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Evaluating the Department of English in a French Medium School

A research project by

Ghada Jamil Imad

Submitted to the Lebanese American University

In partial fulfilment of the requirements

For the degree of

Master in Education

May 2006

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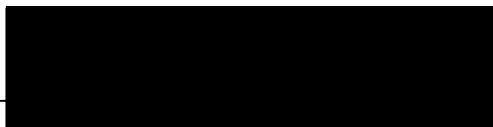
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Dedication

*To my mom and dad*

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*Abstract*

Research on department improvement in schools has been scarce. Hence, the purpose of this study was to survey an English department in a French medium school and find ways to improve it. This research includes a case study of the department culture specifically the values and the goals of the school, in addition to collegiality among teachers and the teaching and learning processes.

Thus, a questionnaire was administered to five English teachers and twenty students. They were also observed in their classrooms and the teacher's lounge. Documents from the school were also used. Data analysis identified collegiality among teachers and cohesiveness between teachers' beliefs and the school's values and beliefs. However, structured lesson plans were absent in the classrooms. Besides, there was insufficient emphasis on students' high level thinking. Furthermore, enthusiasm was deficient in teachers, which was reflected on students who became disinterested in their turn. Teachers' professional development was also missing in the department which affected the teachers' subject knowledge and methodology skills.

## Evaluating the Department of English in a French Medium School

### Chapter One

#### *Introduction*

Much has been written about school effectiveness and improvement. However, little is written about improving a department in a school, and none has been written about improving the English, as a second foreign language, department in a French medium school in Lebanon. Consequently, the coordinators of the English language in the French medium schools do not possess enough references that help them in enhancing their department and making it more successful. Finding out the features of a successful English department would provide an example to other French schools where English is taught as a second foreign language.

Two of the most important elements, which help in the school improvement are the culture and the teaching and learning processes (Harris, 1998). Positive culture, which is mainly characterised by collegiality among staff is crucial for the department improvement. Additionally, if the teaching and learning are organised, structured and are in line with the school goals, the department will improve. Hence, this study will focus on the culture and the teaching and learning processes of an English department in a French medium school.

#### *Purpose*

This research paper examines the culture and the teaching and learning processes in the English department in a French medium school in Lebanon and aims at discovering the procedures to improve them. The aspects of the school culture that will



be examined in this study are the norms, values, beliefs of the school community, in addition to what teachers think and how they interact and communicate with each other (Stolp, 1996). Snowden and Gorton (2002) recommended that if school leaders desire to improve the productivity of their school, they should understand and enhance the culture of their school. Consequently, this research paper intends to study the department culture, specifically the values, goals and collegiality among teachers, in order to improve it. Furthermore, the centre of the department improvement remains in the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms; hence, this paper also aims at studying the quality of teaching and learning and finding ways to enhance them. Subsequently, the findings will be beneficial and will be a model for other English departments in French medium schools.

The research questions that will be investigated throughout the study are the following:

Table 1

Objectives and Research Questions

| Objectives                           | Research Questions  |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1- To examine the English department | a- What are the elements of the department culture?<br>b- What are the elements of teaching and learning?                 |
| 2- To improve the department         | a- How can one improve the department culture?<br>b-How can one improve the quality of learning and teaching experiences? |

*Rationale*

D'Andrea and Gosling (2005) claimed that change starts with individuals who are seeking innovations and who can interest other staff in working with them. In this way an innovation spreads to other members of a department of a school and then more widely across the institution. D'Andrea and Gosling (2005) indicated that discipline-specific development is necessary and useful. This is not opposed to an organization-based approach. Indeed the two strategies should be seen as complementary. Moreover, Harris and Bennett (2001) believed that schools have the capacity to improve themselves by undergoing cultural change and suggested that "this is best achieved by working on the internal conditions within each individual school" (p. 13). Thus, the researcher is convinced that if each French medium school in Lebanon conducts an internal study in its departments, it will improve and become more effective; as a result, this improvement will be spread into the other departments and the whole school. Moreover, Sammons, Hillman and Mortimore (1995) deduced from several studies conducted in the American, British and Dutch schools that what sometimes hinders the English department from improving is the focus on scientific subjects much more than on languages. In addition, despite the numerous studies conducted to improve French medium schools, no research has been done on the English department. At the end of high school, students are not tested in the second foreign language on the Baccalaureate exams. Because of the problems mentioned above, the researcher has started improving the English department. She changed many things in the English department during the last two years. For instance, she replaced the old manuals with up-to-date ones. She is also sending teachers to workshops and seminars in order to become more knowledgeable about the latest methodologies that fit the school context. Moreover, the coordinator observes regularly

the teachers in the classrooms so she could find the weaknesses and work them out with the teachers. Furthermore, the projects have become compulsory for students. They work in pairs a project per term. Moreover, the researcher has a meeting with the teachers of cycle II and cycle III once a week. They discuss the programme they cover, and the problems they face in order to find solutions. In addition to what was mentioned above, the researcher seeks for an ongoing improvement.

Nevertheless, the researcher noticed that despite all the changes, she missed some important points, such as the culture of the department including the beliefs and values shared by the teachers, the way they communicate and work with each other in addition to the teaching and learning processes.

Since improvement comes as a response to the needs, the researcher decided to take action in addressing the problems that hinder the department improvement, and she is determined to identify the ways to improve the culture and the teaching and learning processes in her department.

### *Significance of the Study*

The findings of this study may ultimately serve the interests of the school administrators and policy makers who, in their turn, want the English departments in French medium schools to become more effective. Hence, the suggested model can be modified and adopted by other English departments in French medium schools.

*Context of the school*

“LS” is the fictional name of the school under study, and the researcher is the coordinator of the English department in this school. Hillman et al. (1995) argued that any improvement should take into account the changes, history and context of the specific institution. Hence, knowing the history of the school and the department under study is crucial.

In 1969, LSB, which is the main branch of LS, was launched in the centre of Beirut. It was surrounded by hotels, night clubs, amusement centres and restaurants which made the school environment noisy. Thus, the students’ parents asked the board of the school to have another branch for LSB in a quieter place and far from the capital’s crowd. LSB established another branch, the one under study, in 1972 from grades 8 to high school students only. LS, the school under study, is at the top of a hill where silence is dominant. In 1990 the school accepted students to primary classes, from grade 1 to grade 7. The technical school was launched in 1990. In 2000-2001 LS integrated the French Baccalaureate, and the certificate is given by the French Embassy (Oeuvre de la Communaute Educative, 2002)

The school’s mission is based on its founder’s mission, and it is to provide education to students of various socio economic backgrounds and to instruct them religiously. However, most of its students come from middle to high socio economic status because of LS reputation for its high standards in education. Students’ success in the public exams and private universities entrance exams has made LS well known all over the country (Oeuvre de la Communaute Educative, 2002).LS promotes deep respect

for the students and treats them as unique persons. LS is also characterized by collegiality among its teachers who should work on education of quality that is based on Christianity (F. Ecoles Chretiennes, 2005). Teachers and staff should show solidarity for poor people and should work for justice and peace. Every one in the school should refer to the founder's history and philosophy. Furthermore, LS aims at having collegiality and interpersonal relationships among all the staff. In addition, the teachers should develop the intelligences of the students and instruct them in order to be culturally sensitive, loyal patriots and responsible citizens. Furthermore, students are encouraged to become confident and independent lifelong learners. Moreover, they should learn how to keep healthy and to learn the Evangelical values (F. Ecoles Chretiennes, 2005).

The department of English language, one of the earlier departments at LS school, was established in 1972 (Oeuvre de la Communauté Educative, 2002). From its beginning till 2002-2003 it was directed by a monk. He used local English books written by Lebanese authors. The methodology adopted by the English teachers was very traditional based on reading, grammar and spelling. The students were passive and not very motivated in the classrooms because the evaluation was based on memorization.

The students had to memorize the grammar rules to have a good grade. At that time, the researcher was still a teacher. The English teachers did not have scheduled meetings. They used to meet occasionally to check what each teacher covered from the lessons.

In 2002-2003 the researcher was assigned as the Head of the English department. She has become responsible for cycle II, grades three to six, and cycle III, grades seven to nine. At the beginning, the researcher did not implement many changes. She started the first year studying the department and learning about the school system

and the best materials that fit the school context. The following year she changed the books and adopted a foreign book based on the latest pedagogical theories including up-to-date materials. The books are based on thematic units and integrated skills. The methodology the teachers adopt has become more active and the class is mainly student centered. The speaking and writing skills are more emphasized than grammar and spelling. Weekly meetings between the English teachers and the coordinator are held at the coordinator's office to share their experience, the problems they face, the programme they covered, and they plan for the following week.

English is taught as a second foreign language. Students start learning English in grade three for one period per week which is equivalent to 52 minutes. Subsequently, from grade four through grade six, the learners have three periods of English per week. In grades seven and eight, this language is taught in four periods, and in grade nine there are only three periods per week. The first, second and third secondary have two periods only.

Nevertheless, after graduation most of LS students are enrolled in an English medium university and those who can afford paying the fees register in the American private universities in the country (Oeuvre de la Communaute Educative, 2002).

After the identification of the school context, the following chapter will include the literature review of many studies done about school and department improvement.

## Chapter Two

## Literature review

*Introduction*

The researcher's primary focus is on examining the English department for the purpose of improvement; thus, she examined research related not only to departmental improvement, but also to school improvement. Harris (1998) and other researchers claimed that the same characteristics of the school improvement are applied on department improvement in addition to some specific characteristics. Moreover, Gold (1998) affirmed that the school should translate its culture into the department culture.

The Head of the department should embed the values, beliefs and objectives of the school in the curriculum of the discipline s/he is in charge. The Head plays an important role in the culture improvement since s/he builds unity and order in the department by focusing on the purposes and the norms the school believes in (Razik and Swanson, 2001). Consequently, the researcher referred to studies on school and departmental culture improvement because what is relevant for the school culture is also relevant for the department culture.

*General Elements of Department and School Improvement*

In order to improve any department, Harris (1998) suggested for those who are in charge to take into account the following areas. They should have an appropriate leadership and management styles. Leadership should be context related because a leader might be successful in one department but may not be as successful in another one for the reason that what fits one department might not fit another one. Moreover, leaders should bear in mind that there is no one standard management style given that each department has its unique management style to adopt since each school has its unique culture. Both managers and teachers should work as leaders and decision makers (Harris, 2002).

Sackney (1999) suggested that in order to improve, schools have to change in the relationships between the staff, and make the school as a professional learning community where leadership is distributed. Besides, the department should have one vision that is shared by all the teachers, and this should be revealed in the good communication and collegiality among teachers and the head of the department. In addition to that, the department should be well organized, should plan for the school year, and should adopt an adequate system for evaluation of the students. Continuous professional development and learning for the teachers and the head of the department is also one of the most important characteristics in addition to the focus on teaching and learning processes.

Even though the characteristics mentioned above are crucial and are included in the department improvement, the researcher will concentrate on research done on the leader's role in the school and department improvement, the way the teachers think about the school's values, the way they interact with each other, collegiality and communication among them and their impact on school and department improvement. Moreover, this literature review contains studies on teaching and learning processes and their influence on the department improvement.

#### *Elements of School and Department Culture*

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Walker and Dimmock (2005) defined culture as the values and beliefs that are shared among people. It is also the way people think, feel and act. Snowden and Gorton (2002) described culture as a set of shared values and goals that are revealed in the mission statement, the philosophy and the policies of the organization. The culture also includes expectations and sanctions, symbolic activity and individual and group behaviour. Peterson and Deal (1998) described culture as the norms, values, beliefs, traditions, and the way people work together, solve problems, and confront challenges.



All these are shown in the people's daily life and in the way they feel and act. The culture is also the rules that state what people should and should not do. If principals want to improve any school, they should change the roles, criterion of accountability and model of behaviour. The culture of the school and the department are characterized by improved educational outcomes; an emphasis on learning; mutual empowerment and caring between staff, students and parents; collaboration and partnership between teachers and colleagues and between teachers and students (Cavanagh, 2001).

#### *Leadership and School Improvement*

Walker and Dimmock (2005) identified leadership, management and decision processes as the core of the school leadership and administration. Leaders should work on collaboration, motivation, planning, decision-making processes, interpersonal communication, conflict resolution and staff evaluation. Kouzes and Posner (1995) stated five characteristics of leadership practice. Leaders challenge the process, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, model the way, and encourage the others. Therefore, leaders are at the core of school and department improvement since they have vision and lead change forward (Harris, 2002).

In order to improve the quality of schooling and enhance students' achievement, Razik and Swanson (2001) suggested that educational leaders should have strong leadership which is characterised by a unique culture based on the values of the school and human relations. Razik and Swanson (2001) highlighted the importance of human relations and motivation if a school want to improve. For them, the leaders should motivate the teachers to improve their performance to their maximum potential

and this occurs if the leader uses recognition, achievement, advancement and responsibility. According to Snowden and Gorton (2002), the leader plays an important role in culture improvement because s/he is able to build a positive climate that is characterised by trust and openness which are essential factors for productive group work, and this also affects the school improvement. The leader should be skilful and able to develop feelings of trust, open communications and collegiality (Kelley, Thornton and Daugherty, 2005). S/he is also capable to make the group more cohesive and collegial. Consequently, s/he should value the group members and involve them in working toward the goal of the department, and must have a spirit of cooperation and teamwork. As a result, s/he becomes a model for the teachers and in their turn they cooperate and work collaboratively with each other, and they work in a relaxing environment and become more motivated and involved in the department improvement (Snowden and Gorton, 2002).

Furthermore, in order to have a successful school and keep on improving, leadership practices should take the context of the school into account and should not adopt policy blueprints of different cultural settings out of the leader's contexts. In their comparative study, Walker and Dimmock (2005) showed that the leader is responsible for successful program implementation, and this happens if the changes are in harmony with the culture of the school.

Nevertheless, department heads should keep in mind that they are not the only instructional leaders. Glickman (2002) underlined the importance of the various structures with multiple leaders for assisting, focusing and improving classroom teaching and learning.

“These structures for professional interactions must have a focus on what to observe and share about teaching and student learning”(Glickman, 2002. p. 23). Furthermore, the leader is responsible for empowering the teachers to share the vision, and enabling them to build an effective school culture characterised by collegiality (Kelly et al., 2005). Sammons et al. (1995) reiterated the above when they noted that an effective Head teacher is the one who shares leadership responsibility with other teachers in decision-making. Thus, s/he should be involved with teachers by knowing how the teaching and learning processes are going on in the classrooms.

On the other hand, Walker and Dimmock (2002) showed a connection between learning and leadership since leaders are able to create a school culture that values learning. Leaders also advise and coordinate about learning processes in and out of the school; thus they should be knowledgeable about learning. For Sergiovanni and Starratt (2002), a successful instructional leadership is the one who focuses on subject matter content and principles of learning and teaching processes. Therefore, the instructional leader needs to visit the classrooms and observe the teaching and learning processes to be aware of the details in every classroom. Then s/he has a meeting with the teachers to discuss the processes and to improve if necessary.

#### *Impact of Culture on School and Department Improvement*

Strahan (2003) conducted a study about collaborative professional culture and found that supportive culture characterised by coordination and caring among teachers had a great impact on students score on state test achievement

(Wheelan and Kesselring, 2005) suggested from the findings of their research that if teachers work to become more cooperative, and work as a group, student learning and performance will improve.

Halpin (1966) claimed that school culture has a positive and negative impact on the students' achievement. He has also shown that when teachers and the head teachers work enthusiastically and collaboratively, this is reflected on their students' work. Consequently they work efficiently and improve their achievement. As a result, this affects the department improvement. Gaziel's (1997) findings from his research about the impact of school culture on effectiveness school matches with the above. He found that when teachers share most of the work and when there is interaction in which teachers discuss, plan for, analyse and evaluate, students' achievement will improve. In their study concerning the organization of effective secondary schools, Bryk, Lee and Smith (1993) emphasized the importance of a sense of community. Such elements of community as cooperative work, effective communication, and shared goals have been identified as crucial for all types of successful organization, not only schools. Hopkins (1995) also showed that a school culture that encourages collegiality, trust and

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collaborative working relationships is more receptive to improvement. Furthermore, in the study of Catholic schools which aimed at promoting students' academic and social outcomes, Bryk et al. (1993) drew attention to the importance of strong institutional norms, shared beliefs, and educational philosophy with social fairness.

Purkey and Smith (1982) examined the impact of culture and deduced that a school's culture is a set of values and norms that leads staff and students in the direction of successful teaching and learning. Moreover, in a research conducted in Comer School, Snowden and Gorton (2002).

found that one of the reasons that lead to students' success is the change in the culture of the school, and this is based on shared problem solving, consensus decision making, and collaboration. Moreover, the students improve their self-efficacy, and relations with their peers, they also enhance their grades and their total development in a positive culture.

On the other hand, Cavanagh (2001) found in his research that students' outcomes didn't improve because of absence of collegiality and collaboration among teachers. He deduced that school and department improvement does not occur in a climate where staff do not feel supported, and they do not work collaboratively. Saphier and Matthew (1985) cited some norms that lead to the school and department effectiveness, and these norms contribute to the culture improvement. They are the following: collegiality- experimentation -high expectations- trust and confidence -tangible support – reaching out to the knowledge bases -appreciation and recognition caring, celebration and humour - involvement in decision making -protection of what is important- traditions –honest and open communication.

#### *Improving the Culture of a Department*

Bottery (2004) advised those who want to improve their school culture not to compare it with other cultures and to believe in its uniqueness because culture improvement projects that are successful in one school may be unsuccessful in another. Therefore, each school should diagnose its culture and then change it for the better (Harris, 2002). In order to improve Mitchell, Cameron and Wylie (2002) proposed that the school culture should be in line with the school vision, and the school vision and goals are the solid basics and are necessary to maintain school improvement. Therefore, the Head and the teachers of a department should be knowledgeable about the school's culture since Gold (1998) suggested that the school should translate its culture into the department culture. Thus, the department culture should be in

harmony with the school's culture. Consequently, the Head and the teachers of the department should abide by the philosophy, the values and goals set by the school. They should start asking a basic question: what kinds of behaviour are valued in this school? Snowden and Gorton (2002) also suggested that the Head of the department should state and shape the staff behaviour in his/her department. S/he plays a role in defining and shaping the culture of the school. He/she can set an example practicing what is preached to strengthen a message he/she communicates to faculty because s/he is powerful. S/he needs to build good relationships, effective communication, and empower staff to use and develop their strengths. According to Kelley et al. (2005), the department Heads are powerful and have the needed authority to impact the culture of the school and to improve it. They can spread the feelings of trust, communications and collegiality. They should transmit to the teachers the sanctions set by the school. In addition, there should be a set of expectations that emphasizes the teachers' determination to work on the students' excellent performance. Harris (2002) emphasised the importance of positive culture to improve school. The positive culture is characterised by trust among staff, participation and involvement from the whole staff, supporting and appreciating teachers' ideas and encouraging opportunities for innovation. As Harris (2002) noted, school improvement does not occur if teachers do not trust their colleagues and senior management because when trust is spread through a school, staff become more energetic and motivated. Harris (2002) also proposed that improvement includes activities that focus on school norms, values and beliefs that are student-centered and encourage continuing professional development. Leaders influence the school culture by changing it into a more positive one. However, Richardson (2003) recommended that teachers should be engaged as leaders and should be as knowledgeable as their leaders about the school culture in order to help with the school and department improvement. Mitchell et al. (2002) found in their research that

teacher's leadership was one of the most important factors of school's success. The staff cohesiveness, energy and enthusiasm were also important elements for school improvement.

Likewise, collegiality and collaboration among teachers are important conditions for unity of purpose. Sammons et al. (1995) emphasized the importance of teacher's involvement in decision-making and the development of school and department guidelines, which create a sense of "ownership". Staff and pupils should have a strong sense of community, reciprocal relationships of support and respect. In order to have an effective school, Gaziel (1997) recommended that the school must have a school culture that values teamwork which is characterised by teachers' collaboration in most of the work and communication among teachers when they plan, design and analyse together. If school are seeking effectiveness, Cavanagh (2001) advised them to strengthen collegial and collaborative school cultures because a school cannot improve if staff do not work cooperatively and do not feel supported, respected and empowered.

#### *Elements of Teaching and Learning in a Department*

Many studies showed that there is correlation between teaching and learning and teacher effectiveness and that teacher's knowledge in the subject is a necessity for effective teaching and learning (Bennett, Summers, and Askew, 1994).

Improving teaching and learning is crucial for the department improvement. Brighthouse and Woods (2000) confirmed that "the quality of teaching and learning is at the heart of school improvement and real, lasting change can only come from what teachers and learning assistants do consistently in classrooms and other learning areas in the school" (p. 32). A successful department is the one where staff think thoroughly together of what constitutes effective teaching and learning for the subject they teach and

they sort out a set of core values and beliefs. Moreover, involving the pupils and parents in the speculation of how the teachers might improve their practice in their classrooms affects positively teaching and learning. The teachers should be aware that their central purpose and the focus of all their activities are enhancing the pupils' achievement. The Head of the department should agree with the teachers on the processes and practices and once they start implementing the new strategies he/she constantly monitor, review and adjust again. Brighouse and Woods (2000) added that there are high expectations for everybody, learners and teachers, "and the Head teacher in particular is leader of learning. There is in fact an apparent teaching and learning culture in the school which is constantly being nourished and developed" (p. 36).

#### *Improving the Quality of Learning and Teaching in the Department*

Teaching and learning will not occur without the willingness of the people involved in the changes (D'Andrea and Gosling, 2005). Since teachers are directly in charge of teaching they have a crucial role in improving teaching. Thus, to improve the quality of teaching, the head teacher should determine the quality of teachers and teachers should have some necessary qualities. For instance, they need to be knowledgeable about the latest research in educational field and need to develop collegiality as they reflect on educational issues and come up with new ideas (Bottery, 2004). They should also be committed in terms of time and emotion to teaching because high commitment of teachers drives them to do better for their students, their colleagues, their department and their school improvement (Glickman, 2002). Teachers can also build their own professional communities where they focus on collaboration and networking, participate in decision-making and share good practices. Other researchers recommended strategies to improve teaching and learning. For instance, Brighouse and



Woods (2000) suggested ten features that help to improve teaching and learning. Some of these characteristics are collaborative teaching, planning and assessment, the effective use of learning resources, professional development, action research, community involvement in the learning school, and the curriculum enrichment and extension. Baker (2005) acknowledged the positive impact of collaborative action research on pupil's achievement. The Head teacher together with the teachers and students should be involved in collaborative action research where they work collaboratively to improve learning and where culture of learning is characterised by all considering themselves as learners. Hence, Sammons et al. (1995) advocated learning organisations for schools that seek improvement where head teachers, teachers, children and staff continue to update their knowledge.

Additionally, teacher's development is an important element for the teaching improvement (Harris, 2002). Glickman (2002) advised teachers to consider instruction improvement as an experiment or a trial-and error research cycle for finding out what structures and methodology are the most convenient to help with the student's learning improvement, the department and the school improvement.

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Alternatively, Lublin et al. (2005) encouraged a deep approach to teaching and learning that reflects the teachers' interest and enthusiasm. The change starts with the teachers in order to encourage students to become motivated and engaged in learning. Hence, this change may start with the teachers' enthusiasm and interest in the subject which affects the students' enthusiasm and interest in the subject. Likewise, Brighthouse and Woods (2000) recommended that to improve a department there should be a focus on the teaching and learning culture which start with the teachers who are full of hope and high expectations. Furthermore, the teachers should use all their energy and enthusiasm

because the research done by Patrick, Hisley and Kempler and (2000) revealed that when a teacher shows great evidence of enthusiasm, his/her students become more interested, energetic, curious and excited about learning which reduces their misbehaviour in the classroom and make them more focused on the lesson. Teachers should also be creative, use their critical thinking and always be positive to transform pupil's achievement. Simultaneously, they should practice leadership at all levels and wish to improve on their previous practice.

Furthermore, in order to help teachers improve and succeed in their classrooms, the instructional leader or coordinator has a major role. According to Glickman (2002), the instructional leader's function is to work closely with teachers mainly when teachers ask for help. Therefore, the leader should listen carefully to the teachers, clarify the teacher's point of view, encourage him/her to continue on speaking, reflect and present the issues discussed, try to find solutions to the problems with the teacher and encourage the teacher to achieve the objectives they set. Sergiovanni and Starrat (2002) proposed to the supervisors and the teachers to be engaged in clinical supervision because this helps teachers to learn and improve; as a result, teachers' improvement reflects on students' achievements and the department improvement. This clinical supervision is also called partnership or colleagueship. The coordinator's role in this procedure is to help the teacher to choose goals to be improved and areas in his/her teaching to enhance. This clinical supervision includes eight phases. The first phase is to establish the teacher-coordinator relationship, the second phase is to plan lessons and units between the teachers and coordinator. The third phase involves planning the classroom observation strategy by teacher and supervisor. In the fourth phase the coordinator observes in the classroom instruction. The fifth phase includes an analysis of

teaching- learning processes, then in the sixth phase the supervisor prepares the conference strategy and holds a post-conference, and the last phase includes the supervisor's recommencements for planning for future improvement.

Moreover, to improve any department, there should be intensive work within the departmental team on teaching and learning issues in order to upgrade their subject knowledge and professional skills. There should be in-service training and professional development for the teachers. This development might start with teachers meeting together in the department and exploring the skills in teams in order to create new pedagogic partnerships. They also need to be clear about the reasons for selecting particular departmental assessment, homework policy, and class conduct. Harris and Bennett (2001) proposed that all these decisions should have their roots in the values and beliefs of the department, and they need to be shared and debated.

Research on improvement showed a relation between teacher's professional development and school improvement (Harris, 2002). Therefore, Southworth and Conner (1999) recommended that the Head of the department should encourage the teachers to have an ongoing learning in order to improve the quality of the teaching and learning because the challenge of teaching is great, and teachers need to keep on developing themselves as teachers throughout their time in the profession. Southworth and Conner (1999) added that improvement of the school or the department does not occur unless the teachers improve and strengthen their classrooms skills and practices. This means that teachers should focus on aspects of their teaching that they are unsure about and want to understand better. They should try new forms and methods of teaching. Furthermore, teaching should be purposeful which includes efficient organisation, clear purpose and structured lessons (Southworth and Conner, 1999).

Teachers should be well organized and clear about their objectives. Effective learning occurs where teachers clearly explain the objectives of the lesson at the outset, and refer to these throughout the lesson to maintain the students focused (Harris, 2002). Having structured lessons help students to be more attentive. Stallings (1975) indicated that effective teachers should teach the classroom as a whole, present information or skills clearly and animatedly, keep the teaching sessions task-oriented, are non-evaluative and keep instruction relaxed, have high expectations for achievement

Moreover, learning outcomes should be based on thinking critically and making judgements. Lublin et al. (2005) found that there is a direct link between learning objectives and teaching methods; the choice of teaching methods have a strong influence on how students approach learning in the subject. For instance, if the objectives of the subject include verbs that show higher level cognitive thinking such as, apply, deduce, generalise, hypothesise, reflect, analyse, solve or justify, then the teacher should use methods which support the development of these abilities. Consequently, this will stimulate the students' intrinsic motivation and will encourage them to be more involved and more thoughtful about the content (Lublin et al., 2005)

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### *Motivation and Improvement*

Barber (1993) showed that students who are not motivated do not try to improve their achievement. Therefore, in order to improve a department and a school, students, teachers and head teachers need to be motivated and committed to work.

When teachers are knowledgeable about goals to reach, aware of consequences to their performances, and when they desire to be rewarded and to avoid sanction, then they become motivated and will focus on students' improvement (Lashway, 1999).

Leaders play an important role in teachers' motivation by respecting and treating

them fairly. Additionally, if the leader is proud of staff's job and accomplishment and s/he has good and productive relationships with teachers, teachers become more involved and motivated in the school improvement ( Sirota, Mischkind and Meltzer, 2006).

Student's motivation "refers to a student's willingness, need, desire and compulsion to participate in, and be successful in, the learning process" (Bomia, Beluzo, Demeester, Elander, Johnson, and Sheldon, 1997. p. 1). Students are motivated if the following factors exist: high expectations, high academic standards and the effective use of rewards. Consequently, students become more stimulated which improves their achievements (Corcoran and Wilson, 1998), whereas those who are not motivated to engage in learning do not succeed (Brewster and Fager, 2001). In their studies, Schweers and Harms (2002) showed that by focusing on teachers and students relationships and by creating a strong sense of community and developing effective relationships for motivation and instruction, the school is able to improve the teaching and learning climate and makes it positive. In their turn teachers can influence students' motivation by empowering them to be more than learners and by becoming peer teachers in a classroom study group where they meet and contribute to the decision-making processes and this will improve their achievement (Brewster and Fager, 2001).

### *Evaluation and Improvement*

Evaluation is an ongoing process which starts at the beginning of the improvement plan and continues beyond the achievement of the goals of this plan. It is based on the outcomes of the school improvement plan. The purpose of the evaluation is to make sure that the school improvement goals were achieved, to verify the usefulness

of the new implementation and to measure the results of the change on teacher effectiveness and student learning (Cook and Fine, 1997). There are two kinds of evaluation: the formative evaluation that is done at intervals during the implementation of the changes when teachers are asked for feedback. This allows the evaluator to make mid-course corrections and do modification to improve the quality of the changes. On the other hand, summative evaluation is done at the end of the program (Cook and Fine, 1997).

To measure the changes that occur in the school, collaboration and improved relationship between administration and teachers are needed. Data are collected from teachers practices, organizational changes, and student outcomes. Thus, the evaluation is done by an evaluation team consisting of teachers and administrators and Harris (1998) proposed that pupils attend these meetings. This team plan strategies for collecting formative and summative data during and after the professional development program. They gather qualitative and quantitative data through interviews, questionnaires, observations, analysis of documents and minutes of meetings (Cook and Fine, 1997). At the department level, the evaluation team explore the skills together and discuss the departmental values and vision which help the staff to reaffirm their needs and responsibilities and to shape the value dimension of almost everything that is done in the department (Harris, 1998). Additionally Data should be taken from classroom assessments because they are frequent and precise. Thus, teachers should be involved in the preparation of assessment tasks that are related to the content and the objectives of the subject matter. However, evaluators should not only refer to the student scores on standardized tests, but also to student portfolios, and multiple assessments that are specifically designed to provide meaningful feedback on student learning (Cook and

Fine, 1997). Samples of student work are analyzed to inform instruction, revise curriculum and pedagogy, and obtain information on student progress (Bradham, Shaw, Tutt, Davis, Tew, Bond, Parker, Hood, Smith and McDowell, 2005).

Simultaneously, in their study on evaluating an in-service programme John and Gravani (2005, p. 111) used two steps for effective assessment of a programme. At first, "reaction evaluation" is conducted where data are collected from participants to know what they like and dislike about the new implementation. Second, "learning evaluation" is to gather information about the principles, curriculum and the content of the programme from the participants. At the end of the evaluation, John and Gravani (2005) found that teachers did not appreciate nor benefited from the in-service training since they were not involved. Therefore, they recommended a "re-diagnosis of learning needs" which is the evaluation at the end of the programme. Its objective is to redesign the programme based on the findings of evaluation processes and the identified gaps or further needs. Moreover, teachers should have the opportunity to engage in active learning where they explore together, reflect and collaborate with peers in order to design their own programme. Additionally, for an effective evaluation, Cook and Fine (1997) suggested action research which includes five steps. First, teachers select a problem of collective interest; they collect data; organize, analyze and interpret data; and then take action based on this information. Data is then collected again to determine the effectiveness of these efforts.

### *Conclusion*

To sum up, departmental improvement does not occur without the culture modification and the teaching and learning improvement. In order to improve them, the teachers and the Head teacher should be involved in examining the existing culture and

teaching and learning processes. The Head teacher should have strong leadership and should work on collaboration among staff and motivate them in addition to his/her crucial role in the improvement of teaching and learning processes. Educators and the Head should meet regularly and should be knowledgeable about the vision and goals of the school because they should share and abide by the same vision and goals of the school. Consequently, they should agree on the same goals they want to reach in the subject they are teaching. They should also discuss the objectives and the curriculum they work, abide by the same rules and have high expectations from the students.

Likewise, collegiality among teachers is crucial and a main factor in the teaching and learning processes improvement. The implementation of the new changes is successful if the staff is motivated and involved. The teachers should be interested in the subject they are teaching because this is reflected on their students. Therefore, if the teachers are motivated, the students will be motivated in their turn.

Evaluation is essential to make sure that the goals set at the beginning of the improvement plan are achieved and that there is successful new implementation, evaluation is compulsory. It could be both summative or formative. Teachers, Head teachers and administrators should be involved in this evaluation.

The following chapter presents the methodology that the researcher adopted in the study herein. It includes the instruments, the participants and data analysis.



questionnaire to students and teachers may help the researcher to develop an understanding of the existing culture. According to Cohen et al. (2000), the advantage of the questionnaire is that the participant is free to answer at his/her own time at his/her own pace. In addition, the fears and embarrassment, which may result from direct contact, are avoided. Another advantage is that it guarantees confidentiality therefore more truthful responses would be obtained than with personal interview. Hence, the questionnaires were distributed to all five English teachers who work at LS school. The items of the questionnaire were derived from the research questions and the literature review. The items are used to address the questions about the teachers' opinion and knowledge about the school values and goals, collegiality among teachers, relationship between the students and their English teachers, teaching and learning processes in the classrooms and the teachers' opinion and suggestions for the department improvement. The questionnaires include multiple choice items, yes/no items, Likert (1-5) rating scale items and open-ended questions. Likewise, another questionnaire was given to twenty students to find out if they are satisfied with the school regulations and the teachers' attitude. This helped to know more about the culture of the school and about the relationship between the students and their teachers. The students' questionnaire begins with some general questions about teaching and learning within the key department. The second set of questions was about the teacher and student relationship. They would contain a core of questions about the department culture.

On the other hand, the school culture is about understanding intentions as well as observing the members of the department. The researcher is a participant observer since she "is playing an established participant role in the scene studied" (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994. p. 249). She is the coordinator of the English language department of LS School

and she is opportunist as she can keep a diary of what is going around with the teachers and the students, and she documented whatever she saw significant and relevant to her study. The diary helps to observe the teachers and the students in the situations where it is difficult to have a direct observation, for instance in the playground, the Head of cycle III office and at the office of the researcher during the weekly meetings (Robson, 2002). In this diary the researcher was taking notes about the points that were related to the purpose of the study. Moreover, the researcher observed the teachers in the teacher's lounge to assess the collegial attitude and level of engagement in their professional dialogue and their daily life. She adopted structured observation which is systematic and allows the researcher to collect numerical data from the observation. The numerical data enables the researcher to make comparisons between settings and situations. Among the "four principal ways of entering data onto structured observation schedule", the researcher chose the rating scales method (Cohen et al. , 2000, p. 308). In this method, the researcher made "some judgements about the events being observed and entered responses onto a rating scale according to five point scale of observed behaviour: never, rarely, sometimes, often and very often (Cohen et al. , 2000, p. 309). Therefore, she

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came up with two rubrics of observation made of categories that include items derived from the questionnaire and the literature review. One rubric was made to observe the teachers in the teachers' lounge and it focused on relationships, collegiality and communication among teachers. The second rubric was used to observe the students in their classrooms, their relationships with their teachers and their participation in the classroom. Besides, each teacher was observed in his/her classroom to analyze the teaching and learning processes. Each teacher was observed for two periods in two different grade levels. For instance P1, participant one, was observed in grades four and

five. The researcher sat in the classroom for the whole period, 52 minutes, and used the rubric of observation (see Appendixes K, L, M, N).

Current documents from the school were gathered, such as the yearly book, and other handbooks in order to understand deeply the school culture such as the mission, philosophy and the goals of the school.

### *Data Analysis*

The data analysis adopted in this case study is descriptive. It implies finding out the frequencies of the main points of the study from the questionnaire and the observation rubrics. Since it surveys the teachers and the students' attitude on culture and teaching and learning processes, it reports the number of these participants falling in different categories (Burns, 2000). "The categories have to be operationalized; that is, an explicit specification has to be made of what indicators one is looking for when making each and any of the categorisation and since the categories contain the substance of the investigation, a content analysis can be no better than its system of categories" (Robson, 2002, p. 355). Thus, the questionnaire and the observation were systematically categorized according to the research questions and purpose set at the beginning of the study herein. For instance, the researcher wanted to investigate about collegiality among teachers, hence, one of the categories was about collegiality among teachers. Furthermore, in order to verify if the teachers and the students' answers in the questionnaire and the researcher's observation converge with the school mission and goals the researcher referred to the handbook of the school, F. des Ecoles Chretiennes, 2005 and Oeuvre de la Communaute Educative, 2002-2003, to verify if what is written meets with what is applied in the real life.

*Participants*

Gorton & Snowden (1998) stated that the most important group to consider in establishing the need for change, and in selecting and introducing a proposed innovation, is the staff. Thus, a sample of five English teachers, one male and four females between the ages of 34 and 58, teaching at the primary and middle school levels participated in this study. They come from middle socio economic background. They have different degrees and certificates.

The first participant (P1) has a Master's degree in psychology and a teaching diploma. She teaches grades three, four and five. She also teaches math in French.

The second participant (P2) has a BA in English Literature. She teaches grades four and five. She is a part timer.

The third participant (P3) has a BA in business. She teaches grades five and six.

The fourth participant (P4) has a Certificate in the English language. She teaches grades seven and grades eight.

The fifth participant (P5) has a Certificate in the English language from Cambridge, and he teaches grade seven and eight and the first secondary grade level.

In addition to the teachers, twenty students out of seven hundred students were randomly selected to participate in this study. Five students from grade six, five from grade seven, three from grade eight and four from grade nine. This chapter dealt with the method that will be used in this study. A questionnaire for the teachers, another one for the students, and observation in the classrooms will help the researcher to collect the

needed data, in addition to the documents of the school that will help to learn more about the culture of the school. The number of the participants is limited to twenty students and five teachers.

### *Ethical Consideration*

For ethical consideration, the researcher asked the principal's permission to carry out the study in the department she is in charge of and to use the school's documents. She also informed him about the purpose of the study she was conducting in the English department. Furthermore, teachers and students were also aware of the purpose of the study. Teachers knew in advance when the researcher would observe them in their classroom. Moreover, all participants knew that they remain anonymous, and that all information will remain confidential (Cohen et al. , 2000).

In this chapter, the researcher described the methodology she applied in her study. The participants consisted of all five English teachers of the English department and twenty students chosen randomly. To ensure triangulation, she used three instruments which consisted of the questionnaire, a structured observation and the school's documents. For the data analysis, she categorised the questionnaire and the rubrics of observation according to the research questions and purpose and then she compared them to each other and to the school documents.

The following chapter will present the data collected from the questionnaires and the rubrics of observation.

## Chapter Four

## Results

*Data presentation:*

This chapter presents the data that were collected from the teachers' and students' questionnaires. It also reports the information collected from the researcher's observation of the teachers and the students in the classroom and the teachers' lounge during recess. The observation focused on collegiality among teachers in addition to the teaching and learning processes in the classroom.

*Organising the data:*

In an effort to examine the elements and the culture, the teaching and learning, and finding ways of improving the culture and the teaching and learning processes of the English department, the researcher organised the data according to Simonoff's (2003) model which uses the row and the columns. The rows include the items of the questionnaire, and the columns have the Likert scales. The data of the questionnaires are divided into four categories according to the research questions set at the beginning of the paper. They are the following :

- a- The teachers' views of the school's culture
- b- The teachers' views of the culture of the English department.
- c- Collegiality among teachers.
- d- The teaching and learning processes in the classroom.

The researcher arranged the teachers' suggestions about the ways of improving the culture and the teaching and learning processes in two tables. They are the following:

- e- Who is responsible for improving the English department?
- f- Ways of improving the culture of the English department.

g- Ways of improving the teaching and learning processes.

The data of the students' questionnaire was organised into three categories :

h- The students' views of their school's culture.

i- The students' views of the English learning processes

j- The students' views of their English teacher and his/her teaching methods.

Similarly, the researcher's observations of the teachers were categorised as the following :

k- The teaching and learning processes in the classroom.

l- The students' participation in the classroom.

*What are the elements of the department culture?*

The teachers' questionnaire showed that the majority of teachers believed that the school vision and goals are clear and based on the student's needs. The school document (Oeuvre de la Communauté, 2002) and other documents state the goals that the students and teachers should reach and, they are based on the students' needs. Teachers also had high expectations for all students. It is noticeable that out of five teachers, only one teacher was not knowledgeable about the school vision (See Table O 4). High

expectation from the students is also emphasised in LS documents. Moreover, most of the teachers (80%) declared that the English department is a safe and organized place that nurtures teaching and learning. Most of them also agreed that the English coordinator is helpful, and they are involved in major decisions related to their work.

Table 2

The teachers' views of the English department culture

|   | Very little | Some | Considerable | Very great | Don't know |
|---|-------------|------|--------------|------------|------------|
| 4- To what extent is the English department a safe and orderly place that nurtures teaching and learning?                         |             |      | 40%          | 40%        | 20%        |
| 5- How much does the English coordinator try to help you with your problems?  |             |      | 80%          | 20%        |            |
| 6- To what extent is the culture of the English department characterized by trust and professionalism?                            |             |      | 60%          | 40%        |            |
| 7- To what extent are you involved in major decisions related to your work?   |             |      | 80%          | 20%        |            |
| 8- To what extent there is interaction and communication among English teachers that aims at achieving organization's objectives? |             |      | 20%          | 80%        |            |

Besides, they said that there is good communication and interaction among English teachers (See Table 2). Furthermore, all the teachers (100%) agreed that there is collaboration and a friendly relationship among them. They all admitted that the English department emphasises the basic skills of the English language. They also agreed that they are involved in decision making related to the assessments' choice, the activities to work on, and when a problem occurs they are all involved to find the convenient solutions. Most of the teachers (80%) thought that the coordinator shows a tangible support and appreciation, whereas only one teacher disagreed and thought that the coordinator is not supportive (See Table 3).



Additionally, the students' questionnaire indicated that several students thought that the school is a good place to make friends, and that they are happy when they are in school. Moreover, students like to do well in school. On the other hand, the majority (60%) are not often satisfied with the behaviour of their mates and think that the school rules are not fair (See Table Q 9).

Table 3

## Collegiality among teachers

|   | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| 9- You and all the English teachers share the same values and goals.                                    | 40%            | 60%   |          |                   |
| 10- The English department has high expectations for student learning.                                  | 80%            | 20%   |          |                   |
| 11- The English department emphasizes the basic skills of the English language.                         | 100%           |       |          |                   |
| 12- There is a sense of a community and cooperative work in the English department.                     | 80%            | 20%   |          |                   |
| 13- There is collaboration among English teachers.  | 100%           |       |          |                   |
| 14- There is effective communication among the head of the English department and the English teachers. | 40%            | 60%   |          |                   |
| 15- There is trust and confidence between the Head of the English department and the English teachers.  | 20%            | 80%   |          |                   |

|   |      |      |     |  |
|---|------|------|-----|--|
| 16- The coordinator shows tangible support and appreciation.  | 20%  | 60%  | 20% |  |
| 17- You are involved in decision making in the department.  |      | 100% |     |  |
| 18- You and your colleagues think thoroughly together what constitutes effective teaching and learning English. | 60%  | 40%  |     |  |
| 19- You are enthusiastic about teaching English as a second foreign language.                                   | 100% |      |     |  |
| 20- You have a friendly relationship with your colleagues in the English department.                            | 100% |      |     |  |

Besides, the teacher's observation in the teacher's lounge and in the researcher's office during the weekly meeting showed that all the teachers share ideas about the English language and they sometimes say positive things to each other. Furthermore, they all (100%) listen to each other when they are sharing their opinions and ideas about the language or about issues from their daily life. During the weekly meeting, most teachers fix appointments to meet outside the school or they often call each other in order to discuss the programme they should cover and to prepare together the assignments. They even talked about their social life and the activities they share. For instance, they talked about a dinner they had with all the teachers of cycle II. Furthermore, most teachers participate in all the celebrations and the ceremonies the school organizes. Despite that, the researcher noticed from her observation that the teachers rarely look for ways to solve problems cooperatively. Although most of them show the collegial attitude in their daily life, they never talk about departmental vision and they rarely talk about the

departmental assessment system, the homework policy and the rules of class conduct (See Table U 14).

*What are the elements of the teaching and learning processes?*

The teachers' questionnaire revealed that all the teachers (100%) examine regularly their students. They all agreed that they are helpful and supportive for their students. Moreover, they all insist on students maintaining high standards in their work and their behaviour. Furthermore, all the teachers approved that they use a wide range of teaching material and media, and they also use a variety of teaching styles. Besides, they all vary their instructional techniques. Most teachers said that they use positive reinforcement instead of punishment and only one said that she uses punishment instead of positive reinforcement (See Table S 12).

Besides, the students' questionnaire showed that most of the students like the English schoolwork, and they are very often interested in them. They also added that the classroom explanations are very helpful. Almost half of the students believed that the English homework is helpful, and 45% thought that they are useless (See Table Q 10). Most students also agreed that their English teacher cares about them, whereas 15% thought that their English teacher is sometimes careless. Besides, the majority said that they like their English teacher and only 20% feel that their teacher does not like them. Moreover, almost 100% of the students are convinced that their teachers are enthusiastic and interested in their work. Half of them said that their teacher varies her/his approach in teaching lessons, and 45% thought that their teacher rarely varies his/her approach (See Table R 11).

On the other hand, the observation in the classrooms revealed that among five teachers only two are often interested in their school work and their effort is consistent from the beginning till the end of the period. Two out of five teachers are often prepared for their class and their lesson is often structured since they explain clearly the objectives at the beginning of the period and refer to them throughout the lesson to maintain the students focus and to keep the teaching session's task oriented. Among five teachers only one was often positive and praises her students instead of criticizing them, whereas the others are sometimes negative and criticize their students behaviour which rarely made the instruction relaxed and comfortable for the students. Most of the teacher rarely use a wide range of teaching materials and teaching styles. The majority rarely vary their instructional techniques except one teacher.

All teachers never use questions of high thinking level, they only focus on lower level thinking including knowledge, comprehension and application (See Table T 12). The observation of students showed that most of the students are sometimes interested in the lesson; however they rarely participate in the explanation and the correction of the activities in the classroom. This is one reason why the majority of the students do not focus and disrupt (See Table T 13).

From the teachers', the students' questionnaire, the observation and the school documents, it is noticeable that the teachers all share the same beliefs and work on the same goals. Besides, collegiality among them and the Head is dominant in the department. However, they do not solve problems cooperatively.

On the other hand, there was a divergence between the teachers' questionnaire and the researcher's observation about the teaching and learning processes. They think

they are enthusiastic and very well prepared whereas the researcher's observation showed the opposite.

*How can one improve the department's culture?*

The teachers' questionnaire showed that all the teachers agreed that teachers play a great role in the improvement of the English department. One teacher suggested arranging weekly meetings in order to discuss students' needs and to promote better standards in the classrooms. Others said that teachers should stick together by exchanging their experience and ideas and supporting each other (See Table O 5). The questionnaire also reflected the teachers' opinion about the ways of improving the culture of the English department. It showed that all the teachers are convinced that collegiality among teachers is an important factor for departmental improvement. All of them agreed that the teacher's enthusiasm in the subject is reflected on the student's enthusiasm. The majority stressed the importance of the in service workshops to improve the department, whereas only one did not believe in it. Besides, most of the teachers said that the teacher's involvement in decision making create a sense of ownership and out of five only two declared that this involvement is useless (See Table P 7).

The data collected from the questionnaire and the observation shows that the teachers work to realise the goals set by the school. They all collaborate with each other, respect their students and work for the students' benefits as stated in the school handbook.

*How can one improve the quality of learning and teaching processes?*

The teacher's questionnaire showed that all the teachers approved that in order to improve the teaching and learning processes their effort should be consistent from the

beginning of the period till the end. They should also pay attention to students of all ability levels; therefore, they should praise their students instead of criticizing them. The teachers also added that the use of a wide range of teaching material and media and the variety of teaching styles help with teaching and learning improvement. Likewise, the teachers said that they should not blame the students for their misbehaviour and should keep the instruction stress-free. All the teachers agreed that the information of the lesson should be structured and they should clearly explain the objectives of the lesson at the beginning of the period and refer to these throughout the lesson to maintain focus. Additionally, the objectives of the lessons should include verbs indicating higher levels of cognitive abilities, like apply, deduce, generalise, hypothesise, reflect, analyse, solve justify. Furthermore, all the teachers were convinced that the questions they ask should be of all levels- Low level thinking (knowledge-comprehension-application) and high level thinking (analysis-synthesis-evaluation). They also said that improvement requires that the majority of students be focused, not disruptive, participating in the conversation and involved in the correction and the explanation (See Table Q 8). Moreover, during meetings, all the teachers of cycle III often say that their students work enthusiastically on the research projects and they use their analytical and critical thinking.

In conclusion, data collected from the questionnaires and the observations about the culture of the department converge with school culture which is based on collegiality and communication among staff. However, there was a discrepancy between the teachers' questionnaire and the researcher's observation of the teaching and learning processes.

The following chapter will discuss the results and will suggest ways of improving the English department.

## Chapter Five

### Discussion

In this chapter, the researcher uses the data from the questionnaires, the observations and the school's documents to address her research questions and then she will compare the findings to what she reviewed in the literature section.

The study herein examined collegiality among teachers, the relationship with their students and the teaching and learning processes of the English department in order to improve them. As the ultimate objectives of this research are to find the weak points of the English department in order to improve them and highlight the strong points so as to keep them. Therefore, this part is divided into three sections: strong points of the English Department, weak points of the English Department and suggestions to improve the English Department.

#### *Strong points of the English department*

The results of examining the culture of the English department under study showed that there is a positive culture based on collegiality among teachers. Besides, all the teachers abide by the same values, and they all have a deep respect of the students.

The students feel that their school is a good place to make friends; they also believe that their English teachers are caring and supportive. This concurs with Gold (1998) who said that the school should translate its culture into the department. Furthermore, important elements of a positive culture exist in the department under study, and they are shown in the sense of community that the teachers have, their cooperative work and effective communication with each other, in addition to sharing the same goals (Harris, 1998). Consequently, this will affect the department improvement and the students score

Strahan (2003) and the students learning and performance will keep on improving if the teachers keep on working cooperatively (Kesselring & Wheelan, 2005).

Additionally, the Head of the department in the present study sets an example in practicing what is preached by abiding by the school's regulations, beliefs and values. She also transmits to the teachers the sanctions set by the school, in addition to working on the students' excellent performance as Snowden and Gorton (2002) suggested. Moreover, there is good communication between the teachers and the Head of the department which strengthens the department culture (Harris, 1998). The Head also agrees with the teachers on the processes and practices of the changes suggested by the teachers and then she monitors the implementation (Brighouse & Woods, 2002). The result of the present study parallel the previous studies since the Head of the department shows a tangible support and believes that as a coordinator she needs to build good relationships, effective communication, and involving teachers in the decision-making of the assessment, some activities to add or to cancel from and in the plan of the curriculum. The teachers' cohesiveness and collegiality reflect the Head's support in the department. The Head takes advantage of her authority to improve the culture. She spreads the feelings of trust, communications and collegiality, and she also sets high expectations that emphasize the teachers' determination to work on the students' excellent performance (Kelley et al., 2005).

#### *Weak points of the English Department*

Although some elements of a positive culture exist in the department in the present study, the English teachers do not try to solve the problems that occur in the English department collaboratively. Furthermore, they do not think thoroughly together of what makes effective teaching and learning in order to improve the department. Even though they work and organize for the school year they do not work on pedagogy



partnerships which are essential for department improvement. They are not knowledgeable about the latest research in the educational field.

On the other hand, the findings of the present study revealed inconsistency between the teachers' questionnaire and the researcher's observation in the classroom. The teachers are not as enthusiastic as they said in their questionnaire and this is reflected on the students' enthusiasm and work (Halpin, 1966). Therefore, not all the students seem to be interested in learning English, they disrupt and annoy their classmates. As a result, the teachers should use all their energy and enthusiasm because Patrick et al. (2000) suggested for the teacher to show enthusiasm so his/her students become more interested, energetic, curious and excited about learning which reduces their misbehaviour in the classroom and make them more focused on the lesson. Lublin et al. (2005) also indicated that the change starts with the enthusiastic teacher who is motivated and engaged in teaching the subject, and this affects the students' enthusiasm and interest in the subject. Thus, this explains why some students are not interested since some teachers are not motivated and interested in the subject they are teaching. .

In terms of improving the teaching and learning processes, the present study showed a divergence in the results of the teachers' questionnaire, students' questionnaires and the researcher's observation and the school's teaching and learning processes mentioned in the school's document. The researcher deduced from the teachers' daily follow up that teachers do not use a wide range of teaching material and media and do not vary their instructional techniques. However, most teachers were convinced that they are using them. This might show that the teachers are not knowledgeable about these terms.

Furthermore, the present study showed that the teachers examine their students regularly; however, the objectives of the assessments need to be clearer and more detailed. In addition, the present study also showed some lack in the teachers' practice in the classroom. For instance, most of them are not often prepared for their class and their lesson is not often structured.

#### *Suggestions for the Department improvement*

Hence, since Harris (2002) proposed that the department improvement starts with more training and development for the teachers, this development should start with teachers meeting together in the department and exploring the teachers' competences in teams in order to create new pedagogic partnerships. They should be more involved by making the choice to plan and implement the new changes or not, and this is one way to get the teachers' ownership. The teachers should work collaboratively, and they should also be involved in the decision making which leads to the unity of purpose and creates a sense of ownership which improves the department culture as Sammons et al. (1995) also stated. Additionally, D'Andrea and Gosling (2005) suggested that teachers should be involved in the changes and the improvement since teaching and learning will never occur without the willingness of the people involved in changes. Thus, the researcher, as the Head of the department, was determined to involve the teachers by asking them to suggest ways of improving the culture and the teaching and learning processes. This could be done by listing the skills that they need to work on in the classroom; the latter should be based on the values and beliefs of the school that are stated in its documents. Additionally, teachers should pursue professional development as Harris (2002) proposed because in order to improve any department, there should be intensive work within the departmental team on teaching and learning issues. They should build their

own professional communities where they focus on collaboration and networking, participate in decision-making and share good practices (Glickman, 2002). This also corresponds to ideas about the lifelong learning for teachers so as to keep on improving and learning new methods in their classroom (Southworth and Conner, 1999). They also need to develop collegiality to reflect on educational issues and come up with new ideas (Bottery, 2004). They should also be more committed in terms of time and emotion to teaching because high commitment of teachers drives them to do better for their students and their department improvement (Glickman, 2002).

Moreover, the teachers should not feel threatened by their coordinator. If they are not familiar with some pedagogical issues, they should feel at ease to ask their coordinator given that it is her function to support and encourage them in improving and developing themselves (Southworth and Conner, 1999).

In terms of examining the students, the objectives of the assessments need to be clearer and more detailed. Teachers should also recognise the reasons for selecting particular departmental assessment, homework policy, and class conduct. Harris (2002) proposed that all these decisions should have their roots in the values and beliefs of the department, and they need to be shared and debated.

Teachers need to be more motivated and committed to work because if they are not they will not try to improve their department (Barber, 1993). Therefore, the Head can inculcate motivation in teachers by showing them how proud she is of their accomplishment (Sirota et al. 2006). Furthermore, the teachers should be more motivated and enthusiastic since they are essential factors that affects students' enthusiasm and their intrinsic motivation and consequently decreases their disruption in the classroom and make them more curious and motivated (Patrick et al. ,2000).

This also affects their achievements (Corcoran and Wilson, 1998). The teachers need to focus not only on low level thinking but also on critical thinking. They should also be more creative and use their critical thinking to improve teaching and learning (Brighthouse & Woods, 2000).

Teachers should also be more prepared by explaining clearly the objectives at the beginning of the period and referring to them throughout the lesson to maintain the students' focus and to keep the teaching session task oriented. Lublin et al. (2005) found that there is a direct link between learning objectives and teaching methods, and the choice of teaching methods will have a strong influence on how students approach learning in the subject. Hence, the objectives stated by the teachers should include higher level cognitive abilities, such as applying, deducing, generalising, analysing, solving, then the methods used should support the development of these abilities. If students undertake these active approaches to learning then they become more involved, more focused, take a deep approach to their learning in the subject, and will not get bored and disrupt in the classroom. In addition, if the students use their intelligence and the high level thinking they will be more motivated and will put more energy in their work. Thus, the learning outcomes should be based on thinking critically and making judgements.

Moreover, teachers should not be negative and criticize their students' behaviour because this makes the instruction more relaxed and comfortable for the students. On the contrary, they should praise them every time they give the right answer or come up with new ideas. Besides, they should use a wide range of teaching materials, not only the manuals and the tape recorder, but also the overhead projector, the computer and the DVD.

Ultimately, the evaluation of the improvement plan should be conducted by an evaluation team consisting of teachers and the Head teacher to explore the teachers' competences together and discuss the departmental vision which helps the staff to reaffirm their needs and responsibilities (Harris, 1998). Additionally, this team should use action research and start selecting a problem of collective interest, then collect the needed data, organize, analyze and interpret data and finally take action based on this information (Cook and Fine, 1997). Moreover, this team can evaluate the new plan by asking the teachers what they like and dislike about the new implementation and by gathering information about the principles, curriculum and the content of the programme. Thus, teachers should have the opportunity to engage in active learning where they explore together, reflect and collaborate with each other in order to design their own programme (John and Gravani, 2005).

#### *Limitations*

The researcher conducted this research in only one English department in one French medium school, and was limited to English teachers and students. Thus, the sample was not large enough: one English department and only five teachers and twenty students. This hinders the generalization of the findings because what fits one department may not fit the other ones.

#### *Recommendations for further study*

The researcher is considering further research in this field and would like to conduct a longitudinal study over five years in the school and the department she is in charge of, or taking several French medium schools to study their English departments. She recommends that a more extensive sample be taken. She would definitely do a study on a larger scale that she feels would be more accurate. She would also like to examine

the elements of the English department that make it more effective and they are the following: “professional leadership, shared vision and goals, a learning environment, concentration on teaching and learning, purposeful teaching, high expectations, positive reinforcement, monitoring progress, home school partnership, pupil rights and responsibilities, a learning environment” (Sammons et al., 1995, p. 8).

### *Conclusion*

This research aimed at examining the culture and the teaching and learning processes of the English department in order to improve it. The questionnaire of the teachers and the students, the observation in the classrooms and the teachers’ lounge, in addition to the documents of the school under study showed that there is a positive culture in the department due to collegiality among teachers and the Head of the department. However, teachers should be more knowledgeable about the school vision and goals and refer to them every time there is any decision in the department. Furthermore, teachers should enhance their methodology and adopt new ones that help students be more active and motivated in the classrooms. Thus, they should follow intensive training sessions based on this need

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Nevertheless, the findings of this research cannot be generalized since the sample was small, only one English department in one French medium school, and only five teachers and twenty students.

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Appendix A

*Teachers' Questionnaire*

*This is a graduation project study being conducted by a Master of Arts (MA) student, Ghada Imad, in the Education Department of the Lebanese American University - Beirut.*

The Project Study aims to examine the culture and teaching and learning processes of the English Department in order to find ways to improve them.

All your answers to these questions are completely confidential.

To protect your privacy, please do not place your name on this questionnaire. Your valuable viewpoint and participation will assist in the advancement of knowledge.

When you complete this questionnaire, please fold it, place it in the envelope and return it.

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## Appendix B

Please answer the following questions:

1- What is your education level? \_\_\_\_\_

2- Do you have a teaching diploma?

Yes

No

I- The Culture and Teaching and Learning of the English Department

Please respond using the following rating scale:

1 = Very Little    2 = Some    3 = Considerable    4 = Very Great    5=Don't know

Circle the most appropriate response.

|  | Very little | Some | Considerable | Very great | Don't know |
|--|-------------|------|--------------|------------|------------|
| 1- To what extent does the school have a clearly stated vision or purpose that is known by you?            | 1           | 2    | 3            | 4          | 5          |
| 2- To what extent does the school have a clearly stated vision or purpose based on its student needs?      | 1           | 2    | 3            | 4          | 5          |
| 3- To what extent does the school have high expectations for all students?                                 | 1           | 2    | 3            | 4          | 5          |
| 4- To what extent is the English department a safe and orderly place that nurtures teaching and learning ? | 1           | 2    | 3            | 4          | 5          |
| 5- How much does the English coordinator try to help you with your problems?                               | 1           | 2    | 3            | 4          | 5          |
| 6- To what extent is the culture of the English department characterized by trust and professionalism ?    | 1           | 2    | 3            | 4          | 5          |
| 7- To what extent are you involved in major decisions related to your work?                                | 1           | 2    | 3            | 4          | 5          |

## Appendix C

|  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8- To what extent there is interaction and communication among English teachers that aimed at achieving organization's objectives? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|

Please respond using the following rating scale:

1 = Strongly agree    2 = agree    3 = disagree    4 = strongly disagree

Circle the most appropriate response.

|   | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| 9- You and all the English teachers share the same values and goals.                                    | 1              | 2     | 3        | 4                 |
| 10- The English department has high expectations for student learning.                                  | 1              | 2     | 3        | 4                 |
| 11- The English department emphasizes the basic skills of the English language.                         | 1              | 2     | 3        | 4                 |
| 12- There is a sense of a community and cooperative work in the English department.                     | 1              | 2     | 3        | 4                 |
| 13- There is collaboration among English teachers.  | 1              | 2     | 3        | 4                 |
| 14- There is effective communication among the head of the English department and the English teachers. | 1              | 2     | 3        | 4                 |
| 15- There is trust and confidence between the Head of the English department and the English teachers.  | 1              | 2     | 3        | 4                 |
| 16- The coordinator shows tangible support and appreciation.  | 1              | 2     | 3        | 4                 |
| 17- You are involved in decision making in the department.  | 1              | 2     | 3        | 4                 |

## Appendix D

|  |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 18- You and your colleagues think thoroughly together what constitutes effective teaching and learning English.                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 19- You are enthusiastic about teaching English as a second foreign language.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 20- You have a friendly relationship with your colleagues in the English department.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 21- You feel that your ideas are listened to in the English department.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 22- You pay attention to students of all ability levels.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 23- You are willing to provide help for those students that need it.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 24- You use positive reinforcement instead of punishment   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 25- You insist on all students maintaining high standards in their work and their behavior.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 26- Students are aware of your classroom work and behavior expectations.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 27- You use a wide range of teaching material and media.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 28- You use a variety of teaching styles.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 29- You vary your instructional techniques so that students with varying learning styles (e.g., active, creative, visual) can benefit. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 30- You regularly examine your students' performance.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Appendix E

**II- How Can One improve the culture and Teaching and Learning of the English Department?**

1- Do teachers play a role in improving the English department?

- Yes
- No

a- If Yes, how?.....  
.....

b- If No, whose responsibility is it?.....  
.....

2- Should teachers have in service workshops to improve the English department?

- Yes
- No

3- Does the teachers' enthusiasm and interest in English affect the students' enthusiasm and interest in the subject?

- Yes
- No

4- Should the Head of School, the Head of the department and the English teachers abide by the same philosophy, values and beliefs of the school in order to improve the English department?

- Yes
- No

5-Is collegiality and collaboration among teachers are important conditions for unity of purpose, and consequently department improvement?

- Yes
- No

6- Does the teachers' involvement in decision-making related to their work and the development of the department guidelines, create a sense of "ownership"?

- Yes
- No



Appendix F

7- Should the teacher's effort be consistent from the beginning of the period till the end?

- Yes
- No

8- Should the teacher pay attention to students of all ability levels?

- Yes
- No

9- Should the teacher be positive and use praises instead of criticism?

- Yes
- No

10- Should the teacher use a wide range of teaching material and media?

- Yes
- No

11- Should the teacher use a variety of teaching styles?

- Yes
- No

12- Should the teacher vary his/her instructional techniques so that students with varying learning styles (e.g., active, creative, visual) can benefit?

- Yes
- No

13- Should The teacher present information or skills clearly and animatedly?

- Yes
- No

14- Should S/he be non-evaluative and keep instruction relaxed and relate comfortably to the students with the consequence that they have fewer behaviour problems?

- Yes
- No

## Appendix G

15- Should the information of the lesson be structured and the teachers clearly explain the objectives of the lesson at the outset and refer to these throughout the lesson to maintain focus?

Yes

No

16- Should the objectives include verbs indicating higher level cognitive abilities, like apply, deduce, generalise, hypothesise, reflect, analyse, solve, justify?

Yes

No

17- Should the objectives be related to the previous study and to things of personal relevance of the pupils?

Yes

No

18- Should the teacher ask questions of all levels- Low level thinking (knowledge-comprehension-application) and high level thinking (analysis-synthesis-evaluation)?

Yes

No

19- Should the majority of students be focused and do not disrupt?

Yes

No

20- Should the majority of students participate in the conversation and be involved in the correction and the explanation?

Yes

No

Appendix H

*Students' Questionnaire*

*This is a graduation project study being conducted by a Master of Arts (MA) student, Ghada Imad, in the Education Department of the Lebanese American University - Beirut.*

The Project Study aims to examine the culture and teaching and learning processes of the English Department in order to find ways to improve them.

All your answers to these questions are completely confidential.

To protect your privacy, please do not place your name on this questionnaire. Your valuable viewpoint and participation will assist in the advancement of knowledge.

When you complete this questionnaire, please fold it, place it in the envelope and return it.

## Appendix I

Please answer the following questions:

1- Are you a ?

- Boy  
 Girl

2- How long have you been a student at LS ?

- 5- 7 years  
 4-6 years  
 1-3 years

3- Which grade level are you ? \_\_\_\_\_

Please respond using the following rating scale:

1 = Never    2= Rarely    3 = Sometimes    4 = Often    5 = Very Often

Circle the most appropriate response.

|   | Never | Rarely | Some-<br>times | Often | Very<br>often |
|---|-------|--------|----------------|-------|---------------|
| 1- Are you happy when you are in school?  | 1     | 2      | 3              | 4     | 5             |
| 2- Are you satisfied with the behaviour of other students in and out of class?          | 1     | 2      | 3              | 4     | 5             |
| 3- Are you satisfied with the extracurricular program: sports, school plays, and clubs? | 1     | 2      | 3              | 4     | 5             |
| 4- Do you feel the school rules are fair?   | 1     | 2      | 3              | 4     | 5             |
| 5- Is this school a good place to make friends?   | 1     | 2      | 3              | 4     | 5             |
| 6- Do you like to do well in school?  | 1     | 2      | 3              | 4     | 5             |
| 7- Do you find your English courses interesting?  | 1     | 2      | 3              | 4     | 5             |
| 8- Do you like your English schoolwork?   | 1     | 2      | 3              | 4     | 5             |

## Appendix J

|   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9- Do classroom explanations and class work help you improve your English language? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10- Does English homework help you learn more?                                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11- Do you feel your English teacher cares about you?                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12- Do you feel the marks you got in English are fair?                              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13- Do you like your English teacher?   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14- Is your English teacher enthusiastic about teaching?                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15-Is your English teacher interested in your school work?                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16- Does your English teacher vary his/her approach in teaching the lessons?        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17-Is your English teacher prepared for class?                                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

## Appendix K

**Observation rubric for teachers and students in the classroom**

|   | Never | Rarely | Some-<br>times | Often | Very<br>often |
|---|-------|--------|----------------|-------|---------------|
| 1-The teacher is interested in his/her school work.   |       |        |                |       |               |
| 2-The teacher is prepared for class.  |       |        |                |       |               |
| 3- The teacher's effort is consistent from the beginning of the period till the end.                              |       |        |                |       |               |
| 4-S/he pays attention to students of all ability levels.  |       |        |                |       |               |
| 5- The teacher is positive. S/he uses praises instead of criticism.   |       |        |                |       |               |
| 6- The teacher uses a wide range of teaching material and media.  |       |        |                |       |               |
| 7- The teacher uses a variety of teaching styles.   |       |        |                |       |               |
| 8- The teacher varies his/her instructional techniques so that students with varying learning styles can benefit. |       |        |                |       |               |
| 9- The teacher presents information or skills clearly and animatedly.   |       |        |                |       |               |
| 10- The teacher keeps the teaching sessions task-oriented.  |       |        |                |       |               |

## Appendix L

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 11- S/he is non-evaluative and keeps instruction relaxed. S/he relates comfortably to the students with the consequence that they have fewer behaviour problems.                       |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12- The information of the lesson is structured. The teachers clearly explain the objectives of the lesson at the outset and refer to these throughout h the lesson to maintain focus. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 13- The objectives are related to the previous study and to things of personal relevance of the pupils.  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 14- The objectives include verbs indicating higher level cognitive abilities, like apply, deduce, generalise, hypothesise" " reflect, analyse, solve and justify.                      |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15- The main ideas of the lesson are reviewed at the end.  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16- The questions are structured so as to focus pupils' attention on the key elements of the lessons.  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17- The teacher asks questions of all levels. Low level thinking (knowledge-comprehension-application) and high level thinking (analysis-synthesis-evaluation).                        |  |  |  |  |  |

## Appendix M

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 18- The majority of students are interested in the lesson.                       |  |  |  |  |  |
| 19- The majority of students are enthusiastic about learning.                    |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20- The teacher listens to what the students say.                                |  |  |  |  |  |
| 21- The majority of students are focused and do not disrupt.                     |  |  |  |  |  |
| 22- The majority of students participate in the conversation.                    |  |  |  |  |  |
| 23- The majority of students are involved in the explanation and the correction. |  |  |  |  |  |



## Appendix N

**Teachers' observation rubric in the teachers' lounge**

|   | Never | Rarely | Some times | Often | Very Often |
|---|-------|--------|------------|-------|------------|
| 1-The teachers share ideas and materials about the English language.  |       |        |            |       |            |
| 2- They listen to each other and expect to be listened to.  |       |        |            |       |            |
| 3- They say positive things to their colleagues.  |       |        |            |       |            |
| 4- They look for ways to solve problems cooperatively and do not blame or quit.                                       |       |        |            |       |            |
| 5- They make their best effort when things are going well and when they are not.                                      |       |        |            |       |            |
| 6- They work really hard regardless of the situation or the behaviour of the other members of the group.              |       |        |            |       |            |
| 7- The collegial attitude and level of engagement in the professional dialogue is shown in their daily life.          |       |        |            |       |            |
| 8- There is a dialogue among teachers about departmental values and vision.   |       |        |            |       |            |
| 9- They talk about the departmental assessment system, the homework policy and the rules of class conduct.            |       |        |            |       |            |
| 10- All these decisions have their roots in the values and beliefs of the department and they are shared and debated. |       |        |            |       |            |

## Appendix O

Table O 4

The teachers' views of the school's culture

|   | Very little | Some times | Considerable | Very great | Don't know |
|---|-------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|
| 1- To what extent does the school have a clearly stated vision or purpose that is known by you?       |             | 40 %       | 40%          |            | 10%        |
| 2- To what extent does the school have a clearly stated vision or purpose based on its student needs? |             |            | 60%          | 40%        |            |
| 3- To what extent does the school have high expectations for all students?                            |             |            | 60%          | 20%        | 20%        |

Table O 5

The teaching and learning processes in the classroom

|   |     |     |     |  |  |
|---|-----|-----|-----|--|--|
| 22- You pay attention to students of all ability levels.                                    | 80% | 20% |     |  |  |
| 23-You are willing to provide help for those students that need it.                         | 80% | 20% |     |  |  |
| 24- You use positive reinforcement instead of punishment                                    | 20% | 60% | 20% |  |  |
| 25- You insist on all students maintaining high standards in their work and their behavior. | 80% | 20% |     |  |  |
| 26- Students are aware of your classroom work and behavior expectations.                    | 40% | 60% |     |  |  |
| 27-You use a wide range of teaching material and media.                                     | 20% | 80% |     |  |  |
| 28-You use a variety of teaching styles.  | 60% | 40% |     |  |  |

## Appendix P

|   |      |     |  |  |  |
|---|------|-----|--|--|--|
| 29-You vary your instructional techniques so that students with varying learning styles (e.g., active, creative, visual) can benefit. | 80%  | 20% |  |  |  |
| 30-You regularly examine your students' performance.  | 100% |     |  |  |  |

Table P 6

Who is responsible for improving the English department?

|  | Yes  | No | If yes, how? | If No, whose responsibility is it? |
|--|------|----|--------------|------------------------------------|
| 1-Do teachers play a role in improving the English department? | 100% |    |              |                                    |

Table P 7

Ways of improving the culture of the English department.

|  | Yes  | No  |
|--|------|-----|
| 2-Should teachers have in service workshops to improve the English department?   | 80%  | 20% |
| 3- Does the teachers' enthusiasm and interest in English affect the students' enthusiasm and interest in the subject?  | 100% |     |
| 4- Should the Head of School, the Head of the department and the English teachers abide by the same philosophy, values and beliefs of the school in order to improve the English department? | 80%  | 20% |
| 5- Is collegiality and collaboration among teachers are important conditions of purpose, and consequently department improvement?  | 100% |     |
| 6- Does the teachers' involvement in decision-making related to their work the development of the department guidelines, create a sense of "ownership  | 60%  | 40% |

## Appendix Q

Table Q 8

Ways of improving the teaching and learning processes of the English department

1- Collaboration among teachers and the Head of the department 100%

Table Q 9

The students' views of the school's culture

|  | Never | Rarely | Some-<br>times | Often | Very<br>often |
|--|-------|--------|----------------|-------|---------------|
| 1- Are you happy when you are in school?   |       | 5%     | 30%            | 60%   | 5%            |
| 2- Are you satisfied with the behaviour of other students in and out of class?                   |       | 5%     | 60%            | 25%   | 10%           |
| 3- Are you satisfied with the extracurricular program (sports, school plays, concerts, clubs,..) | 5%    |        | 30%            | 20%   | 45%           |
| 4- Do you feel the school rules are fair?  | 5%    | 10%    | 45%            | 25%   | 15%           |
| 5- Is this school a good place to make friends?  |       |        | 15%            | 10%   | 75%           |
| 6- Do you like to do well in school?   |       |        | 10%            |       | 90%           |

Table Q 10

The students' views of the English learning processes

|   | Never | Rarely | Some-<br>times | Often | Very<br>often |
|---|-------|--------|----------------|-------|---------------|
| 7- Do you find your English courses interesting?                                    |       |        | 5%             | 45%   | 50%           |
| 8- Do you like your English schoolwork?   |       | 20%    |                | 15%   | 65%           |
| 9- Do classroom explanations and class work help you improve your English language? |       |        | 15%            | 30%   | 65%           |
| 10- Does English homework help you learn more?                                      |       | 10%    | 35%            | 40%   | 15%           |

## Appendix R

Table R 11

The students' opinion about their English teacher and his/her teaching methods

|  | Never | Rarely | Some-<br>times | Often | Very<br>often |
|--|-------|--------|----------------|-------|---------------|
| 11- Do you feel your English teacher cares about you?                        |       | 5%     | 10%            | 40%   | 45%           |
| 12- Do you feel the marks you got in English are fair?                       |       | 10%    | 10%            | 45%   | 35%           |
| 13- Do you like your English teacher?  |       |        | 20%            | 35%   | 45%           |
| 14- Is your English teacher enthusiastic about teaching?                     |       |        |                | 40%   | 60%           |
| 15-Is your English teacher interested in your school?                        |       |        | 5%             | 45%   | 50%           |
| 16- Does your English teacher vary his/her approach in teaching the lessons? | 5%    | 15%    | 25%            | 40%   | 15%           |
| 17-Is your English teacher prepared for class?                               |       |        | 15%            | 30%   | 55%           |

## Appendix S

**Observation Rubric for teachers and students in the classroom**

Table S 12

The teaching and learning processes in the classroom

|  | Never | Rarely | Some-<br>times | Often | Very<br>often |
|--|-------|--------|----------------|-------|---------------|
| 1-The teacher is interested in his/her school work.  |       |        | 60%            | 40%   |               |
| 2-The teacher is prepared for class.   |       | 20%    | 40%            | 40%   |               |
| 3- The teacher's effort is consistent from the beginning of the period till the end.   |       |        | 60%            | 40%   |               |
| 4-S/he pays attention to students of all ability levels.   |       | 60%    | 40%            |       |               |
| 5- The teacher is positive. S/he uses praises instead of criticism.  |       |        | 80%            | 20%   |               |
| 6- The teacher uses a wide range of teaching material and media.   |       | 40%    | 60%            |       |               |
| 7- The teacher uses a variety of teaching styles.  |       | 80%    | 20%            |       |               |
| 8- The teacher varies his/her instructional techniques so that students with varying learning styles (e.g., active, creative, visual) can benefit. |       | 80%    |                | 20%   |               |
| 9- The teacher presents information or skills clearly and animatedly.  |       | 20%    | 60%            | 20%   |               |
| 10- The teacher keeps the teaching sessions task-oriented.   |       |        | 80%            | 20%   |               |

## Appendix T

|   |     |     |     |     |  |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|--|
| 11- S/he is non-evaluative and keeps instruction relaxed. S/he relates comfortably to the students with the consequence that they have fewer behaviour problems.                    |     | 40% | 60% |     |  |
| 12- The information of the lesson is structured. The teacher clearly explain the objectives of the lesson at the outset and refer to these throughout the lesson to maintain focus. |     | 60% |     | 40% |  |
| 13- The objectives are related to the previous study and to things of personal relevance of the pupils.   |     | 20% | 60% |     |  |
| 14- The objectives include verbs indicating higher level cognitive abilities, like apply, deduce, generalise, hypothesise, reflect, analyse, solve, justify.                        | 20% | 80% |     |     |  |
| 15- The main ideas of the lesson are reviewed at the end.   |     | 60% | 40% |     |  |
| 16- The questions are structured so as to focus pupils' attention on the key elements of the lessons.   |     |     | 40% | 60% |  |
| 17- The teacher asks questions of all levels. Low level thinking (knowledge-comprehension-application) and high level thinking (analysis-synthesis-evaluation).                     |     | 80% | 20% |     |  |

Table T 13

## The students' participation in the classroom

|   |  |  |     |      |  |
|---|--|--|-----|------|--|
| 18-The majority of students are interested in the lesson.   |  |  | 80% | 20%  |  |
| 19-The majority of students are enthusiastic about learning |  |  | 80% | 20%  |  |
| 20- The teacher listens to what the students say.           |  |  |     | 100% |  |

## Appendix U

|  |  |     |     |     |  |
|--|--|-----|-----|-----|--|
| 21-The majority of students are focused and do not disrupt                       |  | 40% | 40% | 20% |  |
| 22-The majority of students participate in the conversation                      |  |     | 60% | 40% |  |
| 23- The majority of students are involved in the explanation and the correction. |  |     | 80% | 20% |  |

Table U 14

## Teachers' observation Rubric in the Teachers' Lounge

|  | Never | Rarely | Some times | Often | Very often |
|--|-------|--------|------------|-------|------------|
| 1-The teachers share ideas and materials about the English language.   |       |        | 100%       |       |            |
| 2- They listen to each other and expect to be listened to.   |       |        |            | 100%  |            |
| 3- They say positive things to their colleagues.   |       |        | 100%       |       |            |
| 4- They look for ways to solve problems cooperatively and do not blame or quit.                                |       | 80%    | 20%        |       |            |
| 5- They make their best effort when things are not going well .  |       | 80%    | 20%        |       |            |
| 6- They work really hard regardless of the situation or the behaviour of the other members of the group.       |       |        | 40%        | 60%   |            |
| 7- The collegial attitude and level of engagement in their professional dialogue is shown in their daily life. |       |        | 20%        | 80%   |            |
| 8- There is a dialogue among teachers about departmental values and vision.                                    | 100%  |        |            |       |            |
| 9- They talk about the departmental assessment system, the homework policy and the rules of class conduct.     |       | 80%    | 20%        |       |            |