversations between two students, one of them asks the other that if he could go to the past, who would he like to meet and why.

After reading the captions, the teacher asked the students the same question again and listened to some of the students’ answers.

The teacher skipped exercises 3 and 4 that ask for the some pronoun references and meanings of phrasal verbs.

Then, the teacher said “let’s now move to page 11. In the first exercise, we are going to delete or omit the words that do not belong to the category. He wrote an example on the board that was about colors and explained that the word sweet does not belong to the category of colors and so he is going to omit it. Then, he asked the students to think about the words in groups and gave them 2 minutes only to do the exercise. Then, the students started to give answers and the teacher asked one of the students to come to the board and to write all the correct answers on the board.

Then, the teacher pointed to exercise two in the textbook and said “now, we will fill in the blanks with these words, words from exercise one.” Another student came to the board and he wrote the answers that the students gave to him.

Then, the teacher said “the next exercise is simple and easy, but we are not going to write it on the board. It requires you to write the missing letters of the different adjectives.” Then, the students read the different adjectives with the missing letters.

The teacher then said “let’s move to the two sentences below, to fill the sentences with the adjectives of activity three, who wants to read the first one?” The students gave the answers orally.

The teacher said “let’s move to exercise 5 and it is very simple. It is about using (re) at the beginning of the words...” while the teacher was talking and explaining the exercise, the bell rang. He closed the book immediately and went out of the classroom.

### **Period 10: 12<sup>th</sup> grade**

The teacher entered the classroom, immediately after entering, he asked two students to get out of the class. He told me later that these two students have passed the English exam for the Tawjehi certificate and that that they only attend classes for other subjects which they failed to pass their exams.

The teacher then wrote the title on the board as “stress” which is the title of the unit. Then, he said “yesterday, we talked about stress in general, the main points that we talked about were stress types, symptoms, the emotional and physical signs of stress, and the things we can do to reduce stress or to get rid of it completely or partly. Today, we are going to read each paragraph and to discuss it in details and answer to this worksheet question.” The teacher distributed the worksheet to the students and then asked them to read the first paragraph silently and to answer to the first three questions.

The students read the paragraph silently, and then the teacher asked a student to read the first question loudly. A student read the answer from paragraph one and the teacher asked

to underline the answer on the textbook. The students did the other two questions in the same way.

While discussing the first paragraph, the teacher asked the students about the synonyms and the opposites of some words and one of them is normal. He pointed that they will take the opposite of this word and that is “strange” on page 76.

The teacher then asked the students to read silently from line 5-10 and to look at the questions in the worksheet. The students underlined the answers of the questions on their textbooks. Repeatedly, the teacher referred to some lines in the text and discussed the meaning of some words and phrases.

Again, the teacher asked the students to read silently till line 20 and to look at the questions number 5 and 6. The teacher discussed on the board the difference between forming the adjective and the adverb in the words that are mentioned in the text and that were “friendly and quickly”.

In the same way, the teacher and the students tackled the next two paragraphs. They also defined the reference of some pronouns mentioned in these paragraphs.

The bell rang while the students were reading silently one of the paragraphs and the teacher pointed that they will continue tomorrow.

While going out of the classroom, the teacher told me that he usually prefers to give the questions with their answers written on the same worksheet as this helps in saving time. He discussed with me that actually most of our teaching aims only to prepare students for the tests. Specially, Tawjehi tests.

When I looked at the worksheet questions, I noticed that they are all questions about some details which the students are expected to find from the text. The answers can be found in sequence from paragraph 1 until the last paragraph.

### **Period 11 : 7<sup>th</sup> grade**

The teacher greeted the students, then she wrote the title on the board and it was “ unit 11, period1”. And she wrote a subtitle that was “visiting a city” and that is the title of the unit.

The teacher asked the students to open their textbooks on page 11. The first exercise on this lesson introduces in a box a group of new vocabulary and asks the students to listen to the CD and repeat them. The teacher started by asking the students about the meanings of these words, they told the meanings orally and then asked the students to use them in full sentences. Thus, the teacher asked “what is the meaning of bridge? Do we have a bridge in Ramallah? Can you use the word bridge in a full sentence? And so on.” The teacher also

asked the students about the opposites of some of these words as modern, stopped, ugly and tidy.

The teacher then said “now, we have to work in pairs, look at the picture below, who can you see? Where are they? What are they doing? Why is the taxi stopping?” The students looked at the picture and started to give answers, most of them seemed that they have read the conversation at home as they gave answers exactly as what is mentioned in the conversation.

The teacher said “now, read the lesson silently. I will write three questions on the board and you should answer to them after finishing reading. The teacher wrote the questions on the board and they were “Is the taxi going fast or slow? Is the city busy or quite? Does the taxi driver like visitors to the city?” The students can find the answers for these questions easily from the conversation.

After finishing reading silently, the students raised their hands and answered to the questions. Then, the teacher asked the students to read loudly and each student read the speech of one of the characters in the conversation.

The teacher asked “How many speakers do we have? And Who are they?” the students answered to the teacher’s questions.

The teacher asked “is it in summer or winter and why?” one of the students answered that it is summer because the man in the picture is wearing a T-shirt. The teacher asked “are modern cities beautiful or ugly?” a student read the answer from the book in which one of the characters says that modern cities are beautiful and have a lot of modern places like restaurants and so on.

The teacher said “now let’s see period 2.” She means the next page as it is written there period 2. The first exercise asks the students to listen to the CD and to circle the word that is not mentioned. Because there is no CD as the teacher explained to me later, she read for the students and the students circled the word that the teacher did not mention.

Then the students moved to exercise 2, in this exercise the students read the sentences and chose the word to complete the sentence. The answers were given orally and the sentences were done without reading the question.

The teacher then said “now, we will fill the spaces with words from the box and then to match each word with the suitable picture below.” The teacher asked the students firstly to describe the pictures and then to read the sentences. The students described the pictures and then read the sentences and filled the spaces with the suitable words. Meanwhile, the teacher wrote the answers on the board. She wrote “1. Visitors, 2. Traffic, 3. Ugly, and 4. Untidy.” And the students wrote the answers on their books.

Then, the teacher asked the students to bring out their notebooks and asked Laila to do question number 1. The teacher did not read the question of this exercise but immediately started by asking the students to answer. The student read the first question, and gave the answer from the conversation and the teacher wrote the answer on the board and asked the students to write on their notebooks. Then, after finishing the first question, the teacher did not complete but told the students that they will stop here and complete this question the next class because there is only 2 minutes left.

Then she told them to prepare period 3 as tomorrow they are going to finish it.

### **Period 12 : 8<sup>th</sup> grade**

The teacher started the class by saying “now open your book on page 13, exercise number 3. Yesterday, we talked about how we compare between two people using the adjectives and adverbs of comparison.” Then, she wrote an example on the board and that was “Ali is a smart boy, he dresses smartly.” And asked about how the adjective is usually turned into an adverb. The students answered that this can be done by adding “ly” at the end of the adjective.

Then, the teacher reminded the students with irregular adjectives such as (good, fast and late). She wrote examples on the board on each of these adjectives and their adverbs while making comparison. She wrote: “Sami is .....than Ali (good), Sami is the ..... of all the students.

She explained the sentences to the students. And gave the students more examples on comparison. Then, the teacher said that this was a revision for the previous lesson. She also added “let’s now complete listening page 13.” The teacher started reading for the students without reading the question. The teacher read from the teachers’ book as she did not use the CD. When the teacher finished reading, she asked the students to go down to activity number 3 which gives questions about the listening passage. The teacher asked the students to read the questions and she listened to their answers on these questions.

Then, the teacher said “now, the last activity in listening is the difference between numbers that end with (teen) and (ty) such as thirteen and thirty. I will read for you, and you will tick the numbers you hear.” The teacher read the numbers from the teachers’ book and the students ticked the number that the teacher said. Then, the teacher asked three students to repeat these numbers.

The teacher then said “now, we will move to the last period of this unit and that is writing. The new writing is about public announcement. The idea is that there are two children who are lost and that whose mother is searching for them and wanted the

policewoman to announce about them.” She added “in any announcement, you need to give the names, the age and the description.”

She asked the students to look at the picture and to describe it. One of the students described the picture as there is a woman who is crying and asking the policewoman for help.

Then, the teacher read the note from the textbook to the students on how to write an announcement. Then, she told the students to read the description of the children from the book and their ages and names. Then she said “he wants us to read paragraph number 1 and to complete the other paragraphs.” The teacher asked one of the students to read paragraph one loudly and told the students that that paragraph should be copied on their notebooks. The students read what is expected in paragraph 2, 3, 4, and 5 loudly. Then, the teacher asked the students to bring out a paper and to write a draft of these paragraphs before writing them on the notebook.

The teacher left the students to work alone and the students started to ask questions to each other and sometimes calling the teacher to ask her questions. In general, most of the students appeared to be unable to write these paragraphs. Then, the bell rang and the teacher told the students that they are going to complete it tomorrow.

### Appendix 3: Transcription of English teachers' interviews

#### **Interviews with English teachers:**

##### **Interview 1**

1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson: Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

I look at the title of the units, and I look at the time schedule for the textbook and the time needed for covering the textbook, then I analyze the textbook and I depend on the this analysis and time schedule in addition to the content itself to prepare my plans.

-How to you write your daily lesson plans?

The same way as I write my yearly plans, depending on the textbook and the time schedule.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

I depend basically on the textbook and questions posed by me. I ask my own questions to evaluate the students. Sometimes, I use my own examples to clarify some points while explaining the lessons especially in language lessons (grammar).

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

Textbook exercises and activities are 80% helpful during classrooms. SO I depend on it in 80% percentage of the time of the classroom.

How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

Before giving the lessons, I assess my students by asking my own questions. During instruction, I assess them through oral questions and after the lesson, I assess them in oral and written ways.

2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

Since the principal "imposed" on me 25 periods per week for this year, there is no time for any kind of interaction.

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

I would like to discuss the content of the textbook, whether the time is sufficient to cover the textbook or not and in general the content of the textbooks. I only have one period that is free during the day.

### 3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

I usually have only one period that is free.

- How do you usually spend your free time?

I usually spend it either correcting paper or writing in the preparation book.

### 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

Yes, of course. This is because the final exams that the students need to be ready for.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

The can cause pressures on us because we have to finish the textbook to prepare the students for them and for most of the grade it is very difficult to cover the textbook.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

Yes, because they only focus on the negative points and ignore the positive one. They also require a lot of written work that is useless.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

Yes, of course. There are many reasons. First of all, the daily pressures on me, secondly, the boredom I suffer from repeating the same curriculum for more than ten years, thirdly, the long work- hours as there is no time to relax in addition to the huge amount of written work that they have required us to do which I think do not help us in any way.

## **Interview 2**

1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson: Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

I look at the content of each unit, what kind of grammatical structure and what kind of comprehension they have and depending on them I decide my yearly plan and what to give to my students. So I depend on the objectives of the lessons themselves, the objectives of the

units, I also depend on the sequence of the textbook unless I see a connection between two sections, I change a little bit in the sequence.

-How do you write your daily lesson plans?

Depending on the lesson itself. What kind of objectives it has.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

I depend on the lesson in the textbook, I can also use pictures, videos, this all depends on the nature of the lesson itself. Sometimes the textbook does not cover the concept, so we use other materials to facilitate the understanding of the students.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

No, most of them especially the grammatical most of them focus on sentence level. So we have to use tasks to improve our students' proficiency. We do not have to strictly abide by the exercises of the lessons. We have to use other activities.

- How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

To assess their previous learning, I ask some general question to get an idea of what they know. During the lesson, I use tasks and questions and after the lesson, I use exercises sometimes the exercises of the lessons help to evaluate the students.

## 2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

Yes of course, but not too much because of the limited free time that is available.

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

About what suitable devices, methods and techniques that we can use for our classes especially the secondary levels to facilitate their learning and to increase their motivation.

## 3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

One period only. I usually have 5 periods every day and only one free period. I only see my colleagues in the morning before classes or sometimes during the recess.

- How do you usually spend your free time?

I do not usually use this period to socialize with people, I use it to prepare for the next lessons, I look at the textbook and the nature of the lesson and I try to prepare my own material to facilitate students' understanding.

## 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

That we have too many lessons and units, we have to cover these materials. This usually frustrates us as teachers. The fact that we have to cover 6 units each semester and 12 units by the end of the year frustrates us.

I am usually concerned with the coverage of the textbook because we have directorate exams by the end of each semester and the whole book is expected to be covered. I have this problem with all the grades. I teach from 8<sup>th</sup> grade to 12<sup>th</sup> grade and I think all teachers suffer from this problem. If we do not teach the whole textbook, the students may fail in the exams.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

They do not evaluate our students efficiently. They depend on multiple choice and comprehension texts that the students have already studied in the lessons, so I do not think that they can evaluate the critical thinking of our students. Moreover, these exams are strictly abide by the textbook. For example, they all start with a comprehension text and the comprehension text is taken from the textbook. I think writing our own exams will be more valid. This is because I teach my students according to my own techniques and I spend a lot of time during classes giving them learning tasks that are not written in the textbook and I think I need to evaluate the achievement of my students in these tasks.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

Sometimes, because they always focus on the participation of the students and they count the number of the students who participate. They always tell us that we have to cover the material and we as teachers we cannot ignore any lessons. She asks for yearly plans, preparation notes, and samples of our students textbooks and I think written things do not reflect reality or what happened in the classrooms.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

Yes, of course. I continue my master degree in order to escape teaching. There are many pressures on us as teachers. Especially that students have weak skills and they always blame us for the weakness of the students and students do not have motivation to learn. Moreover, principals and supervisors impose new things on us every year even if we did not receive enough training to do them.

### Interview 3

#### 1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson:

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

First of all, you have to go over the material and try to pick the most important thing that I must teach, a good teacher must try to put an eye on time to finish the material in the suitable time. I always abide myself to the sequence of the textbook because I think it is very examined in a way that help the students. The textbook is well-planned”, the people who designed the textbook, the supervisors, are well trained, so I think it is very good to follow the sequence of the textbook.

-How to you write your daily lesson plans?

I try to take a look at the points I must cover in my period, and I try to specify a period for each unit, I must teach. I prepare the topic, discuss it and summarize it, give worksheet if I use a grammatical point to make sure it is easy for them.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

I try to verify the material I use, I do not only connect myself to the textbooks, I try to gather literature from different places, which makes me very confident because the students are very smart so the teacher should be good.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

I think the contemporary textbook is very helpful and good and it suites the need of the students and it also concentrates on language and on how we can use it in our daily life, not only on grammar. And yes I design my own material for speaking, for grammar, for listening, cause they will be more helpful and easier for the students for comprehending difficult kinds of activities, so that the lesson will not be boring, and students need to be exposed to different kinds of activities.

How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

If they take a certain grammatical point in previous class, I give a sentence example to check if they got it, and through questions and worksheets. I also use the textbook activities for assessment.

#### 2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

Yes, sure. We exchange experiences, review the main steps of teaching that we should follow to be more productive and to improve our students and we visit each other.

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

I do not have anything in particular, we can talk about different things.

### 3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

I have 25 classes per week, so I do not have any extra time during the day.

- How do you usually spend your free time?

Sometimes, I try to correct the notebooks for the students, writing quizzes, going through the textbook and the material I will give to the classes.

### 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

Yes, I am very concerned with covering all the material. I feel that time is not enough and that they need to reduce the number of units, sometimes to explain one page, we need four classes.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

They are very good, because we can rate the students and we can see the weak points of the students. I think the directorate exams cover everything, my exams look like the directorate exams because I abide by the big lines and I try to cover every point of the textbook.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

Sometimes, they try to interfere in everything specially about the time you gave to the students, and they blame you that you did not cover the material even if you could not because of external circumstances such as moving to the new school after a month!.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

Yes, I thought a lot and I tried to find any other job. This is because teaching is a heavy burden over my shoulders and that they require everything from us, and the things that we have to do are increasing every year.

## **Interview 4**

1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson: Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

Well, actually, it is okay for our supervisors to just use the first page of the book were all the materials written, the titles and the language and writing skills, I can sue this content page as a yearly plan and I just write the dates. I plan to each goal according to the content, each lesson for example has two or three goals I plan for them not as a whole plan for the whole year. I change the sequence of the material, I do it a lot because sometimes you know you start with the language lesson and I have to wait for another two lessons to get to the second part of the language lesson so I give it with the first lesson while the students still remembering the material. I always do that. I do not change the units of the textbook, I just change the order of the lessons of the units.

-How to you write your daily lesson plans?

I have to look at the lesson, then I start to limit my goals, how to start giving the vocabulary, what activities to use and what aid material should I use, which goal should I start with and move to the next goal and so on.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

Mainly the students' book, and I sometimes go through the internet for some lessons, mainly the students' book and the internet.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

Actually, most of them but not all of them. So sometimes, I have to change some exercises and replace them with other exercises and worksheets but most of them are rich. Yes, I do, for the comprehension and grammar.

How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

Before the classroom, we start with general questions about the topic to try to guess the background of the students, during the class I use some activities mostly I go to the internet and get some activities, and after the class I also I can use questions, tests, and the textbook activities.

## 2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

Yes, of course, we always, almost every Tuesday, we set together, we plan lessons together, we ask questions, we do not have problems with that.

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

Mainly language, sometimes we help other and we take worksheets from each other but mainly we talk about language. (Grammar).

### 3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

Sometimes, one class and sometimes two classes only.

- How do you usually spend your free time?

Surely, correcting the papers, preparing for the lessons.

### 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

As I said before, the time and changing the sequence of some exercises, I do not know if it is acceptable for my supervisors or not but I never tell them that.

Of course, I am concerned with covering the textbook, because I feel I have to end the textbook to cover it to the end, that is my feeling no matter of what the students may understand, I must hurry and I did not, I will be asked about that by the head teachers and the supervisors.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

They are good actually, and they are not so difficult, students could have an idea of what they are, of course, the worst part is that they require you to finish the whole book, and you know sometimes we cannot finish it so we have to skip some lessons like listening and speaking to give the vocabulary and the language.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

Sometimes, when I am used to the instructions of one of them and the next year a new one comes and ask for new things, everyone asks for different things, but in general they are good, they never asked about covering the textbook, because they either come at the beginning of the semester or in the middle, they never come at the end of the semester.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

A lot, I always do that, you know the quality of the students, you have physical pressures and psychologically you are tired, I love teaching itself, but I hate the quality of the students and the rule of the ministry, the pressures on us are huge.

## **Interview 5**

1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson: Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

I arrange my yearly plan or schedule according to the dates stated by the ministry of education, I choose my goals according to lessons and the students' level, their needs, different things, according their needs and things we are obliged to follow by the ministry of education and other authorities.

-How do you write your daily lesson plans?

Lesson by lessons according to the goals, I get the goals from the textbooks and the teachers' book and sometimes from the students' needs. I assign time according to the students' needs, levels and questions and your own plan.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

Many sources, sometimes the internet, grammar references, work sheet, I mainly depend on the textbook. We always try to get something new and to develop ourselves.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

Yes, mainly yes but not all the texts, not all the class, sometimes it distracts students, of course, I develop my material for grammar.

How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

According to their participation, according to their questions and their needs. Yes, of course I use the textbook activities as assessment tool, we have to use them, and they say we have to use them.

## 2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

Yes, often.

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

Grammar, and sometimes literature and many other things that come to our mind that we are obliged to discuss, the new things we face.

## 3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

Very little, just one period or two periods all day.

- How do you usually spend your free time?

I spend it working, I spend it from its beginning to the end working and sometimes with the five minutes between the classes. Preparation, worksheets, preparing for the students marks and writing.

#### 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

I always care about the quality not the quantity, how much they understand, I get worried a little. Nevertheless, you have to finish the material and to cover it by the ministry and other authorities. Yes of course, you are worried and stressed all the time, on the one hand you have to convey the material to the students and to make sure that they got it and on the other hand you have to finish the material so I think we are all the time in a conflict.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

They have many mistakes, they are not perfect and sometimes they are not suitable for our students' level but it is not a rule, moreover, they are a force on teachers to cover the textbook and they sometimes concentrate on minor things or not important details and they leave the main topics. -Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

No, we cannot say this, but it depends on their personalities, on the person himself, some people like to do this, depends on their character. Some supervisors we feel that you get help from them but others just stress you. They focus on written work like worksheets and content analysis and preparation. I think these works are just big punishment on us.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

Yes, many times, but unfortunately, it is not easy to find a suitable alternative. Because of the big burdens we have in schools especially in this school, I have been teaching in this school for ten years, and I am given 25 periods every week for seven years or more. This is a big punishment. We always say that this is too much but no one listens or cares.

### **Interview 6**

1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson: Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

I look at the contents of the book, then I choose my goals and I write the plan according to the content of the textbooks. Sometimes I change the sequence of the lessons because I believe that the teacher makes the textbook not that the book makes the teacher. If I feel that there is something more important, I usually start with it before other points.

-How do you write your daily lesson plans?

I prepare by reading the lesson, then I look at what the students need to do and then I write the plan.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

The textbook, flashcards and the board. Sometimes, if I can use the LCD but it is not always available.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

Yes, they are. I do not like to design my own activities.

How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

I ask questions, and I use the textbook activities and worksheets and activities on the board.

## 2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

Yes, we are cooperative.

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

Some difficulties, sometimes when I teach a new grade, and other colleagues have more experience than me, I ask for help.

## 3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

It is good, but it is very easy to waste them. This is the only year in which I have only 21 classes per week. But I waste them on written task I think they waste all of time on them though they are useless.

- How do you usually spend your free time?

I spend them correcting papers, writing exams, writing in the preparation book, checking the attendance of the students, recording the marks, and it is not enough. Actually, if I do not work at home, I will not finish anything. I work for two or three hours at home as well. Sometimes, if it is the midterms or the final exams period, I work for three or four hours.

## 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

I hope I can do it because I believe it is very helpful for the students and for me in the next years. But sometimes as I said before, we make the textbook, you can see there is a lot of

repetition in the units and I can skip some of them. I think I am concerned with covering the textbook because they put it for the benefits of the students. If the students finish the textbook, they will be better than not finishing it. I feel comfortable when I cover it.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

They are better than before, in the previous years when there was not such exams, many teachers were not concerned with covering the textbook, now they have the responsibility of finishing the textbook, I think this is good. And scarcely we find mistakes or problems on them.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

Sometimes, when I feel sick or not comfortable and they insist on attending the class. I also hate something that they count the number of the students who participate in the classroom. I think this is unfair because many students know but do not like to participate.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

Yes, I studied MA in translation and I hoped to change my work. This is because our work is very tiring and the written tasks are so exhausting and you do not feel that you teach as much as you write. The most interesting thing in my job is the 40 minutes in the class just, outside the class, it is tiring, it is killing, and it is exhausting. And these works are increasing every day, as much as I did that I have never any use of that. You do it, and you are not convinced of it and everything nothing, you can do the best thing during the class without writing about it. There is a lot of fear among teachers.

## **Interview 7**

1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson: Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

Usually I write them according to the textbook, I look at the material that I have to cover during the whole year and according to that I put my annual plan I also think about the resources that I may use or that I may need in order to apply all the things I want to cover in my plan. For example, if I want LCD, if I want a recorder or any authentic material, all of these things I actually take into my consideration before I do my annual plan.

To be honest, in teaching Tawjehi in particular I have to follow the sequence of the textbook but in other grades I did not stick to the regular sequence of the textbook because I sometimes consider students' needs. I want to do what is more suitable for them, sometimes I

skip some material, sometimes I adapt, sometimes I try to add something from myself, something that is new and I think will develop their skills and needs.

-How do you write your daily lesson plans?

Again my daily lesson plan, I look at the aims I have to cover in this day, then I put the aims, determine the procedures and the tools I will be using, I get the aims from the teachers' book because the aims in the textbook are identical with what I will do with my students and for the material I am going to teach them that day.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

There are lots of resources, for example, I mainly use the textbook or the students' book and the workbook, I use the LCD and the lab here in the computer lab, and sometimes you have to bring from outside other material, for example, if you needed something for authentic material such as pictures and realia, when for example I taught them unit 5 about money matters, I had to bring them my debit card and my visa card in order to show them real things and authentic things.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

Talking about Tawjehi, I think they are quite enough for them, and talking about other classes, the new material or the new textbook since I am doing my master thesis and I have to research and I have to look at them, I think that yes they are good, the new ones, the new English for Palestine, you can see a lot very wide different and colorful activities that students have to apply in order to get the material in the appropriate way, sometimes listening, sometimes role- playing and sometimes learner to learner interaction, so I think that the textbook and the activities are okay and enough.

How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

You know while we are teaching our students, at the beginning, you have to introduce the material and here you start introducing it by discussing the new topics with them, whether you are talking about comprehension or language topic, literature topic or whatever. That way, you depend mainly on questions, you try to interact with them in order to see their background knowledge about the topic you are doing. So here, I mainly depend on observation and oral answers. While I am teaching, I try to depend on what the textbook is giving to them, sometimes the textbook is giving some predictions, or some predictor questions in order to be sure that the students with me and are applying what I want, after the lesson, I usually do the activities of the textbook, I give them worksheets that I usually design according to their needs and the material in addition to short tests, and final exams.

## 2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

Well, if I want to talk about myself, actually I do not have time to see my colleagues and to sit with them, we have for English for example a committee and all the colleagues of English in each school have to meet twice each month in order to decide on what they are going to do in that month, hardly can I find time in order to see them and to interact with them, partly because of my teaching load and second issue since I am the deputy of the headmistress so I have a lot of things and a lot of administrative responsibilities. However, sometimes, during the break I ask them about something to organize such as special activities for English or talking about the morning assembly what are the activities for example the teachers of English.

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

Things we are going to do during that month, the responsibilities, and the aims that we are going to apply for that month. Sometimes, we talk about activities to do for the morning assembly or on how to activate using English for daily issues.

## 3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

I have free time but it is not free at all. In all the free periods, I have to carry out a lot of responsibilities concerning the administrative and the teachers and following up many issues in the school

- How do you usually spend your free time?

Doing things that are administrative, coping for the teachers and for myself, many things that the day ends up without knowing how it passed.

## 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

It is just the length of the textbook, talking about English for Palestine for the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades, I love these books, I always say it is a rainbow book it is a colorful book, all the materials are modern and all the issues are contemporary and the students are usually very interested while you are discussing them, but the only concern I have is how to cover the material in an appropriate way. Not just cutting material or counting paper, you want to make sure that the students get the most of the textbook. I am concerned because we have a strict outline to finish the material for the Tawjehi exams, so I have to take a lot of additional

classes, I am supposed to give only 10 periods for the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> but actually I give 18 periods every week. I give each one of them 3 more classes and usually as a seven period at the end of the day, so it is a heavy burden for me and my students. Sometimes the students themselves complain from this pressure and additional classes and I always tell them that it is a must not something optional.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

They are good, to talk frankly about the unified exams, I think it is a good chance for the students to be tested from someone out school, but for the teachers, most of the teachers feel that they have to run to cut the material and sometimes actually they do not do the work in the correct way or properly, they are covering the material very quickly to finish what they have to finish without considering other things such as the quality of their teaching.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

No, I do not think so. Actually, my supervisor she is helpful and cooperative, and she does not put on my shoulders any additional burdens because she knows very well what we are doing here at schools, and I am talking here especially about female teachers not males. Sometimes, I feel that I am a little bit feminist when talking about teaching, when we set to talk about males you will find that they hate supervisors as they think that they are throwing on them more and more work but I think that you only need to do your job and nothing more than that.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

I have always had that dream of getting out of schools and to teach at college or university. I like teaching but I do not like teaching at schools. This is because I sometimes feel that we are repeating ourselves each day and each year, you are not doing anything new. For our students, yes, it is new, they are being taught something new every day. However, talking about teachers and about myself, for example I have been teaching Tawjehi for more than 7 years using the same book. It is true that I love that book but it is enough. You have to get something new, new ideas, new ways of teaching, It is true we sometimes try to do something new but we cannot because we have restriction specially in teaching Tawjehi. Sometimes, I try new things with them as writing free writing or to work in groups, but then I ask myself where are you going and what you are doing, you are wasting the time of the students and the students themselves doubt if it is useful at this age to work in groups or to try something new. So I go back to the first choice and that is teaching for the test. That's why I feel sometimes that I am not upgrading myself and that I am still in the same stage nothing new.

## Interview 8

1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson: Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

I take some notes from the book, the textbook and the teachers' book. I write as notes, the number of periods, the goals and the evaluation. I get all the goals from the teachers' book. Almost yes, I follow the sequence of the textbook.

-How do you write your daily lesson plans?

For the 10<sup>th</sup> graders, I just write notes on the preparation book, I write the steps, the procedures that we will follow and the time.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

The books, poster cards, flash cards, the LCD, additional books.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

Yes, they are. The material is almost enough, so no I do not like to design my own material.

How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

Before the classroom, we make some discussions and questions to review the material, during the classroom, observations and questions, after the lesson, I use the activities of the textbook, the tests and exams.

2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

Yes.

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

We discuss the points of weakness of the students.

3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

Almost one or two periods. They are not enough to finish the work, I finish my work at home.

- How do you usually spend your free time?

Discussing different topics with colleagues.

#### 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

Yes, I think I do not have enough time, the number of periods are not enough to complete or cover the material. And we are obliged to finish the material because we have unified exams at the end of the semester.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

I think if we have to pass it, we need to finish the material. I think they should only include 4 units instead of 6 units in the final exam.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

Of course, because they ask about where did you reach. And what about your plans, they focus on written work.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

No, because I do not like teaching but I like English so I feel happy when I pass things to my students. I do not like written works and the pressures but teaching itself is interesting.

### **Interview 9**

1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson: Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

I usually write my yearly plan according to the template that is put by the ministry of education. I divide the time according to the units, and also the number of the students in the class play an important role. Some lessons take more than one period, when there is a larger number of the students, you need more time to give a chance for every students to participate specially the intermediate level from 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grades. Mostly, the new curriculum I follow the same sequence because I think it is written very well.

-How to you write your daily lesson plans?

I prepare weekly because some lessons take more than one period, so in a week, we achieve only two lessons. So I write the lessons and the number of periods it needs.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

Sometimes in addition to the textbook which is very important source, students themselves are another source, the situation itself, the class, the teacher, I depend on things that they can visualize.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

Yes, they are. They have many activities some of them are for writing and others for listening, others for pair works, sometimes I like to design my own activities generally in grammar lessons, and sometimes in vocabulary.

How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

At the beginning of the lesson, we need to present, and before presenting we need to know how much students know about the lesson, their previous knowledge. At the end of the lesson, it is very important to give a homework sometimes from the textbook activities that we have started and we ask the students to complete at home and some questions that are out my the teacher, like use the words in new sentences, if we have a situation, talk about situation that you yourself have.

## 2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

To be honest, I like to work with my colleagues as I am a very collaborative teacher, but since I teach the intermediate level, I find it very difficult to find time to work with others.

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

If I have the chance, I would discuss with them some extensive for the whole classes as reading classes and on how to deal with the weak students.

## 3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

Two periods every day.

- How do you usually spend your free time?

To be honest with you I finish all my work at home because I do not have time to focus very well. So preparing the plans, the worksheet, correcting the papers are all done at home. But here at school, I prepare the CD, the visual aids and other simple works that do not take time. I work for 90 minutes every day.

## 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

No, I am not concerned. I only covered 5 units out of 7 during the first semester., I focus on quality not quantity. I can finish 7 units but without focusing on the quality of students' learning.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

It is a pressure and it depends on the ethics of teachers, I can finish 6 units but my students won't be able to grasp most of the important things. I feel sometimes that I have to finish the textbook and sometimes parents overestimate these exams which result negatively on the students. Sometimes my exams are much better than the exams.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

Not all of them, some of them have a friendly relationship and others come only to disappoint you and to be showy. And I do not think that they can evaluate us appropriately because most of them has left teaching for years and so they are not in the field of teaching, some of them have left teaching for 12 years, so they have not mastered the textbook, they do not know within lines of the textbook.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

Yes, because I am tired and disappointed. I am disappointed when I feel neglected by the students, supervisors and the ministry rules. So I decided to quit teaching a lot but then I return back. The written work causes a lot of pressure on me.

## **Interview 10**

1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson: Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

I write the main objectives, I write the dates when I begin the unit and when I have to finish the unit, then I write the grammar topics, and the other topics. I use the content of the textbook as a source of my goals. I follow the same sequence of the textbook.

-How do you write your daily lesson plans?

First I prepare the lesson at home, I read the contents of the lesson, and I read the steps of the lesson to prepare how I will teach each step. Then, when I come to school in the morning, I wrote this down in the preparation notebook. I write the objectives, the steps and I write the evaluation.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

I depend on the pupils' book and on my own knowledge, I have 13years of experience in teaching so I can give the lesson without any preparation. Today I explained without looking at the textbook because I know all the information.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

Not always, not all of them. I think that some of them are higher than the students' level, so sometimes I skip them and give other alternative activities. Today, for the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, we had the passive voice, many of the activities were not helpful and useful. Thus, instead of giving the textbook activities, I prepared a worksheet, and I wrote the sentences on the blackboard and we worked on them or gave them as a homework for the students. I design activities mostly for grammar because textbook activities are usually complicated and higher than the students' level.

How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

I try to revise the previous material, I ask them questions to recall their knowledge. During the classroom, by doing the textbook exercises and at the end of the lesson, I ask them to do the textbook activities. I can also ask them to give their own sentences.

#### 2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

Yes, of course we have time.

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

For example, if I have problems in teaching something, I try to ask him how he teaches this point.

#### 3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

One period or two periods daily.

- How do you usually spend your free time?

If I am ready for my lesson, I try to do extra work such as content analysis, chatting with colleagues.

#### 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

In my opinion, I do not think that we have to cover all the textbook. Better less but better. You have to focus on quality but they do not give us the chance to do so because they are making the directorate exams, you can not decide what to give. So we are obliged by these tests. But my own feeling, I do not think we should cover the textbook. I focus on vocabulary,

grammar, listening and writing but I do not think I need to give every activity in the textbook, I can skip some of them.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

The main aim is to force teachers to finish the textbook. This is because there is no difference when I write the exams, and when the ministry writes the exam.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

Yes, of course. They ask for a lot of written work or stupid written work. It is just a waste of time such as content analysis. I have to do things that I am not convinced of doing. I do it just to silence them.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

I think about it a lot. It is not a good career because it is not well-paid, it is not prestigious, it is very tiring and exhausting and I always wonder what the hell I am doing here.

## **Interview 11**

1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson: Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

First of all, I follow the textbook itself. I try to determine what the text talks about. If the text is about comprehension, I should write the aims about comprehension and if it is about grammar, I should write them about grammar. Sometimes I go back to the students' knowledge and to my own experience and knowledge. Sometimes, I go back to the sequence of the textbook or the teachers' book and sometimes according to my own experience.

-How do you write your daily lesson plans?

I read the material, and I decide what the text is about and I decided how to explain it.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

My own knowledge, my own experience. Sometimes I go back to the students' book, sometimes to the internet and sometimes to other reference books but not always. Sometimes, I do that in grammar.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

Yes, Sometimes I feel they are helpful and sometime I feel they are not helpful. According to the grammar lesson specially, I write my own sentences and explanation, I write example sentences on the board, I let the students read them and explain the form, then I go

back to the students' book and the workbook and I ask them to do the exercises of the textbook or other activities. Sometimes, I give them homework from the textbook and sometimes worksheets.

How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

I give them a revision, it is important to warm up the students which means to relate the material of the last lesson and the new. I do this during explaining too. After the lesson, I use the textbook exercises, writing questions on the board, worksheets and tests.

### 2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

Yes, of course. It is very important to cooperate with other teachers. Teachers must not feel arrogant or feel shy of asking other teachers. Teachers' should look at themselves as I am the top or I am perfect or I have been teaching for 20 years. All teachers should ask each other's.

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

Sometimes I advise the teachers on how to explain a reading passage for example, how to explain it and the main ideas you are going to talk about, how to teach the comprehension passage, is it only as it is mentioned in the textbook or to ask about the synonyms, the opposites and the references and so on.

### 3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

Because I am the head deputy, I teach the 12<sup>th</sup> grade and so I have a lot of free time.

- How do you usually spend your free time?

Sometimes I spend my free time in administrative issues, with my colleagues or a lone. Sometimes, I write worksheets, reading for the lessons and that's it.

### 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

Yes, of course. It is very important for me especially for the Tawjehi to cover all the material. It is very important because the students are going to be examined and in order to prepare the students for these exams and to get high marks. I think English language is very important and that the students will need it whether they study in local universities or abroad. So I try to make my students practice the language, to give presentations sometimes about the reading text and sometimes I give them a title and they should prepare and talk about it.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

I think all these exams are good. I do agree with them, this is because some teachers do not write perfect exams, here over there, many teachers write all the questions and they must cover all the textbook and this is the first point. The next point is that 11<sup>th</sup> grade student should get prepared and ready on how to take such exams and how they are evaluated. This will make the 12<sup>th</sup> grade exams easier for them because they have got used to these exams.

And I agree with you that they push the teacher to finishing all of the textbook.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

According to me No, I am good with all of them. I have a friendly relationship with them. They focus on written things and on everything but I like to prepare everything for them. I like to get everything required from me ready all the time.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

No, because I love teaching English since I was a little child in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. I used to like English and to be good at it and so I decided that I should specialize in English and to become an English teacher. I can handle all the pressures. I find myself inside the class.

## **Interview 12**

1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson: Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

I usually write my plans depending on the curriculum and according to the time (for each unit). I choose my goals according to the materials each unit includes and I often achieve these goals in sequent.

-How to you write your daily lesson plans?

The daily plans are usually written every two or three days and sometimes late.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

I depend on the textbook and some references internet and experience.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

Yes, the textbook activities are rich and enough. I sometime write worksheets.

How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

Evaluation usually through reading, ongoing exams and answers.

2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

Yes, I interact with my colleagues.

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

We discuss the material, problems, weak students and exams.

### 3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

I usually have one or two periods.

- How do you usually spend your free time?

I spend my free time doing the school activities or nothing.

### 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

Yes, I am concerned about the textbook and covering it. This is because I have final exams at the end especially for the Tawjehi.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

They are good. However, I think they made our role as only teachers who are preparing students for tests.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

Supervisors are gentle.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

I want to work on something related to Psycholinguistics. I love this domain a lot. I hope I can continue my master degree in psycholinguistics and then work as a researcher. Teaching is not bad but I do not feel that I am developing or updating my knowledge. Again, I think my duty is only to prepare students for tests.

## **Interview 13**

1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson: Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

I depend on the curriculum, the textbook itself and I can source them.

I don't follow the sequence of the textbook all the time. I change sometimes, you know the listening activities they usually start with reading and then listening and I do not

think that this is good for the students, and so I change it. I change between the lessons but I keep the sequence of the units.

-How to you write your daily lesson plans?

Actually, I write lesson plans each 3 or 4 days it depends, but before going to the class, I have to look at the lesson and prepare on my mind what to do. With experience, it becomes easy to do that. I sometimes look at the teachers' book.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

I usually use the textbook and its exercises. I can go back to the internet and write worksheet. I look if there is unclear points, I go back to the internet and I google it. I learn the way or the teaching method from the internet.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

I think the contemporary textbooks are better than the previous one. I like to use my own activities, these days, I use the PDP (previous, during, post) plans or framework it is a framework for reading. So for example, if you have a reading lesson, you should follow reading 1, reading 2, and reading 3.

I think the texts in the Palestinian curriculum is not good. However, I do not think that the ministry will allow us to change, I like to do that but the rules and the instructions do not allow us to do that. We need also listening lessons that are more real and interesting to the students. In writing, you can change easily.

How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

I usually encourage them to prepare at home. I also created a facebook page for them to interact with me.

## 2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

Yes of course.

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

The school plans, the midterms and exams and some ideas.

## 3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

I have much free time. I give 20 periods weekly so I have enough free time.

- How do you usually spend your free time?

Using my phone and facebook and we can discuss different topics about politics and different topics.

With experience, I have been teaching for 6 years so far so I do not need to work at home. I have enough time at school to prepare and look at the curriculum.

#### 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

No, I usually finish the book. It is very important to finish it. I think it is psychologically very important to me to finish the book, and for the students you are making them improve in English. Sometimes, at the beginning of the year, students are lazy, but by the end of the semester, they study harder and do better. I think it is very important to finish the textbook not only 2 or 3 units of the whole book.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

They are good. Because I finish the whole book each semester so I do not think they are of any source of pressure on me.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

They are great. I do not think they appropriately evaluate me because they only attend one period during the semester, I think they are not a pressure but they do not bring anything new that we can benefit from.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

That was before four years, now I do insist on continuing in my career. I like teaching but I do not like teaching at schools. I hope to continue working in teaching but in a different place other than schools. Simply because of the bad salary and because of the routines. As you know, here in the Palestinian schools, routines kill you. We follow the same books and you cannot source or bring any new or different material. So you stay where you stand, you cannot improve. In different places, like private schools or colleges, you can change and develop yourself.

### **Interview 14**

1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson: Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

I have it and I write them at the beginning of the semester. I divide them according to the units. Each unit needs 3 weeks at least. It depends on students themselves and the grade. I

always follow the sequence of the textbook. I try to give the students the most important points. I always try to let students depend on themselves. I avoid asking them and continuing the lesson without participation of the students.

-How to you write your daily lesson plans?

Frankly, I have been teaching for 18 years. I only look at the titles and know what I am going to tell the students about whether grammar, or vocabulary. Sometimes, I do not look at the textbook at all so I make preparation in mind. I always do worksheets for my students.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

I always try to use the LCD and the PowerPoint specifically for the reading texts, I use questions, and pictures. I always ask the students to come and tell the most important points in the paragraph, to come and make a summary. I also give vocabulary, opposites and questions otherwise I do not think students will be able to recognize things by themselves. I think this is the job of the teacher to help the students to skim and scan the most important points in the text, to be able to summarize the most important points of the lesson. This encourages the students to speak loudly and to tell their opinions and to have self-reliance.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

Yes, the 11<sup>th</sup> grade textbook has a great relation with what the students will take in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. They integrated together specially the 11<sup>th</sup> and the 12<sup>th</sup> grade textbooks. I like to determine what I have to give whether reading, vocabulary or grammar and to give more examples so the students can understand the idea. In grammar for example, I like to give examples and then the rule. The 10<sup>th</sup> grade textbook does not give the rule, but personally I like to give the grammatical rules to the students to help them recognize what is in their textbooks.

How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

Before the lesson, I have to tell them the aim and the time. The aim for each lesson should cover 3 aspects that are:

To introduce the topic and tell them what you are going to teach.

To tell the students the main things.

I should conclude what we took since the beginning of the class.

2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

I think there is cooperation. I always allow my colleagues to attend my classes. The first semester, Mohammed attended twice. I think exchanging experiences is very necessary because if I have anything that is incomplete, my colleagues will help me.

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

We always discuss whatever we have in the reading text and how to explain things to our students. We also discuss the worksheets and how to help students recognize things and the most important thing is to give them the questions and the answers on the same worksheet, or sometimes to write the line of the answer for example line 2-4. I think skimming and scanning the texts are important skills.

### 3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

I have one or two free periods daily. I give 22 periods every week.

- How do you usually spend your free time?

I spend my free time preparing, correcting papers, and working on the laptop for the new material. Sometimes, chatting with colleagues.

### 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

Yes, because I got a plan and I have to complete it like other school because this cause problems with students. Students will never be able to do it by themselves. I criticize English teachers who do not finish the curriculum.

If I talk about the unconscious of myself, I feel unconsciously I feel that I have to complete all the texts.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

I do agree with them. They tackle all the material from unit 1 to the last unit. This encourages the teachers to complete all the units. Sometimes, you need to force people to do something, otherwise this will be useless.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

I have friendly relationship with them. I accept their critic. Yes, they focus on written work and I try to be ready for everything.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

At the beginning of teaching, I thought a lot of changing my career. I thought that it is unsatisfactory for me, but then I stopped thinking because I have a family now. It is hard to

change your career. In order to be satisfied, you have to do two things, to be faithful in your job, and to do your job well. Motivation is very important as well.

### **Interview 15**

1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson: Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

The semester plan depends on the time of the semester when does it start and when does it finish and how many units and in your plan you try to cover all these units within the time of the semester. The goals are written in the teachers' book. I do not follow the textbook as the Holy Quran, there are some lessons that are repeated in other units so I see that it is better for the students to take them together like the passive voice. It is explained in unit 1 and they explain it again in unit 12, by that time the students would have forgotten everything, so I give it to them all in unit 1.

-How to you write your daily lesson plans?

It depends on the lesson itself. The goals are already written in the teachers' book and it is written how you give it exactly. This is for new teachers, if something goes of what I want to give, I follow it if not I use my own way.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

Of course, the students' book and it depends on the lesson that you are going to explain. Sometimes you need the overhead projector, sometimes videos, sometimes I use the computer, sometimes acting and I mostly use group work.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

Somehow they are useful. Of course, I like to design my own activities in every part of language. For example, when I give a reading text from the book, I do not give it exactly as the textbook, I sometimes use Jigsaw, and I give it using posters. It depends on the nature of the text, you decide the best way to give it.

How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

Worksheets, oral questions and exams.

2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

No, there is no time. This is because we are overloaded. We have a lot of works. And the written works that we have to write and write, this takes a lot of the free classes, and you need double classes to finish it. But we exchange experiences, we ask each other between classes or in the breaks.

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

Sometimes you ask about a certain grammar, for example, how you are going to give it to the students because experience is very good, I continued my master degree, I benefited from what I take as much as I benefited from my colleagues experience. My previous experience was very rich and it helped me a lot as much as the master. So we exchange experiences as we are not all the same, each teacher gives the structure in a certain way. We do\

not hesitate to ask each other if we doubt the information. Many times we asked about a meaning of a word or something else, we do not feel shy to ask, we only care about giving the right information to our students.

### 3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

Two periods only.

- How do you usually spend your free time?

Writing for the ministry, analysis, and nonsense things. I think this time should be used to design activities or writing worksheets. I do not benefit at all from that written work. It is just writing papers and these papers will be thrown in the rubbish basket. The only thing we benefit from are the worksheets but the other written works are with no use neither to the teacher nor to the students.

### 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

No, I am not. I care about quality and not quantity. I told them from the beginning that 12 units are too much. They should be less, if there is a material in the final exam that is not covered, I ask my students to delete its questions.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

You know of course I like to write my own exams, but I do not think they are more difficult than mine. I think the goal of these exams is to tell teachers how to write exams because many teachers do not know how to write exams. They also focus on covering the material as they try to write questions on each unit of the book.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

No, some of them can evaluate me appropriately. They do not focus on written works, they only focus on the periods. They only check the written works. I think supervisors focus on written works if they do not like the class or the way the teacher explains.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

Actually yes, I have very good qualifications. I have graduated from the University of Jordan, and I was the first case of the teacher who started teaching directly after graduation in city schools without teaching in villages. I also graduated from master with excellent degree. I like teaching as teaching is a message and a duty. However, after 17 years of teaching, I started to feel exhausted. I do not feel evaluated neither financially nor psychologically. And you know, financial matter does not bother me a lot. What bothers and hurts me is that huge amount of written work that we have to do. You know I have pain in my right hand because I am writing and writing all the time, so I start to have health problems and that is why I am seriously thinking of changing my career.

## **Interview 16**

1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson: Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

I have a schedule on my computer, I fill it yearly from the students' book. I think we have to follow the sequence of the textbook because I teach the 12<sup>th</sup> grade even the 11<sup>th</sup> grade we cannot change because of the directorate exams.

-How do you write your daily lesson plans?

Because of the years of experience, I know all the material. I go through it quickly because I know it and sometimes I make a review.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

Basically the text book and sometimes worksheets.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

Yes, and I give extra worksheets specially worksheets for vocabulary and grammar.

- How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

Asking questions, quizzes and through tests.

2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

No, I don't have time because I give extra periods for the 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

Goals of the contents, midterms and other exams.

### 3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

One period, and on Thursday I have two periods.

- How do you usually spend your free time?

I take classes from other teachers, preparing and writing exams.

### 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

Yes, and I do my best to cover it especially for the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. Sometimes, I couldn't cover the last units, so I focus on language and vocabulary only. I think I'm obliged to cover all the text book because we have standardized exams at the end, so we have to cover each small point.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

They are non-reliable and they bring for the students hard things that are above their levels, I think they are designed to force teachers to cover all the text book, and I also think teachers have to cover everything.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

Sometimes they can't evaluate you appropriately from one class. They also focus on written works which I think they are useless.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

No, even though teaching is difficult and tough, and I suffer from alot of pressures, I feel satisfied and I do my best.

## **Interview 17**

1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson: Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

From the content page of the textbook. I use it and add to it the dates only. I put the dates according to the time schedule that the head teacher gives us at the beginning of the year. I always follow the sequence of the textbooks.

-How to you write your daily lesson plans?

At first, I look at the text. In each lesson, we have more than one activity, I look at all of the activities and I depend on the activities. I do not skip any activity.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

I use some methods in teaching, such as CDs, flash cards and also the textbook activities.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

Yes, I think it is not necessary to change but they change, I follow the change.

How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

I keep asking questions, and I change my way of teaching.

## 2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

No, most of the time no. I have 24 periods per week and my schedule is very bad.

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

We discuss methods of teaching, the plans, exams and the ideas.

## 3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

Two periods only.

- How do you usually spend your free time?

I spend the free time writing, correcting and writing exams.

## 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

Yes, I always finish the textbook because there are important grammar points and I am obliged to cover it by the supervisors.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

Useful. I think they force teachers to finish the textbook and I should follow it (covering) but it is for the benefits of the students.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

No, not all of them. They focus on written works.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

No, I like being a teacher. At the beginning, I hated it. But now I love it because I like to deal with the teachers.

## **Interview 18**

1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson: Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

I write my yearly plan from the teachers' book. Sometimes, I use the textbooks and sometimes I see teachers' in the YouTube. Sometimes, I change the sequence of the textbook because we do not have time for every exercise. Sometimes, I make two periods in the same lesson and sometimes one period.

-How do you write your daily lesson plans?

I prepare for daily lessons by reading from the teachers' book for one period or two periods if I want to make them in the same day and sometimes I read only one page. Sometimes I see YouTube if I want to teach grammar for example present perfect or past. I watch YouTube videos for teaching grammar.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

I write the answers and through the answers I give the rule. I do not use the textbook, I listen to YouTube sometimes and I read the teachers' book.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

Yes, I think they are enough most of the time.

How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

I ask them some questions before I start the listen to check if they can follow or not. During the lesson and after the lesson I keep asking them questions and write sentences on the board.

2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

Yes, I have. Sometimes I have doubts about certain points for example about grammar, so I ask other English teachers' about them.

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

About grammar. This is because in listening and speaking I am good, but sometimes I need to ask them about grammar and sometimes about writing.

### 3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

Sometimes 40 minutes every day or one period. It is hard to finish all the work during the school time and the supervisors know that. I work at home every day about 2 hours working with the teachers' book and the textbook.

- How do you usually spend your free time?

I do all of my work at home such as preparation. During the school time, I only do some simple things like preparing the CD.

### 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

Yes, I always try to cover it because the supervisors like that. I think teaching only some lessons and the students understand them is much better than covering all of the textbook without understanding. You know I teach boys and each lesson only 6 to 7 students understand the lesson and the others do not understand or keep complaining.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

I do not have a problem with them. I think I have to reach the last unit, but in this school but in the previous school I used to cover it because the students were much better.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

I only see him or her once each semester, if he wants to advise me or tell me to do something. There is no communication between me and the supervisor.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

No, I have been teaching only for 4 years, I used to work as a painter in Israel but after the closure I started to work as a teacher and I do not have any other alternative.

## **Interview 19**

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

I write my yearly plans after I look through the text book. The plans are divided into general goals for each unit, the time for each unit, aids which I used to achieve the goals and

general notes. I choose the main general goals for each unit which the students should learn from each unit. I sequence these goals from the most important to the least important ones.

How to you write your daily lesson plans?

I write my daily plans after I look through the unit in general. The plans are divided into the specific goals, the time for each unit, aids which I used to achieve the goal, assessment procedures and general notes.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

The text book, visual aids such as pictures, extra information from other books, web pages and real things.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

Somehow they are good. Depending on the time, I designed some new activities which are real to students' lives.

-How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

Before: Ask them some questions to know their background information about the new learned topic. During: by observing them, asking and answering the questions and correcting their mistakes to give them the suitable feedback. After: tests and homework.

2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time? Yes

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues? Students' weaknesses, their achievement in English in general and the different ways to develop their English language and overcome their weaknesses.

3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

It depends on the teacher's schedule. Some days, I don't have any free classes except the lunch break at 10:10 am while in two days; I have 2-3 free time classes.

- How do you usually spend your free time?

I correct the papers and chat with other teachers.

4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

The English text book is encapsulated with the materials. At the same time, majority of the students are low achievers of English, so it will be a hard process to finish the material on time. And I have to finish all the material because of the final standardized exams.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams? I think that they should be cancelled and they are waste of time.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you? Yes

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

Yes, because the teachers are the only responsible for the weaknesses of the students from the Palestine educational system in general. This system cause many pressures on teachers. At the same time, students don't want to do anything to improve them.

## **Interview 20**

1. Teachers' role in planning for their lesson: Defining the goals, the process, the outcome, and the evaluative criteria for assessment.

-How do you write your yearly plans? How do you choose your goals? How do you sequence these goals?

I wrote my yearly plan based on the numbers of units for each grade and the time or period I need to finish each unit. I choose my goals based on the skills I have in each unit, and I usually choose one objective for each class to focus on.

-How to you write your daily lesson plans?

I just write quick points taken from my content analysis because I believe that the creative teacher doesn't need to write every single point in his/ her preparation notebook.

- What are the sources that you depend on for the presentation of the material?

Textbook, internet, and my colleagues.

- Do you think that the textbook activities are rich and helpful? Do you design your own classroom activities?

I think that all teachers should (sars) : select, adjust and reject activities needed in his class whether they are taken from the textbook or not.

How do you assess the learning of your students before, during and after the classroom?

Before: by brainstorming or the warmer activities.

During: Pair work or group work

After: a task or a worksheet

2. The level of social relations between teachers.

- Do you interact with colleagues during the school time?

All the time

- What are the topics that you usually or that you would like to discuss with your colleagues?

Activities we need to improve students' achievement in English at our school.

### 3. The intensification of the teachers' work.

- How much free time do you have during the teaching day?

70-120 min

- How do you usually spend your free time?

I do all my preparation and schoolwork at school because I don't believe that teachers should work at home!

### 4. Teachers' concerns about the textbook.

-What are the main concerns that you have about the English textbook? Are you concerned with the maximum coverage of the material? Why?

The English textbook is very long for both students and teachers and I am concerned with the maximum coverage of the material because students in directorate of Ramallah and Al-Bireh have standardized final exams so we as teachers have to cover the whole material.

- What do you think about the standardized final exams?

I don't think that students should have exams at all specially in English language, because it is a second language and most students hate it, but if we are given the chance to teach it in our own way, by using different activities, educational games and projects with giving no exams, I am sure that we will have good and motivated English learners.

- Do the English supervisors cause any pressures on you?

No she doesn't.

-Have you ever thought of changing your career as a teacher? Why?

Maybe I will do in the future, but currently I think that I like teaching.

## Appendix 4: Transcription of Supervisors' interviews

### **Interview 1**

At the beginning of the semester, how do you expect the English teachers to prepare for their lessons?

Teachers are expected to make their lesson plans, and to analyze the content, to prepare for their lesson and their textbooks, to know what they teach their students.

Teachers must put an aim and apply it. The outcome should achieve the goal they prepared for the students. The aim is set according to the lessons of the textbooks and the content itself.

During the semester, how do you assess the progress of the English teachers and their performance?

We call this forming assessment. We check if the teachers achieve the goals they set at the beginning, I look at the students' achievement. I ask the students about the previous material. I also make sure if the teachers follow their lesson plans, and the preparation. Maybe I assess the teachers through the workshops. If they apply what they took in the workshop, this will be a good indicator, but if they do not follow it, I think they will be in trouble.

What are the indicators that you depend on by the end of the semester to evaluate the work of the English teachers?

We have written reports. We put marks for the teachers and we call it formal assessment. I do not focus on covering the textbook as long as the teachers have covered the main concepts of the textbook.

How do you think an English teacher may fulfill or fail her/his expected role?

The successful teacher follows the main steps in teaching that are:

He uses different strategies.

He uses different materials.

He applies what he learns in the workshops.

He follows the preparation.

How does MoE look at the final achievement test? What is/are the purpose of these test?

These tests focus more on the whole skills of language. Many teachers skip listening and writing. We want to make sure that teachers have covered such skills. Some teachers do not give their students speaking at all or listening. So in our exams, we focus on the four skills. And that's why students get low scores in these exams. We blame teachers for their

low- achievement. Teachers do not teach listening and speaking because they are afraid of teaching them, they do not want to make mistakes and they also lack the strategies of teaching these skills. It is not an issue of time because teachers should know how to manage time.

Does MoE focus on the grade-specific objectives and require teachers to know (and follow) them? Are these objectives important in teaching (or helpful for teachers)?

Teachers must know the objectives, and teachers must know and follow them. This can be done through supervisors. They should make sure that teachers follow and fulfill these objectives.

One main complain of teachers is that they cannot ‘cover’ the required textbook. Do you think that the English textbooks can be covered within the time limits of the semester?

No, I do not think that it can be covered. They need more periods. There are repeated subjects. For example in grammar. So teachers can focus on them in one lesson and skim them quickly in the other lesson. Teachers can skip some exercises but they cannot skip reading, comprehension and vocabulary.

The ministry should extend more periods or reduce some of the points. Teachers have no time to go beyond the textbook. If the teacher knows what he is going to teach, he can manage time. I think teachers have problem with time management.

## **Interview 2**

At the begging of the semester, how do you expect the English teachers to prepare for their lessons?

To look at the material itself, to know the number of the days without the holidays, then to start writing their plans. Then to divide the number of contents according to the number of days. And of course to write time for each quiz and for each exam. This can give then a first look how to carry out all the content within the available days.

For a lesson, they have to write the objective and to know how time they need for each goal and to evaluate the students whether they achieve the goals or not. The goals are contented directly to the content, or what should the students learn from this page, then to time out all the activities and to see if you can carry them, if you think that some of the goals cannot be covered in one period, they can postpone some goals to the next class. To decide how much time I need here. I do not expect teachers to write everything in preparation, just the goals, the activities and the questions for assessment.

During the semester, how do you evaluate the progress of the English teachers and their performance?

Teachers are expected to assess students after each objective, to make sure that the students have reached the objective, to use worksheets. Sometimes the preparation book. She can assess the students from the textbook itself, if it has worksheet or exercises or activities she can do that

What are the indicators that you depend on by the end of the semester to evaluate the work of the English teachers?

I can ask students about certain objectives, I expect students to know this and this and this material so I can ask questions, I can give a worksheet, I can look at the results of the students after looking at the exams. The type of questions the teacher uses reflect a lot about her teaching, If the teacher asks questions about a certain material this means that she has taught it but if she does not dare to ask about it, this means that she has skipped or did not teach it, you think it is not important or that you do not want to teach it or it is very difficult for students to absorb, many reasons why you ignored that.

How do you think an English teacher may fail to fulfill her/his expected role?

The same answer like the previous question.

What do you think the purpose of final achievement tests?

Obviously, one of the goals but not the main is to check whether the teacher has finished the material of the textbooks, sometimes you want to ask about basic things and you want to see if the teachers spent time during the class giving this idea or explaining the material, some teachers skip that content for their own purposes because it is basic content and you want whether the students know this content or not. If we look at the exams of teacher, the content they believe or they think to be not important, they never ask about it. An example of this is speaking, listening and writing. They skip them because they need a lot of time and efforts from the teachers and we know that these skills deserve. Some teachers who have experience more than 3 or four years do not want to go to any training course. Some of them do not like to attend training, some teacher do not want to do more efforts or to do extra work or to have anything that change them, they just want this page, read it and give it.

Do you think English teachers are expected to know the grade-specific objectives? Are they important in their teaching?

I think yes they know, I think 90% or more of the teachers know that. But sometimes, if they want to facilitate things for the students they know they have to work harder and here we have a gap. Do teachers really from the inside want to work harder, if they want they will get back, but most of the teachers they do not want to work harder than what they do today, this is the gap. If you want to get better results you want to work harder, most of them know that.

The textbook will help you to know these objectives, If we use the vocabulary of the textbook, we will gradually train for example our students to speak. If we just follow the textbook, I think we can we can make things easier for our students. start speaking using the words using the topics they can expand their skills. But we want teachers who starts.

Do you think that the English textbooks can be covered within the time limits of the semester?

Yes, if we divide our textbook into objectives. If I want my students to speak, to understand what they listen, to read, to write, if each class I trained my students on all the four skills, students will have the skill by the end of the semester. Teachers should set goals for speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Good teachers should determine what the students are going t be asked about at the exams and to teach it. Most teachers have this experience and that is not to waste time. Sometimes, I attend classes and I notice that teachers waste time on things not important or related. Teachers have to work outside the classroom to decide how to teach but most teachers do not like to work outside the classroom before coming. They have to ask students to do extra work outside the class like at home or library, to focus on the main ideas only during the classrooms, giving details to do the work. Students need to work hard.

I think they should have this part, I am a teacher and you are a learner, I know everything and you want to know everything. We can divide the work, I can tell you how to deal with this page, but you have many things to do.

But really do our teacher have this skill how to teach their students to deal with a page, to learn it, what is it important. Sometimes, some students ask me about what is important in this page, it is not my job to tell her, where is your teacher, because of this we ask teachers to write some goals, not to tell them that it a must to write them for me. When you write the goals, it is as if you have lights and you turn them to the students to know their way.

### **Interview 3**

At the begging of the semester, how do you expect the English teachers to prepare for their lessons?

First of all I expect them to prepare in advance for each lesson. This means they should have a briefly written plan which includes the objectives, procedures, assessment and teaching aids ( visual & audio).

During the semester, how do you evaluate the progress of the English teachers and their performance?

I mainly use class observation to assess English teachers. While observing, I look at the teacher's skills in classroom management. That is to say I look at their language, knowledge, teaching practices, feedback. I also observe how well they use different interaction patterns and how well they carry out their roles as a teacher.

Teachers also can be assessed according to their participation in workshops and training programs.

What are the indicators that you depend on by the end of the semester to evaluate the work of the English teachers?

In addition to what is mentioned above, I take the following points into account :

Learners achievement in national exams

Teachers' ability to make remedial plans

How well they can relate language to the learners' real life

Their skills of using Microsoft office applications

How do you think an English teacher may fail to fulfill her/his expected role?

A teacher of English may fail his expected role mainly when he doesn't have the habit of self reflection. In this case, the teacher becomes uninterested in improving his performance.

What do you think the purpose of final achievement tests?

The main purpose of achievement tests is to measure how well students can use the four skills of English. In its turn, the ministry uses statistics either to introduce modifications to the syllabus or to provide training programs for teachers.

Do you think English teachers are expected to know the grade-specific objectives? Are they important in their teaching?

MoE believes that the teachers' knowledge of grade-specific objectives is the cornerstone of teaching English. So teachers are frequently enrolled in training programs which are designed according to the level of learners. For example, teachers of primary English(1-4) are trained how to manage listening and speaking activities because these skills are more important for beginners

Do you think that the English textbooks can be covered within the time limits of the semester?

Covering the required textbook is not a priority, but learning is. However, teachers can balance between depth and breadth by good preparation for each lesson. A good lesson plan helps the teacher to be selective. That's to say, the teacher should decide in advance what material is worth covering within a 40-minute period.

#### Interview 4

At the beginning of the semester, how do you expect the English teachers to prepare for their lessons?

First of all, let's say the teacher should scan the text, he should have a clear idea of what outcomes he is expecting his students to achieve by the end of the semester. The material, the text, the language, the aids he will need, all of these things he should prepare himself and he should scan everything. He should have content analysis and a good idea about his students, their individual differences and how to deal with them. He should have the syllabus distribution, how many units per week, per day, he should have a good idea about the material, his students and the time.

During the semester, how do you evaluate the progress of the English teachers and their performance?

As supervisors, we know that these students should be able to, for example 10<sup>th</sup> grade students should be able to know the following vocabulary, and they should be able to use the language that they have studied. If the teacher gives a good lesson, and we see that her students are interacting well in her class, if we see that they are expressing themselves, that they are using language, they are able to use the new vocabulary. This means that there is a good effort. This is the evidence. In class, we sometimes at the end of the lesson, we stand up and assess the students by asking those questions about the previous material or giving them worksheets. We also check their marks, we ask questions about the student's level in the previous grades and so on.

What are the indicators that you depend on by the end of the semester to evaluate the work of the English teachers?

The teacher should have covered the material, the students' results should be good which means all the students have passed the exams, and at the end of the year we do not observe each teacher. The results of the Tawjehi exams are a very important indicator, whenever I visit a Tawjehi teacher, I ask her about the results of her students. We also look at the students' results in the midterms and daily exams.

Covering the general aims, not covering the pages. I cannot allow each teacher to pick and choose, so one of the teachers will say that he can finish only four units and another teacher will say that he will be able to cover six units. It is important to cover each unit because each unit has something important and that each teacher should be able to cover all the units by having time management, again I mean covering the ideas and concepts not covering the pages. The problem is that many teachers think that listening for example is not

important, so he spends four periods on grammar and neglect listening or speaking. After that the teacher will say that the material is too long and I cannot cover it. I always tell the teachers that you are not supposed to lecture them and make them memorize the details just give them short sweet exercise and let them practice the language. And as you know the Tawjehi is an exception. Teachers are working but they are not working in the right track.

How do you think an English teacher may fail to fulfill her/his expected role?

The teacher has a good vision about his role and the students' role that I am teaching them to use the language and I am not teaching them about the language. If he is well planned and well prepared, and he updates himself with new learning strategies. Some teachers resist change and they teach the way they have been taught, this is an obstacle. If the teacher is honest, he will be well planned and this will be reflected on his students. But if the teacher is lazy and does not care, this will negatively influences his students. I see teacher in schools the only thing that they do is complaining and I think that if you have accepted this work with its salary, you are responsible about your work. Teachers keep complaining and blaming others for their faults. Some of the teacher do not want to work hard.

What do you think the purpose of final achievement tests?

These exams are written in a committee of good teachers under the supervision if the supervisors. After visiting many schools, we noticed that teachers are writing very silly simple exams, like one page final exam or two pages. In another school, you will have 10 pages exam so this is unfair because all the students should have one scale to evaluate their performance. So some teachers are unable to design exams and some teacher do not want to make comprehensive exams because it is difficult to write and correct , so the idea came that why not to have a committee of teachers who design the exams depending on content analysis and some specification. So this is good for the teachers who will have ready exams and good for the students. moreover, all the teachers know that they should cover the material because the exam covers all the material. Moreover, this exam will help 11<sup>th</sup> grade students to get used to Tawjehi exams and may be to university exams. I also think that when you have a system and the system tells you that you are to finish the whole textbook, then you will finish. I think if it is left to the teacher, there will be a big mess. Also, speaking and listening are usually neglected in schools, so we try to stress these skills by giving separate exams on listening and speaking.

Do you think English teachers are expected to know the grade-specific objectives? Are they important in their teaching?

I think teacher lack knowledge of these objectives. They only know the content and that they have to cover the pages of the textbooks. However, there are some teachers who

know the standards that are expected for their students. And when we tell them, they go back to the material and to covering the material, and they do not know that the content is only an aid for teaching. When we talk to the ministry and we tell them that the teachers should know so and so, they tell us that you are spoon-feeding your teachers, I think the ministry has high expectations for the students. They expect the teachers to work to search, to read, but teachers usually do not do that.

Do you think that the English textbooks can be covered within the time limits of the semester?

I think if the teachers are well planned, they can cover it. The new curriculum is well planned and it is better than the previous material which enables the teachers to cover the textbook. There are a lot of repetition in the book, so that teachers are not teaching something new in each period, so this saves time but we also have the same complain from the teacher and that the curriculum is too long to be covered.

### **Interview 5**

At the begging of the semester, how do you expect the English teachers to prepare for their lessons?

I am a novice supervisor, I started working in September and I have been working as a supervisor for 4 months. I taught for 12 years.

The most important thing is focusing on the English language itself. To use the language. You should have plans, content analysis, preparation book, but the most important thing is that you should prepare the things that you are going to give inside the classroom, let your teaching reflect you preparation, do not write things you cannot do, do not separate. It is a hard job, I just try to convince my teachers that when you prepare just try to be realistic. The teacher also should speak English and the students should interact with her.

During the semester, how do you evaluate the progress of the English teachers and their performance?

I evaluate teachers on general things and main important things, like the activities. I look at the students' interaction with the teachers. I also look at the aims, you should define the aims either orally or written on the board and you should to cover the aim you determine. I think you do not need to finish the whole page but instead you have to determine goals. Most of the teachers are not convinced of determining goals. You should always start with aims and to work on them.

What are the indicators that you depend on by the end of the semester to evaluate the work of the English teachers?

Depending on routine things, like looking at percentages and results of exams. Although I sometimes think that the students' results do not reflect the efforts of the teachers.

How do you think an English teacher may fail to fulfill her/his expected role?

The same, depending on the results of the students and the students' response on general questions or specific questions about their material. So students' interaction is something that is very important even the low- achievers.

What do you think the purpose of final achievement tests?

Actually, I have a different point of view. Most of the supervisors support them, but I do not. I will talk as a teacher in the past, the curriculum is too long and it is difficult to finish, so you rush and ends up focusing on quantity and not quality and that students did not understand, so if I have a chance, I would cancel them.

Do you think English teachers are expected to know the grade-specific objectives? Are they important in their teaching?

Actually all of the teachers do not know these objectives. The ministry is the responsible one, I think the objectives of the ministry are not clear. They give you a curriculum, and the way we teach it does not support the general goals or the standards. The teacher should know these objectives clearly and that they should be given the freedom to choose the content to achieve these goals.

Do you think that the English textbooks can be covered within the time limits of the semester?

No, I do not think that the textbooks can be covered within the time available for teachers.