

The educational image and the specificity of the recipient: “Primary education in Algeria as a model”

L'image éducative et la spécificité du destinataire : « L'enseignement primaire en Algérie comme modèle »

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Abstract

Educational imagery is a fundamental pillar of modern education, facilitating the assimilation of cognitive and intellectual concepts and developing visual and analytical thinking skills. It is also an effective tool for attracting and motivating students, and is used and invested in by educational systems around the world.

Algeria, like other countries, has paid great attention to educational images, especially in primary education. as it enables learners to think, analyze, and understand what is written in texts. It attracts their attention and interest with its shapes, colors, and visual effects, as well as its obvious and hidden meanings. It should be noted that the recipient of educational images has a set of psychological, social, and moral aspects that must be taken into account. These must be taken into account, and the role of the environment must not be overlooked, as a child from the north is not the same as a child from the south. Images are not presented arbitrarily or at random, but according to carefully considered rules and principles in order to achieve the goals for which they were produced. Based on this premise, this study, entitled "Educational Images and the Specificity of the Recipient in Primary Education in Algeria," aims to reveal the specificity of the recipient of educational images and then to explain their importance and appropriateness criteria.

Keywords: educational image; specificity; recipient; education; primary stage.

Resumé

L'imagerie éducative est un pilier fondamental de l'éducation moderne, facilitant l'assimilation des concepts cognitifs et intellectuels et développant les capacités de réflexion visuelle et analytique. Elle constitue également un outil efficace pour attirer et motiver les élèves, et est utilisée et financée par les systèmes éducatifs du monde entier.

L'Algérie, comme d'autres pays, a accordé une grande attention aux images éducatives, en particulier dans l'enseignement primaire, car elles permettent aux apprenants de réfléchir, d'analyser et de comprendre ce qui est écrit dans les textes. Elles attirent leur attention et leur intérêt par leurs formes, leurs couleurs et leurs effets visuels, ainsi que par leurs significations évidentes et cachées. Il convient de noter que le destinataire des images éducatives présente un ensemble d'aspects psychologiques, sociaux et moraux qui doivent être pris en compte. Ceux-ci doivent être pris en considération, et le rôle de l'environnement ne doit pas être négligé, car un enfant du nord n'est pas le même qu'un enfant du sud. Les images ne sont pas présentées de manière arbitraire ou aléatoire, mais selon des règles et des principes mûrement réfléchis afin d'atteindre les objectifs pour lesquels elles ont été produites. Partant de ce principe, cette étude, intitulée « Les images éducatives et la spécificité du destinataire dans l'enseignement primaire en Algérie », vise à révéler la spécificité du destinataire des images éducatives, puis à expliquer leur importance et les critères de pertinence.

Mots clés : image éducative; intimité; destinataire; éducation; cycle primaire.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Images in textbooks address many intellectual, cognitive, and cultural issues. They are an effective element and a fundamental basis in the educational learning process. Experts in the field of education recognize the value of images in addressing children in the early stages of life and their effectiveness in conveying knowledge to the learner's mind. Educational research has confirmed the superiority of images over words, as the direct association between visual images and verbal performance has become one of the virtues of language teaching for young people, whether they are learning their native language acquired through their mother tongue or a foreign language. This has made teaching and learning with pictures one of the most successful modern educational techniques.

There is no doubt that educational images play a prominent role and have a significant impact on the educational process, as reflected in the research conducted

on this topic. Anyone familiar with the curricula set by the Ministry of Education realizes that images have been taken into account as an effective educational tool.

The best evidence of this is that almost all lessons are accompanied by illustrative images that teachers are asked to use as a starting point on which to build their lessons and through which learners are introduced to the knowledge to be learned in that class. However, the recipient of the image has not been given their due consideration in studies, which has emptied the educational image of its content and diverted it from its objectives. The recipient of the educational image, especially at the primary education stage, has a set of characteristics that must be taken into account when producing the image, as it is a tool for conveying information and creating knowledge.

This study aims to answer the main question: What are the characteristics of the recipient of educational images in primary education in Algeria? The research required us to rely on a descriptive analytical approach as a mechanism to help us decipher the subject under study.

2. First: The Concept of Educational Images

First, we must define the term "educational image" so that we can then approach the specific characteristics of this type of image. In the field of education, it is defined as an image that "is used in the field of education and teaching and relates to specific teaching components, such as depicting the reality of education or capturing meaningful educational worlds that benefit learners in their institutions or classrooms. In other words, an educational image is one that carries constructive and noble values that serve learners in their educational institutions" (Renatumberari, 1997).

An educational image can also be defined as: a representation of people, objects, or scenes depicted on paper or similar media through photography or drawing. It is one of the pillars of any educational system, if not its foundation, especially as we live in an age of images par excellence. In addition, it can be a tool for enlightening minds and building strong characters if it carries noble values, but it can also be the opposite if it is not used and invested in properly.

It may vary in its forms, styles, and types, but its ultimate goal remains the same: to serve education and convey information to the recipient in the easiest way possible.

Its use may challenge the familiar dimensions of human life(Al-Kaloub, 1993)

-A challenge to the dimension of time in displaying images of distinctive archaeological and historical sites and scenes.

-A challenge to the dimension of place in presenting images of areas of the world that are difficult to visit and see in person.

-Challenging the ability of the naked eye, the camera zooms in or out on objects to make them easier to see or study.

-It challenges the unfamiliar events and objects such as nuclear explosions, volcanic eruptions, and the other side of the moon.

Because of its importance, modern programs rely heavily on educational images as a tool for imparting knowledge and conveying information.

3.Second: The specificity of the recipient of the educational image

Images are chosen with great care, as they are a visual discourse loaded with connotations and communicative messages, especially if the target audience is

elementary school students who rely on images more than discourse in acquiring knowledge, as they are passionate about them without spoken language, as they are clearer and more expressive in their understanding.

Rousseau says: "Treat the pupil according to his age, put him first in his natural place, do not try to take him out of it, and do not allow him to leave it"(al-Shibani, n.d.). The world of children is a unique world, and images are among the things that attract them. Research and studies in the field of education have confirmed that students who work with images outperform those who do not in terms of academic achievement. Images are, in fact, nothing more than an attempt to express a subject clearly, whether the subject is real, such as historical events, or fictional, with the aim of imparting wisdom or a lesson that the child will ultimately learn.

In our current era, images are similar to words and even surpass them. In their overall concept, they are nothing more than a visual expression and creativity that takes the path of imagination and storytelling, translating ideas and meanings derived from the cultural environment in which the discourse of the image moves, which differs according to the communicative relationship that occurs with the image, which is always multiple, visual, storing many things and thus many meanings. Its cultural roots make it a framework open to different interpretations.

From this perspective, attention must be paid to the recipients of the image, especially those aimed at children, who are at an age where they do not fully understand the hidden meanings that images may contain, which may be a tool for destruction rather than a tool for building the mind and developing thought.

4. Third: Culture and Environment and their Impact on the Recipient of Educational Images

The meaning of an image varies according to cultures, which may differ within the same geographical area. Culture plays a major role in shaping the ideas of its members. On this basis, an image can carry multiple meanings and different interpretations. What one student understands from an image may not be understood by another, especially if they have not seen it before. This is where the skill of educational policymakers and those who plan students' academic paths comes into play. The greater the awareness of cultural diversity among learners, the more it reduces the scope for multiple readings and interpretations.

Modern curricula, especially the competency-based approach adopted by education policymakers in Algeria, emphasize the importance of linking educational content to the reality in which students live. The more realistic the content, the more effective the education and the greater the benefit to the learner's life. Education that is disconnected from reality creates two divergent paths for children: the theoretical path of study, which is of no benefit to them in their lives except to move them from illiteracy to literacy, and the realistic path of life, which has no connection to what they learn in school.

The image is not and will never be innocent, as there is a purpose and intention behind its production. It is not just bright shapes and colors that attract learners, but a message with obvious and hidden meanings that arouses in the recipient a desire to interpret and understand, and develops in them the qualities of deduction and analysis from an early age. When children living in an environment where this custom is widespread see a picture of a collaborative activity, such as

“twiza”, they understand, absorb, and imitate it. In this case, it represents a link to knowledge that is intended to be refined, classified, or recorded, while many other viewers are unaware of it. For them, it represents a semantic resource from which they learn and which arouses in them a love of learning about this custom, about which they know nothing except what they have gleaned from this image or what their teacher will tell them, or perhaps what they have heard about this custom from older members of their family. This is where the danger of the image lies in building new knowledge. The clearer, more expressive, more focused, and more carefully and consciously designed the image is, the more effective it is as an educational tool. Conversely, the more confusing, ambiguous, or open to multiple interpretations the image is, the closer it is to misunderstanding and interpretation that is far removed from its objectives and meanings.

The environment surrounding the student has a significant impact on their upbringing, character development, and outlook on life. The initial knowledge that the learner receives serves as a compass that guides their future opinions and beliefs, and this must be taken into consideration when creating the image.

5. Fourth: Standards for Educational Images Designed for Children

In order for educational images to serve their intended purpose, a set of criteria must be met, the most important of which are listed below:

A. In terms of form

The visual aspect of an image is extremely important, as producing an image is much more difficult than writing an article or giving a lecture in language, since language offers verbal alternatives, whereas great care must be taken in choosing shapes, colors, and sizes... They have deep meanings that may not be understood,

but they speak to the subconscious and deal with the inner mind of the recipient, especially if they are children accustomed to watching cartoons, animations, and other media produced by experts skilled in shaping awareness and guiding the recipient through that media.

There are a number of elements that must be present when using images in a formal setting, which we mention below:(Sabah, 1998)

-The image should be appropriate and compatible with the level, age, and grade of the students (animated images for preparatory education, and still images for subsequent stages of education).

-The image must be clear, expressive, and up-to-date.

-It should stimulate questions, discussions, and interest in the learner.

-The image must be harmonious in its composition and components.

-The image should have a frame that preserves it and highlights its components when displayed.

-A number of images appropriate to the lesson topic should be used.

-The image used as a teaching aid should be multicolored to express the details that the learner is expected to perceive.

Images are no longer just a tool that teachers use to draw learners' attention to the book, but have become an educational tool loaded with meanings, overflowing with visual messages rich in information that is intended to be conveyed to learners in the shortest possible way.

The teacher's awareness of the role of the educational image is a cornerstone in how the image is presented, how its content is conveyed, and how the learner is guided to understand the intended meaning of its inclusion in that particular place and nowhere else.

A-1- The importance of color from a formal perspective

The use of color in drawings helps to highlight important elements in their subjects, as it serves to distinguish or emphasize these elements or increase the contrast between them and the background or base. It should also be noted that colors should be

realistic, as modern approaches seek to link learning to reality so that learners do not find themselves between two different worlds (the theoretical world of school and the real world, which differs from the former). This helps the learner to "connect reality with the drawing that depicts it. The choice of colors for any drawing should focus on highlighting reality first and foremost, followed by aesthetics."(Al-Kaloub, 1996). Colors must be consistent with the stages of child development, in addition to being consistent within a single drawing.

Many studies have concluded that the most attractive colors for children are the three primary colors: yellow, red, and blue, and that they should be bright.

If the image is attractive and exciting, it helps the learner in the best way possible, as it allows the learner to engage all their senses in the learning process, which leads to the consolidation of information and its lasting impact. Therefore, its design and production must be left to a specialist in the artistic field.

One criticism of the images included in textbooks in general, and primary school books in particular, is that the images are inappropriate in terms of form – they are often unclear – nor in terms of content, as they cover multiple topics, making it difficult to focus the learner's attention on the target topic. This makes them a distraction for the learner rather than a basis from which the teacher can build new lessons.

A. In terms of content

Arab scholars realized early on the importance of the knowledge conveyed by the senses, which cannot be controlled or regulated, but must be guided and rationalized, as they are the primary source of knowledge that transmits knowledge and experience to the mind. We mention, by way of example, a distinguished Arab scholar (Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani, d. 471 AH) spoke of the importance of this type of knowledge, saying: "It is well known that the first knowledge came to people first through the senses and instincts, then through observation and reflection. It is closest to them, strongest in their hearts, oldest in their company, and most sacred to them. And if you transfer it in something similar from what is perceived by pure reason and the idea in the heart to what is perceived by the senses or what is known by nature, and as necessary. You are like one who appeals to her with the familiar to the stranger, and with the old lover to the new companion (Al-Jurjani, n.d.). The new idea to be conveyed to the recipient is a stranger who wants to get closer and be familiar, so he turns to a close lover and makes him an intermediary to gain acceptance.

In terms of content, the image directed at children should contain many aspects, the most important of which are:

B-1- Moral values

Moral values are defined as a set of principles, rules, and ideals that people believe in and agree upon, using them as a yardstick to weigh their actions and judge their physical and moral behavior. Each of us judges an action as good or evil, beautiful or ugly, based on the values in our minds.

The primary stage is one of the most important stages in a learner's life, as it is the foundation on which all their future ideas, inclinations, and behaviors will be built. Those responsible for educational policy have realized the importance of this and have prioritized education over teaching, because providing learners with moral standards that will enable them to approve or disapprove of behavior in the future is like setting controls and balance that they can rely on throughout their lives.

Moral values may be humanistic, i.e., those related to standards of good and evil, right and wrong in light of religious beliefs and inherited social norms, regardless of religion or gender, such as honesty, justice, tolerance, etc. or social values that connect the individual with others within society, such as cooperation and respect, or cognitive values that include scientific ethics such as curiosity, accuracy, and objectivity, or national values expressed through citizenship and the preference of the public interest over personal interest, such as love of country and sacrifice for its sake.

Therefore, the image must contain moral values that help build the learner's personality and enhance their role in society as a good individual. If these values are emphasized in the image, it will inevitably have a positive impact on the learner's psyche, and what we have experienced and witnessed in life supports this statement.

B-2- The educational-philosophical aspect

This aspect requires consideration of the image creator's view and relationship with the society in which they live, their interpretation of the meaning of knowledge and its relationship to their lived experience. This means that the image must interact positively with the philosophical reference point of society, as

the content of the image can only be understood if it is linked to a social situation, and knowledge has no source other than human experience in the surrounding environment.

Modern philosophy also views the learner as applying their thoughts and reasoning in various educational situations that they encounter in their daily lives, rather than taking a passive stance during education, thereby contributing effectively to the construction of their knowledge.

What the image should address from this perspective is:

-Representing facts and topics. For example, if we want to talk about the sea to children in the south or inland areas, we must bring it closer to them through images, as not all children have been able to go and see it. In this case, moving images are more effective than still images because they give a clearer picture, as they are reality conveyed through video technology.

-Embodiment of changes that may occur in facts, such as interactions and dynamics. Through this, we determine the stages, changes, or results. This means that images help with free expression and enrich the child's vocabulary, and ultimately contribute to the generation of dialogue or conversation.

-Developing the learner's thinking skills and enabling them to imagine things that happened or will happen before or after the event in the image, because the image makes the child use their mental abilities (observation, thinking, reflection) and helps them to construct logic and use reasoning, inference, judgment, and evaluation.

-The picture in the textbook gives the child space to reflect calmly and carefully on the details they are interacting with and ask themselves questions to answer. This is a positive rather than a negative action, because they have observed,

thought, spoken, and convinced themselves, and may convince their peers (Sini, 1991).

From the above, we conclude that images have their own philosophy and educational significance. They are a language that is understandable and clear to learners and an effective means of communication when spoken language is not understood, as they enable communication even between people who speak different languages. This must be taken into account, as learning through images is one of the most effective methods of teaching and learning, and developed countries have a long history in this field.

B-3- The scientific aspect

The images accompanying the lessons should not be placed arbitrarily or included haphazardly. Rather, they must be assigned to specialists in the field of imagery, who have extensive knowledge of the educational content to be conveyed through the images and who take into account the age of the audience. All of these considerations are important when designing educational images aimed at primary school learners because "the communicative charge is more spontaneous than spoken language. When looking at a drawing, it is very easy to move from the signifier to the signified and from the drawn form to the reality it expresses." (Renatumberari, 1997)

This aspect should include the following:

- Conducting multiple studies and research on students regarding the types of illustrations and colors that students interact with and are influenced by. The simpler and more understandable the image is to the learner, the greater its cognitive impact will be.

- Rely on traditional schools of drawing, such as abstract and realistic art.
- Rely on diverse and accurate methods developed by modern science, such as images and maps.
- Taking into account the circumstances of the time and the possibilities of the place.
- Subjecting images to the best available printing techniques in terms of production.
- Images should reflect the social and cultural reality of the child.

B- 4 - Psychological aspect

The psychological aspect of the learner is one of the most important aspects to consider when selecting images and scenes to include in lessons, as they contain implicit messages and psychological connotations that may negatively affect the learner and perhaps instill feelings of love or admiration for behavior that we wish to discourage through the image.

If language expresses the learner's reality, so do images, and an image cannot fulfill its function unless it takes into account the learner's inclinations, desires, and aptitudes. Images allow learners to question; they are a tool for stimulating, developing, and deepening thought. They are also connected to and developed for the inclinations and needs of students, and they are a tool for expressing lived reality. They stir up many feelings and emotions in the learner's psyche and are a powerful factor that may attract or repel the learner to the subject matter as a whole.

B-5- The cognitive aspect

Knowledge arises from the learner's past experiences, thanks to which they can understand things that are distant from them in time and space and use indirect methods to solve their problems. The acquisition of knowledge through sights and events that pass before the eyes is more memorable than anything else, especially at an early age when the learner does not yet possess the linguistic resources to understand verbal messages and speeches, and therefore relies heavily on the sense of sight to acquire information.

Cognitive development in children is a process that goes beyond the interaction of a set of biological and genetic factors with the environment. It requires an additional ability that comes from within the child, which Jean Piaget calls equilibrium, defining it as "an innate, inherited ability that is born with humans and allows them to achieve a kind of equilibrium between their previous knowledge and the new experiences they encounter" (Al-Zaghloul, 2006).

Therefore, it was imperative for the committees responsible for developing and writing textbooks to pay attention to the cognitive dimension of the learner and what is appropriate for their abilities, as images can open up vast areas of knowledge in a child's imagination.

B-6- The aesthetic aspect

The aesthetic aspect of an image is an important factor in attracting the learner's attention and arousing their interest, especially if the image contains bright colors, which instill a feeling of satisfaction in the learner's psyche. It also develops the learner's taste and enhances their aesthetic sensibility, which gives them pleasure and helps them understand what they found difficult to understand in writing, thus unleashing their latent energies.

Conclusion

If the goals are understood, the beginnings are made easier, the paths to them become clear, and it becomes easier to choose the language and provisions necessary for the journey. The educational process is contingent upon the awareness of those who set educational policy, design educational curricula, and draft educational materials of the desired goal of the images and scenes included in textbooks as aids in conveying information and supporting the knowledge presented linguistically. Only then can a visual discourse be produced that embodies the desired goal in order to achieve the desired goal, in addition to clarity of purpose in the minds of those who guide educational discourse, the specificity of the recipients of this discourse must be taken into account. Among the most important things to consider are:

- Awareness of the particularities of primary school students and consideration of these particularities when selecting images based on the latest developments in educational science in this field.

- Assign the task of selecting educational images to specialists whose knowledge and competence are well established. The content and semantic connotations of images shape the minds of future generations, so this task must be assigned to those whose knowledge, competence, and affiliation are well established.

- A clear concept of educational images in general, and those aimed at primary school pupils in particular, must be established.

- Consideration must be given to the environmental and cultural differences among learners, as Algeria is a continent with diverse environments and cultural

backgrounds. Image creators must take this into account so that no segment of society feels targeted in its cultural roots or excluded from the nation's history.

-Be mindful of the choice of colors and materials, as they have a clear impact on attracting or distracting the learner's attention. Dull colors or faint lines often repel learners in the early stages of education.

-Focus on images that convey moral values and good qualities to young people, as these form a solid foundation on which to build their moral and intellectual development. The image that learners derive from school represents, for them, the right path to follow,

and any negative visual message will necessarily have a negative impact.

-Take into account the psychological aspect of the learner, who is highly sensitive in this regard, and the image has a profound effect on their psychological development.

-Consider the positive philosophical connotations of the image, as the learner has a broad imagination and their cognitive system has not yet acquired immunity from the maze of multiple interpretations of a single situation.

-Formulate educational images in a way that refines the learner's aesthetic taste.

In conclusion, we call on the guardianship to give the necessary attention to this category of learners, especially in the field of formulating educational curricula, preparing lessons, and including educational images that are appropriate for the specificities of this critical age group. The guardianship must also establish mixed committees of specialists in the fields of pedagogy and psychology, as well as specialists in the fields of photography and the performing arts, to undertake the

task of selecting images and scenes that are appropriate for the specific characteristics of primary school learners. This awareness of the specific characteristics of primary school students should not be limited to those who develop programs and select lessons, but should be applied across the board, with inspectors and teachers being sensitized and trained in this area so that the images presented to students are comprehensive and fulfill their educational role to the fullest extent.

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