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***A comparative Study between the Algerian New Prospects and the Tunisian Skills for Life:  
English Language Textbooks of the Last Year  
Secondary Education***

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## ***DEDICATION***

***To my Father and Mother; Brothers and Sisters; and to my Fiancé***

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## **List of abbreviations**

- ALM: Audio-Lingual Method
- BAC : Baccalauréat
- BEM: Brevet de l'Enseignement Moyen
- CA/CLT: Communicative Approach/Communicative Language Teaching
- CBA: Competency-Based Approach
- EFL: English as a Foreign Language
- ESL: English as a Second Language
- ICT or TCIE: Information Communication Technology
- GTM: Grammar Translation Method
- OTI: Objectif Terminal d'Intégration (terminal objective of integration TOI).
- ONPS: Office National des Publications Scolaires
- SE3: Secondary Education, Year 3
- SE4: Secondary Education, Year 4
- TBLT: Task-Based Language Teaching
- TB syllabus: Task-Based syllabus

## ABSTRACT

The present work aims at comparing and contrasting two English language books designed for the Tunisian and Algerian students of the last year of secondary education-*Skills for life* and *New Prospects*- and the syllabuses on which they are based. Its major aim is to highlight the similarities and differences that exist between these two textbooks and the syllabuses they flesh out in relation with the CBA, an approach adopted in both countries. This objective is to be attained by analysing the language, social and technological skills and language aspects (grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation), then checking whether they are in conformity with the CBA principles. The study's issue of the study is identified through six questions: Do the two textbooks reflect CBA assumptions and principles? Do the two syllabuses reflect and implement the CBA? Are there any similarities between the two textbooks' content and procedures? Are there any similarities between the two syllabuses regarding design and content? Are the materials of both textbooks organized in a similar way? Do both countries aim at achieving similar terminal objectives at the end of the school year in question in particular and in secondary education in general? The analysis and comparison of the results has ended up in the following conclusions: The content of both textbooks is similar and conform to the CBA. The language skills are emphasised in both textbooks, though with a different presentation. The intercultural and socio-linguistic perspective lacks importance in both textbooks, though both syllabuses emphasise this aspect of language teaching. The approach adopted in both textbooks to teach the socio-linguistic dimension is not in conformity with CBA since there is no contrastive analysis between the culture of the students and that of English speaking countries, which does not comply with one of the major tenets of the CBA. Both textbooks and syllabuses give prominence to the writing skill regarding the fact that the school level in question ends with a national written examination based on written responses (*baccalauréat*) exam. Both syllabuses rely on task-based which is among the features of a CBA syllabus (the use of tasks). The Algerian syllabus unlike the Tunisian syllabus is project-based. Both of them aim at reaching similar objectives at teaching English secondary education terminal classes. Both of them are articulated around similar linguistic, methodological, and socio-cultural objectives. In both syllabuses the language skills, intercultural competence and technological skills are termed as strategies and the language aspects as functions and patterns to be mastered by the students. In general, the study indicates that the English language textbooks and syllabuses of both Tunisia and Algeria represent a similar designed work since many similarities are noticed with the consideration of the approach adopted and of the social differences existing between the two countries. The study, therefore, implies that further research about the English language textbooks and syllabuses between the different countries of the developing world would highlight findings of a paramount importance for these countries and the field of education.



## General Introduction

The aim of this work is to compare and contrast two English language textbooks: the Algerian *New Prospects* and the Tunisian *Skills for Life* in the light of the Competency-Based Approach. English textbooks remain a fundamental material in the teaching and learning processes in the Algerian and Tunisian schools. Each level has assigned specific textbook which is mainly continuity of the programme of the previous year level textbook. Secondary school teachers as well as learners rely most on textbooks as the basic resource. The Algerian secondary school textbooks are edited and published by the national office of school publications (Office National des Publications Scolaires-O.N.P.S). Those of the Tunisian secondary school textbooks are published by state-owned or state-subsidised firms (Centre National Pédagogique Tunisien-C.N.P.T.).

Textbooks are crucial in the teaching and learning processes of English as a foreign language in both countries where English is the second foreign language, taught after French. The language policy of the two countries introduces this language in the middle school so as to give the learners more opportunity to be in contact with it as its learning goes on until the end of secondary education level. This level is closed by a national examination-*Baccalauréat*. At the end of this education level, the students can follow their studies at university, if they succeed, or else they join the working world. In both cases, English constitutes a key requirement.

In recent decades, English has emerged as the language of technology and science in the entire world, and it is currently the dominant language for communication. With this technical and scientific dominance came the beginning of an overall linguistic supremacy, first in Europe and then it spread all over the world. The increasing globalization of the marketplace is forcing companies to pay more attention to their development in the international scale. It is argued that previous firms are adjusting their structures and methods of operation to fit the rapid and broad changes in the economic environment. They are increasing their geographic outreach because more of their suppliers and customers are located on various continents. Why discuss economics with

teaching and learning English? It is because English is closely associated with this economic modernization and industrial development. Information that is sent, received and communicated is mainly in English. The competitive demands of governments, industries, and corporations, both national and multinational, for technological progress require an understanding of the language of that technology that is in the first rate English. It is also noticed that vocabulary, grammatical forms, and ways of speaking and writing used in the international markets, are influenced by technological and scientific developments, economics and management, literature and entertainment genres. The basic factor contributing to this spread of English is its use in science, technology and commerce.

The world is in transition, and English takes new forms. The language and how it is used changes, reflecting patterns of contact with other languages and the changing communication needs of people. English is gaining a higher status as more people realize that English is not the property of only a few countries. Instead, it is a vehicle that is used globally and that will lead to more opportunities. Hasman argues that “*English belongs to whoever uses it for whatever purpose or need*”<sup>1</sup>. This is because English is a world’s language through which people from different countries and cultures communicate.

This international status of English has led many countries to adopt reforms in foreign language policy. The educational reform is crucial for the development of any country since it concerns the improvement of the living style and the thinking process of the educated people, because education is the pathway to the new changes and progress occurring in the world.

All countries have stated educational goals for their educational sectors according to their needs. The most common include the development of basic foundation knowledge (literacy, numeracy, and life skills) in the primary and middle schools, the development of the student’s intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and physical potential; and then of critical thinking and problem-solving skills (ibid). It is stated that students would also learn at academic knowledge about the

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<sup>1</sup> Cited in: Hasman, A.M. 2000:2

working world, respect for human dignity and human rights, understanding of ecology and appreciation of the environment, international understanding development of personal world's vision, promotion of civic and moral values, and the ability to adapt to change (ibid).

## **1-The Issue**

Our research is a comparative and a contrastive study of *New Prospects* and *Skills for Life*, which are currently used as English language textbooks respectively in Algeria and Tunisia. It seeks to highlight the differences and the similarities between the two textbooks and the way they integrate the Competency-Based Approach (CBA) to reach the assigned objectives. Moreover, it seeks to see whether they abide by this new teaching approach in the way the language competences, the cross-syllabus or curriculum competences and the life competences are articulated in the syllabuses and their implementation in the textbooks. The issue of our investigation turns around the integration of CBA. It is articulated through these questions:

1. Do the two syllabuses reflect and implement the CBA?
2. Are there any similarities between the two syllabuses regarding design and content?
3. Do the two textbooks reflect CBA assumptions and principles?
4. Are there any similarities between the two textbooks in terms of contents and procedures?
5. Are the materials of both textbooks organized in a similar way?
6. Do both countries aim at achieving similar terminal objectives at the end of the school year in question in particular and in secondary education in general?

Algerian as well as Tunisian secondary education is open to all learners who succeed in the final exam of the middle school and obtain the *Brevet* (BEM). The *Brevet* is a certification of the acquisition of basic competences supposed to allow the learners to follow their studies in the *lycée*. The *Brevet* is a certification developed after four years of study in Algeria and three years in Tunisia. It is an entrance exam to secondary education which is structured differently in the two countries. In Algeria, all second education students follow the same syllabus for one year (tronc

commun) before being streamed at major fields: literary (letters and philosophy, and foreign languages), scientific (experimental sciences, mathematics, technical mathematics, and economy and management). In Tunisia, secondary education lasts longer since students have to follow a two year syllabus before being oriented in various streams: letters; economy and management; mathematics; technology; and experimental sciences.

Notwithstanding these differences, secondary education in Algeria and Tunisia ends with a national exam, called the *Baccalauréat* of secondary education. This is why we are interested in the analysis of the final year syllabuses and textbooks. The *Baccalauréat* is the ticket which opens the doors of the university to the students, each according to the score obtained in the exam.

## **2-Importance of English in Algeria and Tunisia**

Algeria and Tunisia are among the countries that have introduced reforms in their educational systems, and whose objective is to meet the demands of globalization and universality. The reform has been extended to all the levels and all the sectors of education, from the Primary school to University.

Since English is the essential means of communication throughout the world, nowadays, and since it allows people to have access to a set of conceptual, scientific and cultural fields, the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language in the two countries has also known considerable changes and progress. The reform is said to be the result of the non-accomplishment of the objectives set. This is viewed in the fact that programmes and textbooks did not give sufficient materials and satisfactory outcomes.

The Algerian educational reform aims at providing new opportunities for the country to enable it to deal with the new requirements resulting from the political, economic and social mutations that Algeria is undergoing. The country is currently introducing a qualitative transformation of its educational system and is concentrating on needs related to such aspects as citizenship and employability.

The Algerian reform aims first at providing the material and teaching requirements which are best suited to the needs of eight million school-goers (that is 25% of the population)<sup>2</sup>. The reform of the educational system also aims at exposing the learners to science, technology and different cultures and to foreign languages as English. Moreover, it attempts at increasing those features which determine the learners' national identity from the harmonious perspective of modernity and development. It also contributes to the raising of the quality of university education as well as of technical and vocational training; supporting the design and edition of school books; and backing up the introduction of new information technologies in teaching. By reforming the teaching and learning processes of the English language, the Algerian Ministry of Education aims at helping the learners to become reflective and aware of how other peoples live. At the entrance of the secondary school, learners have already learned English for four years and at the end of this level, they have on the whole seven years of English.

The Tunisian reform has also many aims. Tunisia shares probably the same educational objectives with Algeria and many other countries. By reforming the English language syllabuses and textbooks, the Tunisian ministry of education intends to form citizens who can cope with the new world and its conditions.

Since English leads to modernity and establishes communication between all peoples of the world, Tunisia instituted the study of English in 1996/1997 from the second year of the middle school instead of the first year of the secondary school<sup>3</sup>. Thus, the learners entering the secondary school have already learned English for two years, and when they reach the last year, they have learned English for five years. At the end, the Tunisian learners gain knowledge of six years of English.

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<sup>2</sup> Cited in : *The Algerian Embassy* : [dz@algerianembassy.org](mailto:dz@algerianembassy.org)

<sup>3</sup> Cited in : *Rapport National de l'éducation en Tunisie*. 2001 :31

### **3-Significance and Background of the Study**

It seems that most comparative and contrastive studies between textbooks are done between coursebooks designed and used in the same country. Many of these studies are generally critical and evaluative, conducted by experts from and for the ministry of education. These studies aim at showing strengths and weaknesses, reflexion of the textbooks to the objectives of the syllabuses set by the ministry of education, and making sure that there is some continuity of knowledge and skills development from one level to another.

We can also find comparative studies between textbooks from two levels, as we can find comparative studies between two different language textbooks (French with English textbooks for instance) for the purpose of knowing how the two languages are presented to the learners. But, it seems that comparison and contrast between language textbooks from two countries has not been regarded as an important area in foreign language teaching research. We find comparative and contrastive studies between countries in the economic, political and social domains. But, no comparative study of this kind has been done in the domain of foreign languages. This investigation may be useful for the two countries and may lead to reconsider the teaching and learning of foreign languages. Comparison and contrast between two textbooks is done by evaluating the two textbooks according to some criteria chosen on the basis of our objectives, and then, comparing the results.

### **4-Aims and Justification of the Study**

This study is comparative and contrastive in nature. The first objective is to highlight the similarities and differences of each textbook taking the Competency-Based Approach principles as a basis for evaluation. In Maghrebi countries, Algeria and Tunisia constitute a geo-political entry that makes us expect a shared foreign language.

To justify the significance of the comparison and contrast of the two textbooks, we shall rely on the fact that the two countries are situated in the same geographical area (the North of the African continent) and have grown through time nearly with the same history. The two countries

share cultural features and languages (Arabic). Both of them are governed on the basis of one-state policy-democracy thus they have similar political objectives, among which we can mention the formation of highly educated citizens. Algeria and Tunisia are also engaged in reforms in many domains other than education, to reach objectives such as globalization and partnership. The two countries integrated English in their schools to face the constraints of the world today: the need for technology, science and economy (as all these are mainly in English). In the educational field, there are also similarities between the two countries, such as the fact that the learners end up their secondary education studies with the same examination (*Baccalauréat*). They have also based the new textbooks, made under the actual reforms, on the same teaching and learning approach; the Competency-Based Approach (CBA) that aims at responding to the world's demands in terms of communication, trade, science and technology given that it is considered as an approach that best develops the competences the learners need to interact and use language in different domains and fields.

Our analysis focuses on the last year of secondary education because it is the educational phase that opens two doors to the learners. This means that they can get the *baccalauréat* examination and join higher education at university, or they can, if they do not succeed in this final exam, integrate the working society. As the textbook is the medium that articulates and implements what is specified in the curriculum, a study of the English textbooks may reveal crucial characteristics of the language curricula in different countries, which may in turn reflect important differences in terms of the cultural values of these countries. As the textbook is a powerful means through which students acquire knowledge and values, these textbook differences may in turn reinforce the underlying cultural differences. For instance, textbooks intend to make students realize how useful English can be in their lives (therefore can link between an English concept and the corresponding situation). It is through a critical understanding of the differences between different cultural concepts that we can learn from each other to better use them in the future.

## **5-Limitations of the Study**

A comparison between textbooks habitually undergoes a long process and gives a product which is mainly for the syllabus and the textbook designers. The product generally aims at highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the textbook and helps the designers to improve the contents, teaching methods and procedures and correct eventual mistakes. The intention in this research is to find the similarities and differences existing between the two textbooks of the two countries in secondary education to answer the issue of our survey, which is the subject of a magister memoir, and to know whether the two countries follow the same development process through their educational systems based on the same approach.

## **6-Outline of the Thesis**

The research is developed in four chapters organized more or less in a similar way following in this the IMRAD method. The latter consists of an introduction to each chapter followed up by the method and the materials under study, a review of the literature and the results to be discussed in separate sections. We have added a conclusion to each chapter that deal respectively with syllabus, the language contents, the skills and teacher development.

## **7-Presentation of the Two Textbooks**

*New Prospects* is a textbook designed for Algerian learners of the third year of secondary education. The learners are supposed to pass the *baccalauréat* examination at the end of this year. The textbook is designed so as to equip the learners with the required competences and strategies they need in order to face the world, its progress and changes, society with its conventions and rules. Therefore, *New Prospects* is an Algerian English language textbook intended for the students who prepare the *baccalauréat* examination. It complies with the new English syllabus for SE3 as laid out by the National Curriculum Committee of the Ministry of National Education in March 2006. It is designed in 2007 and published by the National Office of School Publications (O.N.P.S.).



This textbook contains six units dealing with the six main themes recommended in the syllabus with recurrent language functions, grammatical structures and language components as well as skills and strategies. The third secondary students have studied English for six years. At the end of the secondary education level, the pupils are supposed to communicate orally and write a selection of about twenty lines following the communicative situation and relying on one text type. This knowledge and these competences would help the Algerian student to integrate university or professional institutions with a consistent baggage.

*Skills for Life* is a Tunisian English textbook intended for the students of the fourth year of secondary school education. Thanks to this material, the learners have to acquire the basic strategies and skills which would facilitate their integration in the working environment. *Skills for Life* is the last year Tunisian secondary school textbook. It is designed in 2003 and referred to as 241 403 . It is published by the Tunisian National Pedagogic Centre (T.N.P.C.). It addresses all students in various streams through a common core of lessons. The learners would have a final exam which closes secondary education. This is why; the textbook contains materials which would develop the competences the learners require to cross the threshold of university or of the working world. The success in this exam consents the learners to have the *baccalauréat Diploma*.

The textbook is divided into four main units, an introductory unit and three consolidation units based on the previous year textbook content. All the units include nine-lessons turning around daily-life subjects (that are recommended in the national syllabus with different language functions and grammar points), ending with three additional lessons for arts-students. These units are based on the four language skills (listening; speaking; reading and writing) which are developed in an integrated way<sup>4</sup>. As a matter of fact, the learner is led to construct knowledge and learn how to reinvest it in a range of situations which are related to real life. The Tunisian fourth secondary students have already studied English for five years before reaching this year. They are endowed

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<sup>4</sup> *Skills for life* ; 2003: 3

with knowledge, skills and abilities that make them able to construct meaning in order to use English from listening, reading and understanding to communicating in both speech and writing (ibid). This leads them to integrate and understand an English society or group of English speakers as well as to produce meaningful pieces of writing.

# Chapter One: Algerian and Tunisian Syllabuses Design

## Introduction

Generally, in undertaking a new reform, the basic importance should be accorded to syllabus design. After setting the objectives of teaching and learning, the next step is the designing of new syllabuses in which these objectives are underlined. The syllabus presents the objectives to achieve, the content of language that is intended to be learned, the process in which the language content should be presented to the students and finally the product of the teaching process that shows what kind of abilities and skills the learners are supposed to acquire at the end of the learning process. To compare the Algerian textbook *New Prospects* and the Tunisian *Skills for Life*, we need to discuss first the content, its presentation and procedures in the syllabuses on which they are respectively based.

This chapter deals with the analysis and comparison of the Algerian and Tunisian syllabuses on which the two textbooks are respectively based. The two syllabuses are commonly designed in relation to the fact that the learners study different streams or fields. The chapter is organized under the IMRAD method and ends with a conclusion. In the analysis and comparison of the Algerian and Tunisian syllabuses designed for the last year of secondary education, we will answer the following questions:

- What is the content of each syllabus?
- What is the procedure followed in designing each of them?
- Do the content and the procedure of each one fit a competency-based syllabus?
- Do the two syllabuses underline similar objectives and language content to study?
- Are the two syllabuses based on the same syllabus type?

A syllabus is defined as follows: “*un programme scolaire comprend les finalités du système éducatif, les objectifs ou les compétences poursuivies et les contenus dans les différentes*

*disciplines*”<sup>1</sup>. That is to say, a school syllabus supplies the objectives of the educational system, the competences to be developed and the contents of the different disciplines to learn. It integrates activities that lead to achieve the predefined objectives. Hence, a syllabus defines what students should know, understand and be able to do as the result of their education.

## **1-Literature Review**

The new reform has introduced changes in the textbooks, the teaching approach and procedures, but the first step is the change and design of new syllabuses. The syllabuses should be based on the different objectives set by the ministry of education of both countries and the new teaching approach (CBA). Designing a new syllabus is a complex process in which designers should take into consideration several criteria such as the language needs, the goals and objectives of teaching and learning any discipline, the type of activities to adopt as well as the participation of other members such as teachers, parents and inspectors. These persons intervene at all levels as consultation, structure, organization, editing, advice, validation and decision taking. As Roegiers (2001:155) points it: *“un curriculum est un vaste dispositif dans lequel de multiple acteurs interviennent: enseignants, parents, directeurs d’école, inspecteurs, décideurs...leurs rôles respectifs et leurs relations peuvent varier très fort selon les contextes”*.

The syllabus should provide information about the needs, objectives and culture of the learners. Its content should be organized through inventories of items and gives methodological recommendations (how to teach the content and how to evaluate it). Syllabuses generally gather “structures, words, notions and functions, skills and tasks”. The communicative thrust leads the methodologists and researchers to emphasise the learners’ and societal needs. This is why, before designing a school syllabus, attention is first paid to these two criteria. In view of that attention, the selection of the language content and skills can be made. Learners’ and societal needs, nowadays, are basically to interact with different people from different countries for mainly economic,

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<sup>1</sup> Cited in : Algerian 3SE syllabus 2007 : 15

technological purposes. Thus, the syllabus designers should base their decision on communicative purposes. Consequently, the syllabus based on the competency-based approach should be communicative.

A language syllabus as T. Reilly (1988) argues it, involves an integration of two important matters. It should integrate the subject matter (what to talk about) with the linguistic matter (how to talk about it). The kind of syllabus to implement depends largely on the approach adopted. In what follows, we refer to the main six types of syllabus which, to borrow Reilly's words, rarely occur independently. Generally, designers integrate two or more types in one syllabus although there is a dominant type. The following review would help us to deduce which type of syllabus suits more the competency-based approach as well as the communicative purposes.

The first type is the **structural** or **formal** syllabus in which the grammatical forms and structures are the basis in the language teaching content. The **notional** or **functional** syllabus emphasizes more the functions performed in using the language or the notions expressed through language. A **situational** syllabus is based on real or imaginary situations in which language occurs. A **skill-based** syllabus focuses on teaching specific abilities that may play a part in using language. Skill-based syllabuses include linguistic competences as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and discourse into the four language skills-listening, speaking, reading and writing. A **task-based** syllabus resembles and differs from the skill-based syllabus. It includes, according to Reilly, mainly purposeful tasks the learners have to perform through integrating language and other skills in specific settings of language use. Learners perform the tasks through a processed way. The learning process combines a variety of language functions, skills, individual and group works in completing the tasks. The subject of the tasks surrounds different cases and situations as talking to a person working in a restaurant or in a political enterprise. Task-based language teaching is concerned with communicative and cognitive processes (Reilly1988:4). The task-based approach, as pointed out by Richards and Rodgers, draws on structural (the linguistic system), functional (educational and social

goals) and interactional (the four language skills) models of language. Thus, it is a suitable approach for syllabuses designed for communicative purposes. The last type of syllabus is the **content-based** syllabus which is concerned with content and information. This kind aims at learning a subject through a foreign language rather than learning the language. This means that what is important is not the language but the subject matter, as for instance, learning science through English. Therefore, from the above, we can say that the task-based syllabus is the appropriate syllabus for implementing a competency-based syllabus.

A communicative syllabus is the one which contains, according to Dubin and Olshtain (1986), three main areas: the **language content** area; the **process** area and the **product/outcome** area in the form of inventories. The language content area includes the inventories of all the grammatical structures, situations, notions, functions and social skills to be acquired or learned by the students. It also includes the vocabulary and the pronunciation patterns to be taught at each level. The process area of the communicative syllabus concerns the ways in which the language content should be presented, and different types of activities and tasks that contribute to language acquisition (the task inventory). According to the above authors three types of activities are best suited for a communicative syllabus: **global**, **cognitive** and **creative**. The global activities aim at integrating an overall language use. Cognitive activities are focused on intellectual aims that develop the learners to develop different critical strategies while creative activities are those activities in which the learners use the language for expressing themselves. The last area “product/outcomes” formulating a communicative syllabus emphasises skills and needs (the inventory of skills). This means that “... learners need to be presented with tasks which are concerned with language skills as real communication in real time, in the classroom”<sup>2</sup>.

According to the two authors referred to above, the four language skills should take a significant part in a communicative syllabus. This latter should include listening activities that help

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<sup>2</sup> Dubin and Olshtain, 1986: 100

both different listening strategies and the context in which the language is used, in order to be able to apply and use that language outside the classroom. In speaking, the learners should also be faced with different situations in order to develop in them the ability to participate in different conversations and discussions. Dubin and Olshtain argue that reading should be taught from its different objectives and sub-skills. This means that from skimming, scanning to inferring different types of texts because learners need to acquire different reading strategies to understand different types of texts. Finally, as *“learners write assignments appropriate to their particular field of specialization”*<sup>3</sup> and their interests, writing becomes an integrative process (ibid) which is based on different components. These components are “when”, “why” and “for what audience” to communicate ones thoughts and feelings.

From the above, a communicative syllabus is the one which integrates language components, functions and skills. Dubin and Olshtain argue that the topics should be related to the learners’ interests and background knowledge. Lexis, grammatical features and communicative functions are selected according to purpose and serve the treatment of the themes. The tasks would follow the sequence which goes from most to least communicative/interactive while the language skills should be incorporated in an integrated way in each thematic unit. Accordingly, a task-based syllabus responds to the required criteria of a communicative syllabus as Sawkins T.L. (1996/46/7) states it. He gives a model for a task-based syllabus which is constituted of five major sections and claims similar principles as a communicative syllabus:

- Listening skills, strategies and tasks.
- Communicative skills, strategies and tasks.
- Reading skills, strategies and tasks.
- Writing skills, strategies and tasks.
- Grammar structures, functions and tasks.

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<sup>3</sup> Dubin and Olshtain, 1986: 102

This means that a competency-based syllabus should be communicative and task-based in order to meet the principles and objectives of the competency-based approach. White (1988) arranges the bases of a language syllabus which is based on communicative foundations in the following figure:

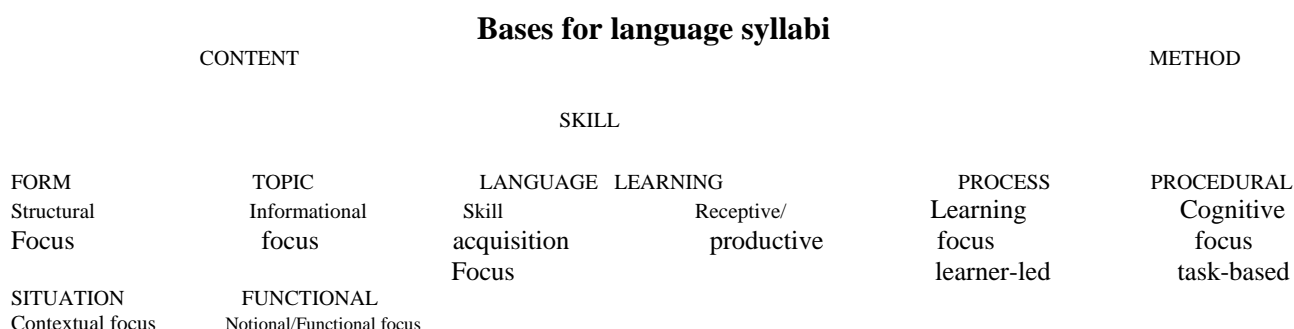


FIGURE 1: ***BASES FOR LANGUAGE SYLLABUS DESIGN*** according to WHITE 1988:46<sup>4</sup>

## 2-Research Methodology

To compare the Algerian and Tunisian English textbooks, comparison of the syllabuses they rely on is firstly required. To get data from the two syllabuses comparison, we need to analyse each of them according to their design process and content. In this analysis, we'll sustain our findings by reference to Dubin and Olshtain work (1986) on communicative syllabus design and on Reilly work (1988) on syllabus type. The first two authors based their study on a communicative syllabus which is considered as the suitable one on which CBA textbooks mainly rely. Through the analysis, we intend to draw attention on the Algerian and Tunisian concerned syllabuses design procedures and their contents and whether they implement the CBA principles in a similar or different way. The communicative syllabus is chosen in our study for the reason that it responds to the communicative purposes set in foreign language teaching area. It is the one which considers language from its different sides and aspects.

<sup>4</sup> Taken from: Breen. *EFL syllabus design*. 2009 ( [www.finchpark.com/afe/tbsyll.htm](http://www.finchpark.com/afe/tbsyll.htm))



In designing a communicative syllabus, there are, according to Dubin and Olshtain, different and important steps to pass through. The first step is the “fact finding” in which the syllabus designers must fetch answers to five crucial questions (1986: 5):

- Who are the learners?
- Who are the teachers?
- Why is the program necessary?
- Where and when will it be implemented?
- How will it be implemented?

The answers to these questions are the basis on which a policy-making authority relies on in order to prepare guidelines for new courses. This policy-making authority is divided in two groups according to the level. At the national level, it can be a curriculum advisory committee which works on translating societal needs and expectations into operational and attainable goals in order to prepare a draft document. This latter specifies overall educational goals, and is passed to a syllabus committee which is responsible for designing a syllabus on the basis of the document. While at the local level, the policy authority can be a teachers’ committee which has to prepare a new programme. This committee is responsible for preparing both the specification of the goals and the course syllabus by underlying its specific objectives (Dubin and Olshtain, 1986:5/24).

In analysing the Algerian and Tunisian syllabuses, we’ll check whether they reflect the design steps of a communicative syllabus or not. Accordingly, to check on which syllabus type they are based by analysing their objectives and principles.

### **3-Results and Discussion**

In this section of our study, we will present the results and discuss them in relation to the syllabuses. These latter are analysed in terms of objectives, procedure or design process, language content, process or tasks through which the language content should be presented, and outcomes. Hence, to infer the type of each one according to the aforementioned principles in the literature

review. These principles are based on the work of Dubin and Olshtain (1986) in designing a communicative syllabus and on Reilly (1988) in terms of syllabus type. This section will also refer to the requirements of the competency-based approach. We also intend to highlight the importance given to each skill and language component in both syllabuses as we will refer to the evaluation process and project works in both of them. We Begin with a sight on the finalities and objectives of teaching and learning English in both countries.

### **1-Finalities of Teaching English in the Syllabuses**

We start this section by examining the goals of teaching of English as the second foreign language. Both syllabuses mention the status and finalities of teaching English at school. In reading them, we notice that English is considered, in both, as a subject matter and as a means of communication. The quotations taken from the two syllabuses illustrate this consideration:

*Le but de l'enseignement de l'Anglais est d'aider notre société à **s'intégrer** harmonieusement dans la **modernité** en participant pleinement et entièrement à la communauté linguistique qui utilise cette langue pour tous types d'**interaction** (English as a means of communication) and L'enseignement de l'Anglais implique, non seulement l'acquisition de compétences linguistiques et de communication , mais également de compétences transversales d'ordre méthodologique/technologique, culturel, social chez l'élève... (English as a subject of study) (The Algerian syllabus page 7)*

What has to be observed here is that the teaching of English in Algeria is not looked at likely in utilitarian terms. It is meant to respond to the societal need for modernisation and communication with the world at large. Moreover, English as an additional language is regarded as a way of personal enrichment of the learners as citizens of their country and the modern world to which they belong. On the whole, the philosophy of education that seems to have inspired the writing of the syllabus is humanist in its orientation in that it caters not only to basic material needs but the development of personality in all its dimensions.

The Tunisian syllabus seems to be oriented in the same humanist direction. On page 38, we read what follows:

*Both as a means of communication and a subject of study, English will be a means to collect information, process data... English will foster self-expression as well as appropriate interaction with peers and other interlocutors which, in turn, will ensure access to universal culture through Anglophone contexts” and “...use communication technology, be it at the individual or cooperative modes through working procedures (English as a means of communication) and English will develop the learners’ analytical and critical skills required by the syllabus mainly by drawing upon prior and academic knowledge to comprehend and use language as a system orally and in written form (English as a subject matter). (Tunisian syllabus p. 38)*

The diagram below (taken from the Tunisian syllabus page 38) shows how these skills and strategies are integrated to consider English as a subject matter and as a means of communication are interrelated:

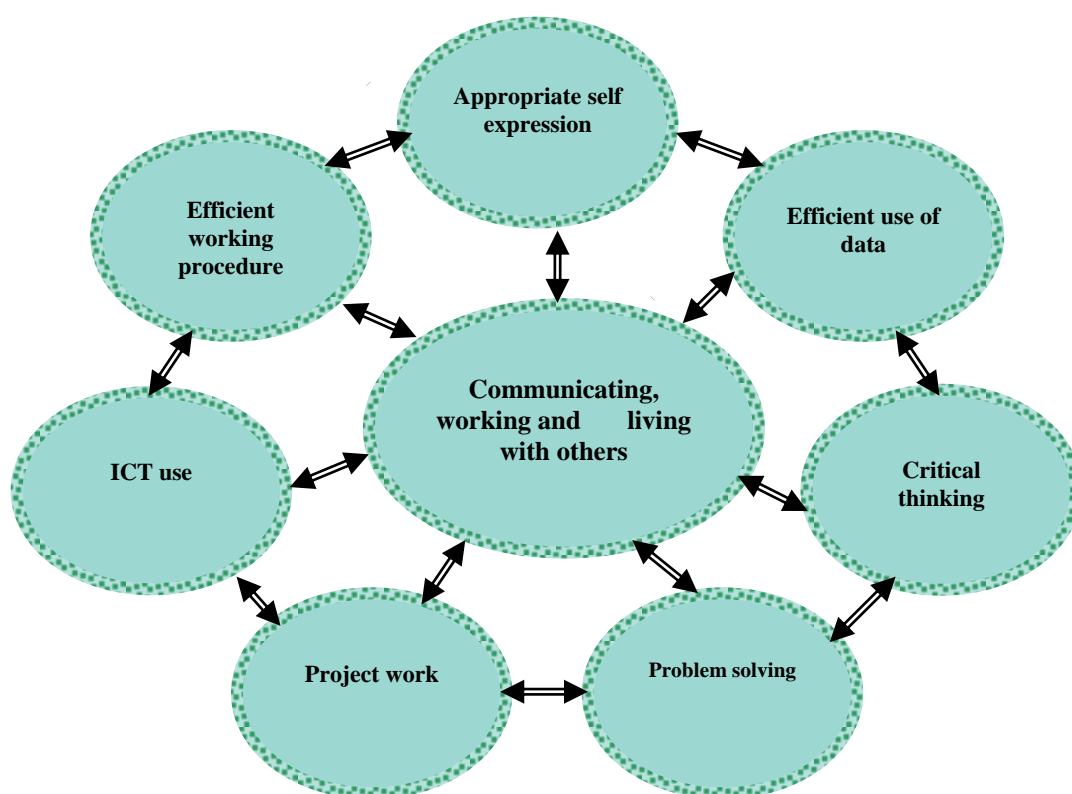


Figure n°2: **Integration of skills and strategies in the Tunisian syllabus**

### **1-1-Objectives of Teaching English in the Last Year of Secondary Education**

Apart from these general goals that we have qualified as being humanist, the instructional plan also specifies the teaching objectives for English. The objectives set for teaching and learning

English in the last year of secondary education (SE3 for Algeria and SE4 for Tunisia) are detailed in the tables below. The tables show the similarities regarding these objectives:

Algerian syllabus	Tunisian syllabus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• « Doter l'apprenant d'une base linguistique solide (grammaire, syntaxe, vocabulaire, prononciation, maîtrise des codes de l'oral et de l'écrit » (page 8).</li> <li>• « Lui permettre de comprendre et communiquer aisément dans la langue étrangère » (page 8).</li> <li>• « Lui permettre de poursuivre avec succès une formation supérieure en anglais, en milieu universitaire ou professionnel » (page 8).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Language is seen as a means of communication (interactional, transactional and functional) rather a set of decontextualized grammatical structures, word lists and isolated language skills” (page 39).</li> <li>• “Language is seen as a system that has lexis, grammar as well as linguistic structures and patterns which can be used to create various discourse forms or text types. Knowledge of grammar and how it functions contribute to effective language use” (page 39).</li> <li>• “The teaching/learning process should foster learner independence to enable him/her to use English effectively both in its spoken and written forms so that he/she may continue learning by him/herself beyond the programme” (page 39).</li> </ul>

**Table n°1: Linguistic and Communication Objectives**

The linguistic and communication objectives for the teaching of English show close similarities in both syllabuses. This means that both countries share objectives in teaching/learning English for communication.

Algerian syllabus:	Tunisian syllabus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• « Consolider les capacités intellectuelles de l'élève telles que l'analyse, l'évaluation à travers des activités pertinentes » (page 8).</li> <li>• Promouvoir chez l'apprenant des stratégies d'apprentissage et d'autoévaluation lui permettant d'approfondir et d'élargir ses connaissances (page 8).</li> <li>• Teach them to learn how to use the ICT means that are crucial for documentation and research inside or outside the classroom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The teacher should create conditions conducive to learning” (page 39).</li> <li>• “The teacher acts as a professional, creative manager of classroom activities and of student learning” (ibid).</li> <li>• ...research and webquests are meant to foster...research strategies and learner autonomy (ibid).</li> </ul>

Table n°2: **The methodological/technological objectives**

This type of objectives offers the strategies to be used by the teacher in order to help and encourage the learners to learn and reinforce what they already learned. The table 2 shows that the Tunisian syllabus' objectives mentioned are the only methodological/technological objectives provided while the Algerian syllabus offers, in addition to those listed in the table above, objectives (page 8) stated as follows:.

- Reinforce the thinking and working methods the learners acquired in the previous educational cycles;
- Encourage thinking at each learning level;
- Teach learners to learn how to use different types of documentation in order to prepare them for university or any other milieu.

Algerian Syllabus	Tunisian Syllabus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Favoriser l'interdisciplinarité en abordant des thèmes étudiés dans d'autres disciplines scolaires en vue de l'intégration de tous les acquis de l'apprenant (page 8).</li> <li>• Stimuler la curiosité de l'apprenant et contribuer à son ouverture d'esprit en l'exposant à divers contextes de civilisation et en l'intéressant plus particulièrement à la culture anglophone (anglaise, américaine, africaine, indienne, australienne, canadienne, néo-zélandaise, etc.)) (page 9).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The learner needs to understand how the language system works and how conventions can vary according to purpose, audience, context and culture and apply this knowledge in speech and writing in both formal and informal situations.</li> <li>• The learner's participation and interaction are important in learning the language and fostering self-confidence and social relationships among learners. Such relationships and interactions among learners within the context of learning English will nurture in learners positive values and a sense of identity.</li> <li>• Project work and activities, portfolios, are meant to foster socio-psychological skills, and learner autonomy.</li> </ul>

Table n°3: **Socio-Cultural Objectives**

The table 3 illustrates the standpoint Algeria and Tunisia share regarding the teaching of one's culture and the culture(s) of the English language. The cross-cultural teaching conducts them to efficiently and successfully integrate the active and foreign milieus outside the classroom and the country.

The fact that some objectives (linguistic, methodological or socio-cultural) are not cited in the Tunisian syllabus but mentioned in the Algerian one (or vice-versa) does not restrict them to those referred to in this research work. As an example, we find in the document (*“la Nouvelle Réforme du Système Educatif Tunisien”* 2002, published by the Tunisian ministry of education),

different objectives related to the three fields. In a general sight, Algeria and Tunisia share many objectives for teaching English in the school year under discussion.

## 1-2-Terminal Objective of Integration (OTI)

The Tunisian syllabus does not provide the terminal objective of integration (OTI) the learners should achieve at the end of secondary education while the Algerian syllabus mentions it as follows:

*Dans une situation de communication, et sur la base d'un support oral ou écrit, l'élève doit produire un message écrit d'une vingtaine de lignes, dans un type de discours écrit choisi (descriptif, narratif, argumentatif, expositif, injonctif), correctement et lisiblement.* (The Algerian syllabus page 9).

Concerning the approach on which the two syllabuses are based (CBA); it is well explained in the Algerian syllabus (page 9 to 11) whereas Tunisian designers do not refer to it explicitly. It is through reading the principles and other documents<sup>5</sup> that we find a reference to CBA as the adopted approach termed as « *la conception des programmes dans l'optique de l'approche par les compétences en lieu et place de la perspective sommative et cumulative qui caractérise les programmes actuels* » (ibid, 2002: 53). The three competencies which are the basis of CBA are listed only in the Algerian syllabus as competences the learners need to master at the end of the SE3 as follows:

- *Interagir oralement.*
- *Interpréter des messages oraux ou écrits.*
- *Produire des messages écrits.*

(Algerian syllabus; 2007:11).

What is noticeable in the two syllabuses is that the Algerian syllabus stresses the explanation of project work (from page15 to page25) while the Tunisian syllabus focuses on the explanation of the four language skills and strategies (from page 7 to page 15), the grammar components and the communicative functions and components (from page19 to page 24). To sum up, the analysis and

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<sup>5</sup> For example : *la nouvelle réforme du système éducatif tunisien*: 2002 and the teacher's guide

comparison of the two syllabuses highlights many similarities as well as differences regarding the objectives and finalities of teaching English at school in general and the school level concerned in this study in particular.

## **2-Procedure Followed in Designing the Algerian and Tunisian Syllabuses**

This section refers to the steps followed by the syllabus designers to design the Algerian and Tunisian syllabuses. The Algerian and Tunisian syllabus designers seem to follow a similar process in designing the concerned syllabuses. This process also shares similarities with the communicative syllabus design procedure proposed by Dubin and Olshtain discussed in the review of the literature.

The stages followed by the Algerian experts to design the syllabuses start with the formulation of general orientations that should constitute them. A national commission is made and has the responsibility to ensure scientific and pedagogical expertise with propositions and opinions regarding the objectives of the teaching process. After the objectives have been set, specialized groups of disciplines are formed in order to design a syllabus for each discipline. The textbooks' designers elaborate textbooks according to the new syllabuses content, process and objectives.

Similarly, the stages of the Tunisian syllabus design start with the national commission which has gathered the propositions and prepared documents for orientation and sets the objectives. In other words, a distinction is set between the curriculum which is a statement of the education-policy and the syllabus which fleshes out that statement. According to Dubin and Olshtain, this is the ideal way of presenting an instructional plan. Therefore, the responsibility of the Tunisian national commission is similar to the Algerian national commission. Then, commissions by area (group experts of each discipline for the Algerian syllabus) are formed in order to write the syllabuses of the different disciplines. In the production of the syllabuses, these commissions by area rely on the objectives set by the national commission. The textbooks' designers, then work on the production of textbooks. These commissions by area make the same work as the Algerian specialized groups of each discipline. Consequently, the design procedure of the Algerian and



Tunisian syllabuses is similar and follow the design steps of the communicative syllabus referred to above. Accordingly, from the design process, the two concerned syllabuses are communicative. In what follows, we move to the analysis of their language content which includes the grammatical structures, lexis, pronunciation, notions and functions of the English language.

### **3- Language Content in the Two Syllabuses**

This section intends to present the results and a discussion of the analysis of the language content of the two syllabuses. The language content of a syllabus is concerned with the different language functions, notions, grammatical structures, lexis and pronunciation patterns. It is presented in the form of inventories of items that we shall detail below.

### **3-Intercultural Dimension in both Syllabuses**

Dubin and Olshtain<sup>6</sup> sustain the fact *that “when a communicative competence has been determined as a curriculum goal, writers look for ways to include the sociocultural component of language content...”* It means that, foreign learners should and need to learn those behaviours and linguistic forms of social feature/function which are different from those of their own. This means that, it is important to emphasize the similarities and differences which exist between the mother tongue of the learners and the target language they learn, in order to help them to avoid overgeneralization, misinterpreting, misunderstanding and being misunderstood. According to the same authors (p. 124) *“no textbook which purports to represent how language is actually used in communicative contexts can be produced without a sociolinguistic dimension”*. The following is the analysis of the two syllabuses in terms of sociocultural skills and different language functions. Penny Ur<sup>7</sup> argues that *“syllabuses for language courses should be based on a taxonomy of functions and notions, since they represent the units underlying a communicative system more realistically than the categories of lexis and grammar which may be taught detached from particular communicative contexts”*. This kind of taxonomy is supplied only in the Tunisian syllabus and there

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<sup>6</sup> Cited in : Dubin and Olshtain; 1986:122

<sup>7</sup> Cited in : Penny Ur; 1996: 92

is no list underlying this kind of content in the Algerian syllabus though it refers to it and give it paramount importance.

The intercultural dimension of foreign language teaching is of paramount importance in both countries. There is a significant presence of this aspect in both syllabuses. Nevertheless, there are differences. The Algerian syllabus shows this by listing the main objectives in teaching English in its cultural context while the Tunisian syllabus categorizes all the functions to teach to the learners with the different strategies to develop in them.

Three sections in the Algerian syllabus are related to the intercultural skills: “finalités de l’enseignement de l’anglais dans le cycle secondaire”, “des savoir-être (intercultural outcomes/social skills outcomes)” and “description des projets en termes de ressources”. This type of skills supports students in making the shift in perspective, thus their own culture becomes an outward one and is looked at from the outside, while the target culture becomes familiar (Algerian syllabus). The learners have to be equipped with an intercultural competence in order to be able to successfully communicate with people of the English culture(s). Knowing that culture differs in many aspects and facts, it is important to integrate it in language teaching. In fact, the true mastery of any language, as stated by many authors, is achieved only when there is a mastery of the cultural contexts in which the language occurs. Therefore, the Algerian students are guided in a process of analyzing different aspects of the English culture(s), of accepting universal values, attaching to the national values, tolerating and respecting others, hence, becoming open-minded.

The socio-cultural skills are formulated in the Tunisian syllabus through two sections: “principles, assumptions and methodology”, and “communicative functions and exponents”. The intercultural learning aims at laying down the differences and similarities existing between the Tunisian and English cultures. This would help the learners to act appropriately and effectively in various cultural contexts. The learners are requested to acquire a socio-cultural competence given that culture is considered as an instrument for social interpretation and communicative action

(language use in general). The learners need to understand how the language system works and varies according to purpose, audience, contexts and culture. This kind of knowledge would help the learners to foster self-confidence, social relationships and socio-psychological skills among them (Tunisian syllabus p. 39). They also need to learn to express and find intellectual attitudes, expressing and finding out emotional and other attitudes and socializing by relating these facts to the English culture(s) and the Tunisian one.

These functions are generally included in the inventories of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation of English. Thus, the presence of teaching materials to these language aspects is essential. Apart from pointing to the intercultural skills, the Algerian and Tunisian syllabuses include inventories of skills and strategies related to the four skills: listening; speaking; reading and writing.

#### **4-Outcomes/Language Skills in the Syllabuses**

In this section, we lay down the results arrived to from the analysis of the two syllabuses regarding the outcomes or the language skills the learners intend to acquire at the end of the course. The four language skills are provided in both syllabuses with a significant position. The difference is shown in the way these skills are presented to the syllabus user. The Algerian syllabus lists the main objectives to achieve in relation to each language skill whereas the Tunisian one categorizes the different sub-skills meant to develop in the learners with different strategies to adopt for each sub-skill in addition to the general objectives to achieve at the end of secondary education. In the Algerian syllabus, this is formulated mainly through skills and strategy outcomes in which different strategies are provided while the Tunisian syllabus devotes a large part to the sub-skills to develop and strategies to adopt for each skill. In what follows, we discuss the place and importance of each skill in isolation.

#### **4-1-Listening**

In both syllabuses, listening takes an important place. The two syllabuses discuss the objectives to achieve considering the listening ability, though the presentation and organization of the materials are different. The two syllabuses provide the skills to develop in the learners in relation to listening but with a different way. The Algerian syllabus formulates this through competence **2** that deals with the interpretation of oral texts and written ones, while the Tunisian syllabus shows it with a listing of the different listening sub-skills and strategies to develop in the learners. However the aim of teaching listening is the same. It is to help the learners to understand and interpret oral discourse, to negotiate meaning, to infer and transfer information, and analyse the structure of different oral types and genres of oral discourse.

Three sections in the Algerian syllabus are devoted to the listening skills “compétence 2: *interpréter des messages oraux ou écrits*”, “des savoirs/contenus linguistiques (language outcomes)” and “des savoirs-être (intercultural outcomes): social skills outcomes”. Learning listening aims at interpreting an oral message in order to be informed, respond to questions, justify an answer in a communicative situation, to construct meaning in different types of oral discourse (phone conversations, interview, job interview...), to learn to listen to others, respect them and understand what they say.

Listening is formulated in the Tunisian syllabus through the different sub-skills and strategies (appendix n°1 page i). That is to say, there is only one section devoted to the teaching of listening: “reading and listening skills and strategies” in the Tunisian syllabus. Listening instruction aims at building and constructing knowledge and developing comprehending skills in the listening activities. The listening texts are used for information and linguistic content and serve as a springboard for production. The selections proposed in the syllabus are selected from different sources: novels, magazines, newspapers, ads, leaflets, poems, songs, plays in order to sensitize

students to different genres. The different listening sub-skills and strategies help the learners to understand, comprehend and construct meaning in different contexts.

In other words, listening in both syllabuses is formulated so as to give the learners opportunities to understand English speakers in general. In addition, through the different text types the learners construct meaning in different contexts and thus avoid misinterpretation and misunderstanding. Listening is related to the three other skills mainly to speaking.

#### **4-2-Speaking**

Both syllabuses articulate objectives on the ability to communicate orally. In the Algerian syllabus, it is formulated through competence **1** that intends to make the learners produce oral information relying on the context and situation, using correct grammar and pronunciation and appropriate vocabulary. In the Tunisian syllabus, it is articulated through the different sub-skills and strategies that, in general, encourage the learners to produce an oral report relying on context, appropriate vocabulary, correct grammar and pronunciation. This means that, the aim of teaching the speaking skill is similar. However, the way dealt with it is different.

Concerning speaking in the Algerian syllabus, there are five sections in which speaking objectives, skills and strategies are formulated: “compétence1: *interagir oralement*”, “*des situations d’apprentissage* (project outcomes) *et des situations d’intégration* (learner’s outcomes”, “*des savoirs/contenus linguistiques* (language outcomes)”, “*des savoirs-faire* (skills and strategies outcomes)”, and “*des savoir-être* (intercultural outcomes/social skills outcomes)”. The students are supposed to produce an oral product which is coherent and correct (by using correct grammar, appropriate vocabulary and pronunciation), to interact, to negotiate, to persuade, to give opinions, to take and let the floor, to organize debates, to take part in different types of oral discourse (phone conversations, interviews...), to ask and answer questions, to guess, to summarize, to formulate, to share and to present oral works.

Two sections are allocated to speaking in the Tunisian syllabus: “principles, assumptions and methodology” and “speaking and writing skills and strategies” (appendix n°2 page ii). Speaking lessons aim at fostering self-confidence and social relationships among learners when they participate and interact in language learning. Speaking training also aims at teaching language as a means of communication through its three dimensions (interactional, transactional and functional). The learners learn to interact, report, respond, describe, summarize, develop, pronounce and produce unplanned speech.

Speaking, in both syllabuses, is given an important place regarding the fact that it is among the skills which help to achieve a communicative competence. Speaking as well as listening are skills related to the oral language but to achieve the communicative competence required, the written skills are also needed. Thus, listening and speaking in the oral language correspond respectively to reading and writing in the written language.

#### **4-3-Reading**

Reading carries a significant position in both syllabuses. It is formulated in the Algerian syllabus through competence 2 as listening which underlines the understanding and interpretation of oral and written language while in the Tunisian syllabus; it is articulated with sub-skills and strategies as listening for the same purpose. This means that the aim of teaching reading in both syllabuses is the same, however, the presentation is different.

Reading in the Algerian syllabus is formulated through four main parts: “compétence2: *interpréter des messages oraux ou écrits*”, “*des situations d’apprentissage* (project outcomes) *et des situations d’intégration* (learner’s outcomes)”, “*des savoirs/contenus linguistiques* (language outcomes)” and “*des savoir-faire* (skills and strategies outcomes)”. Through learning reading, the students are guided in the process of interpreting written texts for the purpose of getting information, respond to questions, justify an answer, organize debates, recognize conventions of

writing (vocabulary, punctuation, capitalization, cohesion, coherence, grammar...), interpret and transfer information.

There is only one section allocated to the reading skill in the Tunisian syllabus: “reading and listening skills and strategies” (appendix n°1 page i). Teaching reading aims at constructing meaning and knowledge. In other words, the learners learn to read, understand, infer, analyze, transfer, guess, build, differentiate, recognize, predict, identify, scan and skim in different text types. The reading passages are exploited for information and linguistic content and serve as a vehicle for production. They are taken from different sources, as novels, magazines, newspapers, leaflets, ads, poems, songs, plays in order to put the learners in different contexts, help them to understand the language used in different contexts and sensitize them to different contextual features.

Reading as listening, is a process of exchanging information between the text and the reader/listener. This means that the learners bring information to the text (his/her background knowledge) and the text brings textual and contextual features to the reader/listener. In other words, the learners are engaged in a process of building and constructing knowledge on the basis of the text content as well as on their previous knowledge. In both syllabuses, although formulated differently, listening and reading are intended to be taught for the same purposes (one in the oral language and the other in the written language). Reading is mainly related to writing.

#### **4-4-Writing**

Writing is considered as the most important skill in both syllabuses considering the fact that the school level for which the syllabuses are designed end with a national exam (*baccalauréat*) which is mainly in a written mode. Accordingly, the learners need to acquire different writing skills and strategies. Nevertheless, the way in which writing materials are provided in both syllabuses is different. In the Algerian syllabus, competence 3 and the terminal objective shed light on the importance and objectives of teaching writing while in the Tunisian syllabus, writing is articulated

through strategies and sub-skills as the other skills. The importance given to writing in the Tunisian context is highlighted when viewing the textbook and teacher's book of the level concerned.

Six sections of the Algerian syllabus are concerned with the writing skill: "*objectif terminal d'intégration: profil de sortie de l'élève de 3AS*", "*compétence 3: produire des messages écrits*", "*des situations d'apprentissage (project outcomes) et des situations d'intégration (learner's outcomes)*", "*des savoirs/contenus linguistiques (language outcomes)*", "*des savoir-faire (skills and strategies outcomes)*" and "*description des projets en termes de ressources*". In writing instruction, the learners are asked to produce a piece of writing in any text type studied in the textbook by using correct grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, text structure, cohesion, coherence.... They are taught to draw up and organize the work in coherent meaningful way. Writing in the Algerian as in the Tunisian syllabus, is given paramount importance since the *baccalauréat* exam is mainly in the written mode. Thus, the learners have to acquire different skills and strategies which could help them to respond correctly and cohesively in this exam. As it is argued in the Algerian syllabus, writing is the most important skill to acquire (but not the only one) regarding the fact that the end objective is primarily related to writing as the citation tells:

*Dans une situation de communication, et sur la base d'un support oral ou écrit, l'élève doit produire un message écrit d'une vingtaine de lignes, dans un type de discours écrit choisi (descriptif, narratif, argumentatif, expositif, injonctif), correctement et lisiblement (Algerian syllabus, page 9).*

One part is concerned with writing in the Tunisian syllabus: "speaking and writing skills and strategies" (appendix n°2 page ii). Writing instruction aims at communicating and reinvesting the acquired and constructed knowledge in a range of situations related to real life. The learners are taught to use different conventions of writing to produce different types of texts and to produce a coherent essay with correct grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, and text structure. Writing in this level is given a special place and taught as process as it is the year which ends with the *baccalauréat* exam. This exam is mainly in the written mode. Thus, the learners are helped to



acquire different writing skills and strategies they need for succeeding in this exam in particular and in life in general.

Writing takes an important place in both syllabuses more than the three others. This is due to the fact that the final examination which is expected to take place at the end of the year requires responses in a written mode. The learners need to acquire different writing strategies of different text types and genres.

Despite the fact that the Tunisian syllabus awards one to two sections for each skill, what is provided in these sections is more detailed in comparison with those awarded in the Algerian syllabus for each skill. Nevertheless, the Algerian syllabus is not the only source the users rely on as an adjunct to the textbook is provided. The document offers the main details and explanations, suggestions and propositions needed. What is attractable is the emphasis of both syllabuses on the integration of the four language skills. Both of them provide materials in which two or more skills are integrated. They also offer situations in which the language content is practised through the four skills as they are interdependent components of the language. The analysis of the two syllabuses in terms of the outcomes shows a relation with the communicative syllabus. Therefore, though the several differences existing between the two syllabuses, there is a significant amount of similarities with a communicative syllabus, a feature which makes them close.

It is argued that in both syllabuses the four language skills should be developed in a contextual setting. This means that the tasks proposed to perform the four skills should take place in the context of the unit theme. Accordingly, both syllabuses focus this feature. The topics, then, should be attractive and interesting. They should interest the learners, challenge both their intelligence and their language ability and contribute to their linguistic and cognitive development.

The themes in the two syllabuses are varied and resemble each other. They are arranged from society, education, science and technology to professional life. In general, the two syllabuses are based on more or less similar themes except the theme of history which is treated only in the

Algerian syllabus. The two syllabuses treat the concept of society through different topics as feelings and emotions, different relationships, attitudes and values towards many social phenomena. The theme of science is vehicled through different inventions, new technologies, scientific experiments and researches. The theme of professional life or business is highlighted through different attitudes and feelings, procedures that prepare the learners to an eventual working project. The education theme has the purpose to open for the learners the different kinds and ways of education existing in the world. It occurs mainly through comparison of educational systems in the world, as there are topics related to geography in both of syllabuses. The theme of history, in the Algerian syllabus, is shown through a backdrop sight on different civilizations grown in the past and that contributed to the development of the human life.

The themes and topics should be selected according to the age groups and interests as well as from integrating content from other subject matter areas in the course curriculum. Dubin and Olshtain argue that the major topics that can be the source of inspiration, from general age level, are history, geography, science, social studies. The Algerian and Tunisian syllabuses show an apparent use of the sources proposed by the two authors. These themes also respond to the learners' needs and interests as they are in a phase where they want to know everything surrounding them. The themes adopted in the two syllabuses, in general, touch the learners' world. Consequently, social problems and issues are important to study because the learners explore their society and seek for a way to integrate it. Science and technology also are important because they need to follow and cope with the world's development. Education is an important theme because learners need to recognize its importance and influence on their society and the world in general. Business is the theme through which the learners learn how to behave in a professional setting, to know its advantages as well as dangers. As the themes are related to the environment of the learners, the texts adopted should be authentic.

The listening and reading texts provided in both syllabuses are taken from different sources. Both syllabuses state that the texts meant to the teaching of listening as well as reading are authentic. They are taken from newspapers, novels, magazines, photos, illustrations, encyclopaedias, TV shows, radio broadcasts, internet, hotel brochures, airport notices, bank instruction, advertisements, and cartoons. Authentic materials are in general those texts that are not prepared for the sake of teaching. This means that they are texts produced by native speakers for a non-pedagogical purpose. Nevertheless, the only expression that shows that is cited in the Algerian syllabus “*une situation d’intégration...utilise des documents authentiques*” (2007:10). The sources from which the materials are extracted are cited in the textbooks that rely on both syllabuses. These sources are considered authentic by many authors, among them Richards and Rodgers 2001, Mishan Freda 2005, Gebhard 1996.

The use of authentic materials in foreign language teaching is very important because such materials provide a slice of real life; depict native environments and life styles thus help to develop a cultural awareness in the learners. They also expose the learners to different registers, dialects, pronunciation and provide cultural contexts for the language. Authentic materials reinforce the relationship between the language classroom and the outside world. They are considered as a way to make the language learning in context thus motivating the learners. They help to develop many needed competencies as well. These are linguistic, structural, cultural and functional competencies<sup>8</sup>. The two syllabuses claim the use of authentic and task-based materials for the teaching of English. Therefore, the use of authentic materials reflects the real-world and the use of task-based materials involve the learners in the practical use of the language. Many language researchers believe that the adoption of authentic and task-based materials may contribute to the overall effective of the learning process. This is because the learner sees the activity as appropriate to his/her learning

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<sup>8</sup> Garza, 1996; Lonergan, 1984 cited in: Ryan K. Rocque. 2008:17/18

needs. It is argued that the advocates of task-based teaching opt for the use of authentic materials as they favour authenticity for tasks.

Therefore, the two syllabuses articulate similar aims concerning the teaching of the four language skills though the presentation of the materials is different. They also show a thematic penchant in the teaching of different language aspects and skills. This means that the language is taught in context and situations that attract the learners and raise their motivation. The authenticity matter is also shared by the two syllabuses since both of them adopt authentic materials concerning the listening and reading materials. What also is worthwhile to discuss is the use of the technological materials in language teaching in the two syllabuses. In the following, we discuss the results arrived to concerning the technological skills and ICT importance in both syllabuses.

### **5-Place of the Technological Skills in the Syllabuses**

The ICT constitutes a strategic choice in the plan aiming at establishing the school of tomorrow. It initiates the learners to these new technologies in order to master them and know their different fields of exploitation. ICT also initiates them to the domain of research and knowledge acquisition. The ICT tool helps the learners to form themselves as citizens of the new societies and the new world's demands and progress. The ICT enriches the learning tools and facilitates the integration of different knowledge by bridging the gap between disciplines, gives the possibility to the learners to treat and exploit information. Thus, the teacher's role shifts from the primary source of information to a guide and negotiator for the learners. It also diversifies the modes of training in order to ameliorate the quality of education services provided and establishes the principle of long life learning. Therefore, the Algerian and Tunisian syllabuses engage into the teaching of and teaching language through technological and computing skills.

The Algerian syllabus devotes two sections to the technological skills “objectifs méthodologiques/technologiques” and “des savoir-faire technologiques (technological and computer skills)”. Teaching English by using internet (and vice-versa) aims at helping the learners

to find other communication tools which would motivate them. The section “principles, assumptions and methodology” discusses the ICT skills in the Tunisian syllabus. The activities related to ICT are meant to foster socio-psychological skills, research strategies, learner autonomy, critical thinking and analytical skills. This aspect of teaching contributes to the learners’ autonomy and the development of high-order skills.

In the Algerian syllabus, the learners already developed certain technological competences in the previous years, as it is argued by the designers. Thus, this year they only have to apply them as a tool of information finding. However, there is no reference in the Tunisian syllabus to whether the ICT are tools of information research or of language teaching. What is cited is the fact that the tasks in general and those to perform through internet are meant to foster socio-psychological skills, research strategies and learner autonomy. This means that, implicitly, the technological tools are used for information research. What also is important is the fact that the learners could use new ways of research and recognize that the ICT are an everyday tool of learning and research. Generally, the learners search for information for the purpose of project work activities. Below we discuss the implementation of project works in the two syllabuses.

## **6-Place of Project Work in the Two Syllabuses**

Project work activities as discussed in the design process of the two syllabuses are an important tool for teaching and learning language. As we already said, the Algerian syllabus is more equipped with project works than the Tunisian one.

Three sections of the Algerian syllabus are concerned with the project work: “projets proposés communs aux deux filières”, “description des projets en termes de ressources” and “structure des projets et exemples d’activités”. The project works should be done along with all the rubrics of the units. Project works help the learners to work in groups, to share and exchange information, to collaborate and negotiate hence an establishment of mutual help and social relationships between them (friendship, peers and colleagues). Each student in the group feels that

he/she is important; he/she has a role, a responsibility towards the work and the group. This feeling makes him/her motivated, works hardly and shares all his/her knowledge. Project works also enable the students to acquire and use different language strategies and skills. Correct grammatical structures and rules, appropriate vocabulary, correct structure of the project according to the type of the piece they are going to produce (a speech, a story, booklet, a letter) and its genre (description, argumentation, narration, persuasion...), cohesion and coherence between sentences and paragraphs, correct link words are all highlighted in the final product. Through project works, learners acquire and develop reading, listening and technological skills and strategies (when collecting data), writing skills and strategies (when writing the product) and speaking skills and strategies (when presenting the product). Intercultural perspective and language aspects are developed and acquired along the work and language functions and aspects (grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation) alongside the skills.

There is one principle devoted to project work in the Tunisian syllabus in the section: “principles, assumptions and methodology”. Project work activities are meant to foster socio-psychological skills, research strategies and learner autonomy. The project work is a way of discovering new things and knowledge acquisition. It is a means which relates society to classroom and vice-versa. Teaching through project works helps the learners to acquire different skills and strategies of research, selection, organization, analysis. Unfortunately, the Tunisian syllabus designers did not take into consideration the requirements of the CBA regarding project works implementation. Another important aspect in syllabus design is the evaluation process of the language teaching and learning process. In what follows, we discuss the evaluation process provided in each syllabus.

## **7-Evaluation/Assessment in the Syllabuses**

Concerning the evaluation phase, it is considered as part of the teaching and learning process in both syllabuses. As it is termed: *«l'évaluation est un processus intégré à toute forme*

*d'apprentissage* »<sup>9</sup> and “*learner assessment follows naturally from the teaching/learning activities done in class*”<sup>10</sup>. This means that, evaluation is a tool for teaching as well as for learning in both syllabuses. However, the Algerian adopts four types of assessment whereas the Tunisian syllabus adopts only two types. This represents an advantage for the Algerian teachers as well as learners since teachers can evaluate the learners who at the same time can assess themselves.

In the Algerian syllabus, we find four types of evaluation: *diagnostic* assessment, *formative* and *self-assessment*, “*formatrice*” evaluation and ‘*summative*’/‘*certificative*’ assessment while in the Tunisian syllabus, there are only two types of evaluation: *formative* and *summative* which are respectively process and product oriented assessments.

The *diagnostic* assessment is done at the beginning of a learning period. It has for purpose to show to the teachers the level and difficulties of the students. The “*formatrice*” evaluation implies one or more pupils and permits them to check their levels. It is divided into three evaluations (co-evaluation or tutoring, mutual assessment or peer-assessment and auto-evaluation or self-assessment). *Formative* assessment is a process intended to contribute to the development of the students by providing information on what they can do as English learners. The *summative* assessment is “*intended to be an indicator of learners’ achievement*” (Tunisian syllabus p5). It occurs at the end of a learning period (trimester, year, cycle...) and gives decisions about the success or failure of the learners through the exams.

In the assessment phase, it also seems that the Algerian teachers are better equipped. Before starting teaching they first check the students’ level. This would help them in how and what to teach and from which point or level to start. The “*formatrice*” evaluation also is an advantage because it gives the learners opportunities to learn more and correct themselves. This is a motivating way of learning and finally, the Tunisian syllabus, unlike the Algerian one, does not provide a guide for

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<sup>9</sup> Direction de l’Enseignement Secondaire. Commission Nationale des Programmes. *Programme Algérien d’Anglais deuxième langue étrangère: troisième année secondaire 3AS*. République Algérienne Démocratique et Populaire. Ministère de L’éducation Nationale; 2007 : 25

<sup>10</sup> Curricula & Training Department. *Tunisian Programmes, secondary education 4AS*. 2008. Republic of Tunisia. Ministry of Education & Training.; 2008 : 5

how to produce innovative tests of performance, formative tests.... This means that, there is no model to follow, by the teachers, in order to create and produce suitable and valid tests.

According to Perrenoud (1997), the *formative evaluation* is the one which is situated in a pragmatic perspective. This means that it is continuous. This type of evaluation surrounds all what helps the learner to better learn as he argued (1997: 25)

*elle tient compte de tout ce qui peut aider l'élève à mieux apprendre: de ses acquis, qui conditionnent les tâches qu'on peut lui proposer, aussi bien que sa façon d'apprendre et de raisonner, de son rapport au savoir, de ses angoisses et blocage éventuels devant certains types de tâches, de ce qui fait sens pour lui et le mobilise, de ses intérêts, de ses projets, de son image de soi comme sujet capable d'apprendre, de son environnement scolaire et familial .*

This means that this type of evaluation is based on daily relationship between the teacher and the students. The aim of the formative evaluation is to help the students to learn and not to judge them. Materials for the formative assessment are provided in both textbooks as it is a central type claimed by the competency-based approach.

According to the same author, teaching and evaluation should not be separated and the learners should evaluate themselves in order to be aware of their abilities and weaknesses and thus work to ameliorate themselves. This is why; the use of portfolio and personal journal by the learners can facilitate a continuous evaluation for them and for the teacher as well. Both syllabuses claim the use of this kind of materials and both textbooks provide it .

Therefore, the evaluation process is considered as part of the teaching/learning process in both syllabuses. However, the number of evaluation types adopted is different. The Algerian syllabus provides four types unlike the Tunisian which provides only two. The Algerian syllabus provides various samples of assessment tools for the teachers in the document accompanying the teacher's guide (from p. 28 to p. 32) while the Tunisian syllabus does not provide any model for the teacher. Instead, it provides the criteria of each language aspect and skill on which the learners should be assessed (page 40/41).



## 8-Language Components in the two Syllabuses (Grammar, Vocabulary, Pronunciation)

The last inventory of items comes in the form of descriptors related to grammar, vocabulary, functions and pronunciation. According to Dubin and Olshtain, the inventory items function as an organizational factor. In other terms, it streamlines and organizes the other items. Otherwise, the syllabus will be shapeless.

Training in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation helps the learners to build a knowledge he/she can use in everyday life in oral as well as in written perspectives. The grammatical structures of a sentence or an utterance help the reader/listener to understand the others. They also help the writer/speaker express their ideas in a correct way in order to be understood by others. Vocabulary instruction also is an important component for the reason that if the student knows in which contexts to use a word or an expression, its synonyms and equivalents leads to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation when listening/reading. It also contributes to the appropriate use of the language when speaking/writing as it is pointed out by Dunlin and Olshtain<sup>11</sup> “...possessing a good vocabulary stock is what enables many learners to use their knowledge of the language effectively and in ways which fit their specific needs”. Pronunciation is seen as the best way to evaluate any person’s communicative competence concerning the oral skills. Knowing to pronounce means knowing to speak and articulate in the right way. This makes the listeners of that “good” speaker understand what he/she means to say. It also means to understand what the others say in a right way. It also helps to avoid misleading in words’ meanings which have similar pronunciation (homophones and homonyms). This misleading makes them go far from the correct meaning of the utterance. As it is articulated in the Tunisian syllabus (2008:39); “*language is seen as a system that has lexis, grammar as well as linguistic structures and patterns which can be used to create various discourses forms or text types*”, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation patterns should not be neglected in language teaching.

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<sup>11</sup> Cited in : Dunlin and Olshtain; 1986:112

Concerning the Algerian syllabus, there are two sections concerned with the teaching of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation: “objectifs linguistiques et de communication” and “des savoirs/contenus linguistiques (language outcomes)”. The learners need to be endowed with a solid linguistic baggage in English (syntax, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation) in order to make them able to master oral and written skills, understand and communicate in English. The grammar and vocabulary of English should be taught in context and be related to the theme of the lesson or unit. The learner needs to understand how the language system works, how language conventions vary according to different communicative situations and contexts, and apply this knowledge in speech as well as in writing. Therefore, teaching of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation is part of language teaching which helps the pupils to use English effectively both in spoken and written modes.

Similarly, the Tunisian syllabus devotes two sections for the teaching of grammar: “principles, assumptions and methodology” and “grammar”. Grammar instruction is among the crucial language aspects to teach in any language. This is because if a learner does not learn how the language is structured and how its system functions, he/she could not achieve any communicative competence (oral as well as written). Thus, knowing the grammar of a language and how it functions contributes to effective language acquisition. Vocabulary and pronunciation are also formulated in the Tunisian syllabus in such a way that makes the textbook designers aware of their importance. The syllabus gives guidelines for how to insert them in the textbook considering different parts of the language (as the context, learner’s needs and interests and *baccalauréat* exam).

Both syllabuses formulate clear objectives regarding the teaching of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. These three elements are among the basic language components to master in order to get an efficient communicative competence (which is one of the basic principles of the CBA). The importance of these three skills is reflected in both textbooks (*New Prospects* and *Skills for Life*) seeing that both are designed with various tasks and lessons related to them. The different

fact is the audio CD provided in *Skills for Life* which helps the Tunisian students to achieve better pronunciation competence than the Algerian students. Listening to native speakers is an essential tool for acquiring correct pronunciation and listening skills. The organization and the presentation of the materials are different. Nevertheless, what is worth is the fact that the two syllabuses respond to the communicative syllabus requirements regarding the language content. Indeed, the presentation and organization are not so important. It is also worth mentioning that the Algerian syllabus is not the only source the teachers rely on as there is an accompanying document that provides all the explanations and details needed.

### **9-Design Process**

This section is related to how the language contents of the two syllabuses are presented. The results show a balance in the types of tasks adopted in both syllabuses. They show also similarities with the communicative syllabus, discussed above. The types of tasks show a tendency in use of communicative tasks. However, there are differences in the organization in which these tasks are presented.

The types of activities proposed in both syllabuses arrange from sharing and telling information to role playing, interaction and discussion. The learners are led to use English in most of the tasks. The two syllabuses favour interaction, group and peer work, situations in which problems should be solved however the difference is in the way they are presented. The Algerian syllabus proposes learning situations in which different language content and skills are required to solve the problem whereas; the Tunisian syllabus specifies the objectives of tasks, the importance of their variety and their contextualization. The strategies provided in both syllabuses are presented differently. They are mentioned in both, however with a different organization. The Algerian syllabus defines the strategies in terms of the objectives to achieve whereas the Tunisian syllabus defines them in relation to the four language skills.

The Algerian syllabus offers different learning situations to teach different items and skills for different aims to achieve. Therefore, the Algerian teacher has effective materials for teaching. On the other hand, the Tunisian syllabus presents objectives, and different strategies to adopt in each skill or language item. The Tunisian teachers have to prepare their own teaching materials. The main difference of the two syllabuses concerns the project work activities. On the one hand, the Algerian syllabus gives great importance to project works as they symbolize an important procedure in the teaching process. Project works help the learners to develop different abilities in different situations as well as the notions of autonomy, collaboration and negotiation inside a group. This is why; the Algerian syllabus proposes a project work for each unit. There are six units and six project works. The Tunisian syllabus, on the other hand, does not give an equal importance to project works as the Algerian syllabus. This is shown in the fact that there are only two project works for four units which turn around simple questions and do not lead the learners to a deep research and writing task.

Analysis of both syllabuses with reference to the tasks and teaching process reveals that both of them regard teaching through tasks, context and communicative situations. Nonetheless, the Algerian syllabus is more explicit and contains details and real situations while the Tunisian syllabus relates this kind of details to the assessment process and not to the whole teaching process. The project work activity is also a main difference between the two syllabuses which makes the Algerian syllabus presents more communicative tasks than the Tunisian one.

The two syllabuses draw central importance to the teaching of language, social, and technological skills as well as language aspects. The designers took into account all the aspects of language which would help the learners to achieve communicative competence in English. There are differences as the project work, the evaluation process and the teaching aids. Algerian syllabus provides different types of evaluation and each unit carries a project work whereas the Tunisian syllabus provides a teaching aid CD for the listening and pronunciation lessons and activities.

Through the analysis of the language content and outcomes, through the objectives and design process, it reveals that both syllabuses are communicative considering the syllabus design proposed by Dubin and Olshtain discussed in the review of the literature. However, the way in which the content is presented and organized is different. The next step is to show whether the two syllabuses are designed on the same type since they are both communicative or not.

## 10- Algerian and Tunisian Syllabuses Types

In what is done, it emerges that both syllabuses are communicative in genre. In what follows, the attention is put on the type of syllabus on which the concerned syllabuses are based. Because of the fact that the syllabus types discussed in the review of this chapter can be communicative as they carry communicative purposes, we should show whether the Algerian and Tunisian syllabuses respond to the communicative purposes and the competency-based approach as well. The principles on which the two syllabuses are founded would enlighten us which type of syllabuses they are.

Through reading the Algerian and Tunisian syllabuses, we are attracted by similarities underlined between the two syllabuses' principles and the principles of task-based syllabus (TB syllabus)<sup>12</sup> as the extracts taken from both syllabuses reveal:

- The learner is the centre of the language learning which aims at making him/her able to use language outside the academic context. This principle is termed as *“le programme par compétences propose des situations d'apprentissage et des situations d'intégration qui mettent l'apprenant au centre de l'apprentissage..”* and *« lui permettre de poursuivre avec succès une formation supérieure en Anglais, en milieu universitaire ou professionnel »* (in the Algerian syllabus : p.8) and *“the learner is the core of the learning process...the teaching/learning process should foster learner independence to enable the learner to use English effectively both in*

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<sup>12</sup> The principles of task-based syllabus are taken from : Rabbini, Roberto. “An Introduction to Syllabus Design and Evaluation”. The Internet TESL Journal. 2002. [www.finchpark.com/afe/tbsyll.htm](http://www.finchpark.com/afe/tbsyll.htm)

*its spoken and written forms so that he/she may continue learning by himself/herself, beyond the programme*” (in the Tunisian syllabus; p. 39)

- The materials and activities used should be authentic and meaningful for authentic and meaningful communication. The communication tasks involving learners’ participation are considered as a means for language learning. This principle is termed as *“Favoriser l’interdisciplinarité en abordant des thèmes étudiés dans d’autres disciplines scolaires en vue de l’intégration de tous les acquis de l’apprenant”* (in the Algerian syllabus p. 8) and *“language is seen as a means of communication (interactional, transactional and functional) rather than set of decontextualized grammatical structures, word lists and isolated language skills”* (in the Tunisian syllabus; 39).
- Task-based syllabus is based on the belief that learners become analytical in the exploration process of communication in the foreign language and the ability to use it. Thus interaction is a basic element. This principle is termed as *“lui permettre de comprendre et communiquer aisément dans la langue étrangère”* (in the Algerian syllabus; p. 8) and *“the learner’s participation and interaction are important in learning the language and fostering self-confidence and social relationships among learners”* (in the Tunisian syllabus; p. 39).
- The emphasis is on socio-constructivism by studying the language in its different contexts. This principle is termed as *“Stimuler la curiosité de l’apprenant et contribuer à son ouverture d’esprit en l’exposant à divers contextes de civilisation et en l’intéressant plus particulièrement à la culture anglophone (anglaise, américaine, africaine, indienne, australienne, canadienne, néo-zélandaise, etc.)”* (in the Algerian syllabus; p. 9) and *“the learner needs to understand how the language system works and how language conventions can vary according to purpose,*

*audience, context and culture and apply this knowledge in speech and writing in both formal and informal situations”* (in the Tunisian syllabus; p. 39)

- It is important to develop critical and analytical thinking in the learners. It is worded as *“Consolider les capacités intellectuelles de l’élève telles que l’analyse, la synthèse, l’évaluation à travers des activités pertinentes”* (in the Algerian syllabus p. 8) and *“the topics and activities interest the learners, challenge both their intelligence and their language ability and contribute to their linguistic and cognitive development”* (in the Tunisian syllabus; p. 39).
- Emphasize the use of different strategies along with the meaning construction process. It is worded as *“Promouvoir chez l’apprenant des stratégies d’apprentissage et d’autoévaluation lui permettant d’approfondir et d’élargir ses connaissances”* (in the Algerian syllabus p.8) and *“the language skills are developed as skill categories which comprise several sub-skills strategies; their natural convergence is a basic principle to be implemented. Lessons serve not only to teach language items but also to develop new learning skills and strategies and/or help to transfer them from/to French and Arabic”* (in the Tunisian syllabus p. 39).

An argument which makes us take this view point is the quotation from Rabbini, R. (2002) who argues that task-based syllabus is the one which reconsiders its priorities and constitutes tasks which change their focus *“from the linguistic element to the pedagogical, with an emphasis on learning or learner”*. Thus TB Syllabus is the most suitable syllabus type for the implementation of the competency-based approach. In other words, it is the appropriate syllabus also because it emphasizes on the learner, on pedagogical tasks, problem-solving situations and life-coping skills as it is argued by Nunan, D. (2001), *“a task-based syllabus represents a particular realization of communicative language teaching. It relates purely pedagogical goals to real-world activities”*<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Nunan, David (2001). *“Aspects of task-based syllabus design”*.

and by Long<sup>14</sup> who says that “*task-based approaches represent an advantage for those advocating an integrated approach to course design*”.

Task-based syllabus introduces a focus on form into a meaning-centred curriculum. It consists of tasks as well as allowing for the systematic treatment of linguistic forms. It is argued that task-based syllabuses guide the learners to negotiate their meaning and to cooperate with others. Thus their communicative competence develops more and they learn to be a “social person” when completing the tasks. It is also argued that task-based approach assumes that speaking as writing a language is a skill best perfecting through practice, interaction and composing. It also uses tasks and activities to encourage learners to use the language communicatively in order to achieve a specific purpose. It is thought that tasks impose cognitive demands on the learners and these demands increase the quality of the learners’ productions.

What is important in a syllabus is also the way or the organization in which the language components are presented. They are systematized and categorized. This is shown in their implementation in the textbooks. Thus a fleeting look at both textbooks’ tables of contents illustrates that the items to be introduced and studied are not classified in a list which analyzes one item once in the whole syllabus. This means that the items are introduced and reinforced in different stages of the syllabus. It is argued in the Tunisian syllabus that “*language skills, lexis, grammatical structures, functions, text types and other language components are taught and **recycled** at increasing levels of difficulty through the variation of activities and contexts*” (2008: 40). As an example, in the Algerian textbook, we find that the present simple tense is first introduced in unit 2 and reinforced in units 3, 4, 5 and 6. Stress patterns are first introduced in unit 1 and reinforced and practised in units 2, 3, 4 and 5. We have in the Tunisian textbook the function “**used to**” is first introduced in lesson 1 unit 1 and reinforced in lesson 1 unit 3. Stress patterns are introduced first in lesson 3 unit 1 and reinforced and practised in lesson 7 unit 1, lessons 3 and 8 unit 2, lessons 3 and

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<sup>14</sup> By Cuesta Cuesta M.R. (an ERIC Document).



6 unit 3 and lesson 8 unit 4. Concerning the language and social skills, we notice that in both textbooks they are introduced from the beginning and practised, reinforced and strengthened all along the units. Therefore, both syllabuses are cyclical syllabuses as these latter are known for their feature of not introducing a new item or pattern one time in the whole syllabus. This means that the topic issue should be presented many times along the syllabus. It should be first presented and then reintroduced and strengthened in different situations and contexts as it is argued by Dublin and Olshtein<sup>15</sup>, a language item “... *should be reintroduced in different manifestations at various times in the course*”. In this respect, Cunningsworth states that “*a cyclical course moves fairly quickly from one language item to another and then progressively returns to each item once, twice or more times, later in the course*” (1984:26). The advantage from the use of a cyclical syllabus is that the learners are faced with a wide range of expressive possibilities without thoroughly acquire any of them.

Therefore, our two syllabuses carry information about the content to teach, how to teach it and how to evaluate it. We find in both syllabuses sections related to the contents and language components to be taught in the school year, the strategies to follow for their teaching process and assessment materials for the evaluating of the acquired knowledge, competencies and skills (the outcomes evaluation) with differences in the organization and presentation.

The four language skills gather and integrate the use and learning of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, social skills and intercultural instruction. The Algerian and Tunisian syllabuses are designed on the basis of this model. They provide materials on language and social skills, language components as well as the teaching of ICT. This latter helps the learners to learn and seek information in English thus develop their research skills.

Another feature concerned with the two syllabuses is the project work. Both include projects and research work. However, the Algerian syllabus is based on six project works concluding the six

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<sup>15</sup> Cited in: Dublin, F and Olshtein, E.; 1997: 55

units, whereas the Tunisian one provides only two projects for 4 units. Both of them provide tasks requiring web research. However, only the Algerian syllabus claims the writing skills application in these types of tasks. It is argued that an educational project is seen as *a whole-hearted purposeful activity*<sup>16</sup> which takes place in a social environment, thus suggests the development of an interdisciplinary competency involving cognitive and social skills. This means that project works are among the learning processes which relate real-world to classroom. It is argued that project works have a strong process dimension (e.g. oral presentations, drama, written reports...). The product is considered as part of the process which is an infrastructure/transportation rather than a learning plan. Project work is essential in the learning process because it gives different opportunities for the learners to use language, to discover things, to learn how to “do”, take decisions and make choices. It also gives the learners the feeling of ownership of the accomplished work which leads to satisfaction and motivation.

Group work and activities are very important in the learning process because they are considered as *“the nourishing ground for self-empowerment of the individual”*<sup>17</sup>. This means that the individual blossoms inside the group, shows what he/she knows and can be able to do and learn from the others. Therefore, while tasks help the learners to develop their communicative competence, project works help the learners to develop their cognitive and social skills. Generally, a task-based syllabus is also project-based. It is argued that Project-based syllabuses can be seen as a special application of the process syllabus, exemplifying process and task-based ideas by being *“collaborative, avoiding competition, and lending themselves to analysis of global goals into sub-components which are then delegated to sub-groups, who take responsibility for completing them”*<sup>18</sup>. It is also argued that *“cooperative learning is more than just putting students into groups and giving them something to do. Cooperative learning principles and techniques are tools the*

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<sup>16</sup> From Kilpatrick 1918, cited in *EFL syllabus design*. [www.finchpark.com/afe/tbsyll.htm](http://www.finchpark.com/afe/tbsyll.htm). page 40

<sup>17</sup> From Legutke & Thomas ; 1991 : 235 cited in *EFL syllabus design*. [www.finchpark.com/afe/tbsyll.htm](http://www.finchpark.com/afe/tbsyll.htm). page 43

<sup>18</sup> From : [Skehan 1998:273](#) cited in *EFL syllabus design*. [www.finchpark.com/afe/tbsyll.htm](http://www.finchpark.com/afe/tbsyll.htm)

*teachers use to encourage mutual helpfulness and the active participation of all group members”<sup>19</sup>.*

This kind of learning strategy is generally associated with learning self-esteem, liking school and inter-ethnic relations. Consequently, the Algerian syllabus unlike the Tunisian one is project-based.

The two syllabuses are, then, task-based and cyclical with including the notions and functions (which are the basis of notional syllabus). They are based on skills acquisition (which is the basic principle of skill-based syllabus) and on the grammatical structures and forms (which is the basis of the structural syllabus). This means that although the task-based syllabus dominates, there are other types which make the two syllabuses designed on the centre of several language components and needs to be mastered. In other words, syllabuses have to be based on different types in order to ensure the teaching of different language dimensions required in the learning process and objectives given that the student needs different language aspects in order to achieve proficiency in communication process.

## **Conclusion**

The Algerian syllabus is mainly formulated through general objectives to achieve at the end of the third year secondary education and specific objectives to achieve for different language skills, content and strategies. Conversely, the Tunisian syllabus is formulated so as to give the reader an insight of what to teach in general, the objectives to reach, and the different strategies to adopt in order to arrive at the objectives set. The content of the language in the Algerian syllabus is mainly planned through three competences to develop in the learners. Competence 1 is related to the oral or verbal interaction. It means that the learners should produce or create an oral report by using appropriate grammar, vocabulary and correct pronunciation according to the different situations or contexts. The learners are led to negotiate, discuss, express, give and defend opinions and problem solving situations through group works. Competence 2 concerns the interpretation of oral as well as written discourse. This competence helps the learners to understand, justify and answer.

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<sup>19</sup> George Jacobs and Stephen Hall ; a journal for teachers of English outside the United states. V.32, N°4. 1994:2

Competence 3 is related to the written production. This means that the learners should produce a correct written piece in different text types and genres. These three competences relate the language content to the language skills. This means that the Algerian syllabus respects the demands of a communicative syllabus. In contrast, the Tunisian syllabus is planned in terms of strategies for different language content and outcomes with a central emphasis on the language and social skills. In general, the reading and listening strategies help the learners to understand and interpret oral as well as written texts. They help them to justify, recognize, infer and analyze different text types and genres. The aims are similar to those of competence 2 formulated in the Algerian syllabus. The writing and speaking strategies help the learners to interact in, report and produce different text types and genres by using correct grammar, appropriate vocabulary and correct pronunciation. The aims are similar to those of competence 1 and competence 3 of the Algerian syllabus. Thus, from the side of competences to acquire, although a set of differences in presentation exists, the two syllabuses are communicative and are designed on the basis of similar objectives. The intercultural outcomes are different in terms of formulation but tend to have similar objectives that make the learners use appropriate language and learning values, respect of others and acquiring appropriate behaviour. Besides, it is argued that the advocates of task-based teaching opt for the use of authentic materials as they favour authenticity for the tasks.

Many researchers as Richards and Rodgers agree on the fact that task-based approach shares general assumptions about the nature of language learning underlying CLT with, of course, additional ones. It is argued that “*task-based is a logical development of communicative language teaching since it draws on several principles that formed of the communicative language teaching movement from the 1980s*” (Richards and Rodgers: 2001:223). In common with CLT and task-based approach, the CBA emphasises the central role of meaning in language use. They also share the use of tasks. Consequently, the Algerian and Tunisian syllabuses are communicative task-based and respond to the needs and requirements of the competency-based approach on which the two

textbooks concerned in this work are based. They also are cyclical. However, the Algerian syllabus, unlike the Tunisian one is project-based.

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001: 163), a syllabus which is based on CLT principles as those discussed in this chapter includes different aspects as the situations in which the learners can use the foreign language (as travel and business); the topic they might talk about (as personal identification, education and shopping), the functions they needed language for (as describing something, requesting information, expressing agreement and disagreement); the notions used in communication (time, duration, frequency); the vocabulary and grammar needed, and the use of correct pronunciation/punctuation. All these aspects are included in the Algerian and Tunisian syllabuses. Another argument sustaining this point of view is provided by Yalden (1983)<sup>20</sup> who argues that a task-based syllabus (which is the case of the two syllabuses) is a current communicative syllabus type.

Both syllabuses are communicative task-based, cyclical syllabuses. The Algerian syllabus, unlike the Tunisian one, is project-based. The aim of project work in the Algerian textbook is to help the learners reinvest the competencies they have learned in the form of grammar, vocabulary, skills and strategies in a concrete and visible form. Indeed, it seems to consolidate students' knowledge through autonomous research, it shows that they can really do with the language.

In the next chapter, we shall see how the syllabuses are given shape in the textbooks starting with the way the descriptors and specifications are fleshed out.

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<sup>20</sup> Cited in Richards and Rodgers, 1997 : 164

## Chapter Two: Language Components and Socio-Cultural Dimension

### Introduction

In this chapter, we intend to deal with the language structures and patterns, notions and functions in the Algerian *New Prospects* and Tunisian *Skills for Life*. Since grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, notions and functions are important to understand as well as to produce language, Algerian and Tunisian learners need to acquire them and learn how to use them. In this chapter, we aim at comparing the materials provided in the two textbooks concerning the teaching of English grammatical structures, lexis, pronunciation patterns, notions and functional language. Thus, the issue raised in this chapter concerns whether the textbooks provide teaching materials of these elements, whether they are similar or different and whether they respond to the competency-based approach principles.

The term **function** really refers to the process of conveying the meaning<sup>1</sup>. It is clear that this meaning is ordinary conveyed through language form (words and sounds organized according to the rules of the language) (ibid: 15). Coursebooks must teach language form because meaning and functions are expressed through form and without form there could be no verbal communication (ibid). This means that we cannot produce a functional course without teaching language form. This is why we should teach both form and function as it is well argued by Cunningsworth “*language learning, then, may be seen as acquisition of the ability to participate in the dynamic and creative process of communication, and not just an acquisition of separate, isolated units of language, whether they are termed structural units or functional units*” (ibid:17).

This chapter is divided into an introduction in which we introduce the language components and socio-cultural dimension of the language and raise the issue. The literature review section deals with a background on teaching the elements discussed in this chapter. The method and materials section deals with the materials to analyze and compare and the method to follow. The last section

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<sup>1</sup> Cunningsworth; 1984

deals with the results arrived to and discussion of these results in terms of what is referred to in the review of the literature. The chapter ends with a conclusion that underlines the similarities and differences existing in the two textbooks regarding the teaching of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, notions and functions.

## **1-Review of the Literature**

### **1-Grammar Teaching**

Grammar instruction (morphology and syntax) is very important in language teaching. Thus any teaching course that omits and neglects grammar is not really teaching language<sup>2</sup>. Thornburys<sup>3</sup> defines Grammar as “*a description of the regularities provided in a language*”. He adds “*knowledge of these regularities provides the learner with the means to generate a potentially enormous number of original sentences*” (Ibid). In this respect, Douglas Brown<sup>4</sup> sustains that Grammar is “*a system of rules governing the conventional arrangement and relationship of words in a sentence*”. Additionally, Woods, E.<sup>5</sup> sustains that “*Grammar competence is one of the competences that make up communicative competence*”. This is why it is a crucial aspect in foreign language teaching programmes. These authors show that grammar helps people to use language correctly in communicative situations (speech and writing) and facilitates understanding and recognition of correct spoken as well as written language. Nunan<sup>6</sup> shares the same view in that “*grammar is an essential resource in using language communicatively* (ibid: 27). This is why; it should not be neglected in EFL contexts.

Learning the grammar of the target language is among the important constituent of foreign language leaning. In order to understand a written selection or to write a passage, the learners need to know how the sentences are constructed and how the paragraphs are organized, that is to say the rules of language use. Grammar focus as Brown stated is efficient in improving the writing skills

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<sup>2</sup> Cunningsworth, 1984.

<sup>3</sup> Cited in: Thornburys. 1991:15

<sup>4</sup> Cited in: Douglas Brown. 2001:362

<sup>5</sup> Cited in: Woods, Edwards. 1995 :2

<sup>6</sup> Nunan, 1989

more than speaking, listening or reading. Knowing the grammatical structures means understanding where a sentence starts and where it ends, which kind of sentence, when and where the action of the sentence takes place. These aspects of grammar, in addition to other language aspects as vocabulary, assist the learners to recognize and understand the meaning of a sentence.

Grammar principles should be integrated into a communicative framework. Celce-Murcia and Hilles<sup>7</sup> argue that if grammar is taught in isolated and unconnected sentences, it would give a fragmented and unrealistic picture of English. It also makes it difficult for the learners who are not able to apply the acquired knowledge in actual and real situations to produce correct language. This is why grammar points should be taught in a realistic and effective contextualization as much as possible. Learners should know which structure is appropriate to use and when employing it with people from different social classes in different situations. Learners should also learn the differences in meaning that exist between words. To borrow Celce-Murcia and Hilles' (ibid: 9) example, we notice clearly this difference:

A-John has a few good ideas.

B-john has few good ideas.

The choice of using "a few" in sentence 'A' is to express something positive and in 'B' the use of "few" implies something negative. Therefore, learners should know how meaning is affected by such slight differences (the indefinite article "a").

In teaching grammar, we find two familiar approaches. On the one hand, a **deductive** approach, as Thornburys<sup>8</sup> argues "*starts with the presentation of a rule and is followed by example in which the rule is applied*" (p.29). An **inductive** approach, on the other hand, "*starts with some examples from which a rule is inferred*" (ibid).

According to Thornburys (ibid: 30), a deductive approach has four advantages. It gets straight to the point; it can be time-saving and allows more time for practice and application. It

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<sup>7</sup> Celce-Murcia M. and Hilles S. 1988

<sup>8</sup> Cited in: Thornburys (1991:29)



respects the intelligence and maturity of many students and acknowledges the role of cognitive processes in language acquisition. It confirms many learners' expectations about classroom learning especially those who have an analytical learning style and it allows the teacher to teach points as they come up, rather than anticipating and preparing them in advance. This example illustrates how this approach is applied:

The rule says<sup>9</sup>: we use **wish** + **past** simple to express a **regret** about a **present situation** by imagining its opposite.

Example: I wish I **had** a car (but I have not).

**Activity<sup>10</sup>:** respond to each of situations below by writing a sentence starting with the verb **wish**.

Pay attention to tenses:

- Someone regretting having stolen public funds.
- Someone wishing himself home and not in prison.
- Someone expressing the wish to be given a second chance.

The inductive way of teaching is seen, according to Thornburys (p.49), to be the way in which people acquire their native language. This is done simply through exposure. It is seen as the “natural” route to learning. This approach provides a natural and unconscious use of grammatical rules and structures. Grammar teaching should be related to real language use such as telling a story, booking a hotel room...etc. The following example shows how the approach works:

**Activity<sup>11</sup>:** consider sentences 1 and 2 below. Then discuss questions A-C that follow.

1. Citizens **had better** stop shrugging their shoulders at bureaucratic abuse.
  2. They **had better** not say that the fight against corruption is not their own business.
- A. What do the items in bold type express? Find the rule underlying this expression.  
B. What is the short form/contraction of the words in bold type?

**See Grammar Reference pp. 219-220 for the rule.**

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<sup>9</sup> New prospects ; 2007 :218

<sup>10</sup> New prospects ; 2007 :49

<sup>11</sup> New prospects ; 2007: 49

According to Celce-Murcia and Hilles, there are three type techniques to teach grammar points. *Dramatization* and other *dynamic, interactional* techniques help to teach the structural social matches as requests, modals and degree of politeness as this kind makes a direct connection between the structure and the social function. We find the use of activities such as role plays, storytelling. *Demonstration, illustration, listening* and *responding* questions are techniques used to teach structure-meaning matches. They help students to match linguistic form with semantic variables. Activities with objects like pictures and graphs are more appropriate. *Text-generation, explanation* and *manipulation* are used to teach structure-discourse matches. They help to teach the text itself and its cohesion. We find activities such as songs, problems, stories, text-completion, and text-imitation.

The above authors argue that listening and responding techniques together with listening and writing ones are significant techniques to teach grammar points and practise new vocabulary in a communicative way.

Grammatical activities should be presented to learners as follows: **charts and graphs** are used in order to clarify grammatical relationships and to understand sociolinguistic and discourse constraints. **Objects** are used to teach, for example, possessive pronouns. **Maps and drawings** can serve to illustrate certain grammatical structures as prepositional phrases (on the left...), question forms (where...?), imperatives (go...), appropriate discourse for getting someone's attention, asking for directions, receiving and clarifying given information, and concluding a conversation. Drawings enable to teach locative words (to describe locations, to give directions...). **Dialogues** help to introduce and practise grammatical rules. **Written texts** can be used to teach verb tense and to illustrate a grammatical category.

Grammar activities can be gathered and divided into three main types: Mechanical drills, Meaningful drills and Communicative drills. **Mechanical** drills include activities for substitution of pronouns, persons, numbers, memorization of verb forms, tenses. This kind of drills separate form

from meaning and use, and they concern only grammatical forms. **Meaningful** drills include activities that emphasize meaning. **Communicative** drills connect between form, meaning and use. The learners are required to use grammar points by providing their own content. They are communicative because the content provided by the learners is not known in advance. This type teaches what grammar is and how it works in the languages they are learning. Woods (1995) argues that there must be a balance between the focus on specific areas of grammar and the development of communicative competence. This can be possible through activities as gap filling, substitution, charts for tenses and frequency adverbs.

## **2-Vocabulary**

According to Cunningsworth<sup>12</sup>, vocabulary items can be presented in word lists, in association with visual aids and in text (usually a reading passage, although they could occur in a listening text). Lists of words are difficult to learn because the words appear in isolation within no context and learners find them boring. Words presented in association with visuals or with texts occur in meaningful contexts. This helps the students to deduce and guess the meaning of the words. This kind of teaching motivates them and raises their curiosity. Lexical items are seen, as Brown<sup>13</sup> states it, in their central role which is in a contextualized and meaningful language. Consequently, the learners are guided each time in a discovery of language items without any direct listing.

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<sup>12</sup> Cunningsworth. 1984

<sup>13</sup> Brown. 2001

Penny Ur<sup>14</sup> proposes a list where she arranges how new vocabulary should be taught:

**Ways of presenting the meaning of new items:**

- Concise definition (as in a dictionary; often a super-ordinate with qualifications for example, “a cat is an animal which...”).
- Detailed description (of appearance, qualities...).
- Examples (hyponyms).
- Illustration (picture, object).
- Demonstration (acting, mime).
- Context (story or sentence in which the item occurs).
- Synonyms/-opposite(s) (antonyms)/-translation.
- Associated ideas, collocations.

Cambridge University Press: 1996

Figure No 3

Penny Ur (ibid: 60) argues that vocabulary should not be taught to the students in isolation but in context since an item could convey different meanings according to the context in which it occurs. She also adds that vocabulary teaching in any foreign language should be taught from its pronunciation as well as its spelling sides. Foreign learners have to learn how the new item is sounded and spelt in order to make a correspondence between written and oral language.

Teaching vocabulary is an essential component in foreign language teaching. For that reason, it is incorporated into communicative tasks. Lexical forms are now taught in contextualized and meaningful language and not as boring lists since words, expressions, and phrases could convey different meanings according to the context in which they are employed. This makes the learners learn in a communicative environment to acquire competences that help them to use the language efficiently.

According to Pang et al<sup>15</sup>, vocabulary should be taught directly as well as indirectly. The former refers to including word definitions and pre-teaching of vocabulary before listening or reading whereas the latter refers to incidental vocabulary learning as mentioning and exposure. This means that a new word or expression occurring in a listening or reading selection, vocabulary occurring in project works, in class debates and discussions are explained by the teacher.

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<sup>14</sup> Cited in: Penny Ur. 1996:63

<sup>15</sup> Pang et al. 2003

According to Cunningsworth<sup>16</sup>, there are two approaches that are meant to teach new lexis. In the first approach, vocabulary items are seen as isolated units to be slotted into grammatical structures and bearing no relationship to other vocabulary items. As for the second approach, courses do their best to teach vocabulary as part of structural system by identifying and exploiting relationships between words. According to the same author, the second approach is seen to be the better and there exist different relationships (formally and semantically) between words. This means that learning a new item is facilitated if the learner can relate it (through similarity, comparison or contrast) to what is already familiar. The relationship could be established with: 1-the native language (L1); 2-what is already known; 3-something non-linguistic (pictures, objects, actions sounds) (ibid). This helps the learners in the learning process. New items can be taught through wordlists (in isolation), or through association with visuals and texts. The association teaching method claims that words encountered in context make meaning clearer; hence the learners deduce the meaning of new and unfamiliar words and expressions.

### **3-Pronunciation**

Penny Ur<sup>17</sup> affirms that *“the aim of pronunciation improvement is... simply to get the learners to pronounce accurately enough to be easily and comfortably comprehensible to other... learners”*. In this respect, Douglas<sup>18</sup> argues that *“pronunciation is a key to gaining full communicative competence”*. Thus, pronunciation is an important language component to master in order to achieve a communicative competence. The phonological system of a language includes the production of individual sounds, stress, rhythm and intonation.

English is characterized by its major organizing structures the native speakers rely on to express themselves. These are stress, rhythm and intonation. To understand the motives and to use a language which is contextually correct, the learners should learn the English stress to recognize the words heard, rhythm and intonation to understand and interpret the meaning of the utterances.

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<sup>16</sup> Cited in: Cunningsworth. 1984:18

<sup>17</sup> Cited in: Penny Ur. 1996:52

<sup>18</sup> Cited in: Douglas. 2001:283

According to Kelly<sup>19</sup>, minimal pairs, listening activities, reading activities, homographs and homophones emphasis are fruitful tasks to work on pronunciation. On the other hand, Cunningsworth argues that *“it is often at best taught incidentally and in random order”*<sup>20</sup>. This means that whenever there is an opportunity of teaching a new word or item, we introduce the pronunciation rules. This means that it should not be taught in a systematic way. Penny Ur argues in this respect that *“any specific aspect of pronunciation can be linked to a very wide range of other categories”* (p. 100). Therefore, teaching elements of pronunciation can take place at each stage and whenever the opportunity is presented.

The main purpose is the recognition of the phoneme-grapheme correspondence in the English language. Through reading texts, the students recognize the differences existing between the pronunciation and the spelling systems of English. We find several activities that deal with English sounds, and stress. We find texts used for sound-symbol matching, weak forms practice, stress, and transcription patterns.

Learners need to know the grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and spelling, punctuation and context of the language in both styles (oral and written). In listening/reading process, the listener/reader recognizes and understands the message thanks to the words, the grammatical structures of the message, the pronunciation (stress and intonation) /punctuation and finally the context in which the message is uttered/wrote. In sum, these language aspects are crucial and should stand for an integrated part in the teaching of foreign languages.

Contrary to what some isolated practitioners and theorists of CBA think, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation are the language aspects one may not neglect in the CBA approach. The above review shows the importance accorded to these language components in language learning. What has to be underlined, however, is that these components are not fixed in advance by the syllabus-designer but come out or emerge from the context of teaching. Moreover, these

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<sup>19</sup> Kelly. 2000

<sup>20</sup> Cited in: Cunningsworth. 1984: 17

language components are supposed to be taught in thematic units hence the importance given to grammar and vocabulary of specific lexical fields. The first mastery, on which the competency-based approach is based, is therefore that students mobilize to undertake their projects. These three components are, then, essential in foreign language teaching and should be taught in context. The last component of this chapter is the intercultural dimension in foreign language learning.

#### **4-Cross-cultural Teaching in CBA**

Contrary to the view in which the communicative approach in most educational contexts is reduced, the CBA has as its basis the recent flowering of cultural studies. One of its components is then the intercultural teaching.

A language textbook should take into account the learners' culture and values as well as those of the native speakers of English. This reflection helps the learners to recognize and accept the differences existing between people and cultures in order to avoid the misinterpretations and misunderstanding which may result from a conversation between foreign and native speakers. These differences should be highlighted in any language textbook. Porto M.<sup>21</sup> argues that *"pedagogically, an integral approach to the teaching of language and culture enables learners to become communicatively competent"*. This is why; we should not separate culture from language teaching. In this respect, it is stated that: *"to attempt to divorce language from its cultural context is to ignore the social circumstances which give it resonance and meaning"*<sup>22</sup>. Therefore, to match between the language and its social context is of paramount importance for foreign language learners. In this respect, Cunningsworth claims that *"when we use the language, we need to be able to perceive the social situation in which we are operating and to be able to match the language we use to the situation"*<sup>23</sup>. This helps the learners to use the language not only in a correct way but also in an appropriate way.

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<sup>21</sup> Porto M. 2000:94

<sup>22</sup> Cited in: Mountford and Nick. 2000 :86

<sup>23</sup> Cited in: Cunningsworth. 1984:18

Recently, international researchers have discussed the need for teaching the culture(s) of the language being taught as a second or foreign language. This is because the awareness of cultural differences and similarities helps the learners to develop a general competence using any language as a “Lingua-Franca”. As Brown<sup>24</sup> claims it “*whenever you teach a language, you also teach a complex system of cultural customs, values and ways of thinking, feeling and acting*”. This means that to understand any target language, the learners need to learn how the native speakers of that language live, think and feel. If this fact is ignored, there would be misunderstanding because of the influence of the learners’ native language and culture as they use this language according to their own culture and conventions.

This leads to the fact that language textbooks should include cross-cultural instruction to make the learners aware of the differences between the cultures and that no culture is better. This would help them to accept and respect the differences underlined in the foreign culture without denying their own. The pupils should also learn the differences that occur in social expressions like proverbs and sayings. These latter lead them to acquire a sociolinguistic competence since proficiency in a foreign language is attained by using the target language in a correct and meaningful context.

Because each language possesses its own culture and its speakers have their own way of living, thinking and behaving, we are in need (to do not have problems of misinterpreting, misunderstanding and being misunderstood) to know how others live and think when we learn their language as pointed out “*...culture is crucial in the sense that the ability to use language appropriately is largely determined by the success with which social values are assigned to sociolinguistic features in...(a cultural context)*”<sup>25</sup>. These cultural aspects are generally integrated in a language textbook through the different notions and functions the learners need to acquire. Penny

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<sup>24</sup> Cited in: Brown. 2001: 64

<sup>25</sup> Cited in: Mountford and Nick. 2000 :91



Ur argues that *“notions and functions are the ways particular meanings are realized in language”*<sup>26</sup>.

The appropriate way to teach the culture(s) of the target language is a contrastive approach in which we highlight the discrepancies as well as the similarities of the cultures, as Porto Melina puts it: *“foreign culture is better integrated in foreign language teaching by a contrastive analysis of that culture and the culture(s) of the learners”* (ibid: 94). Penny Ur states that it is *“...more effective to teach them (notions and functions) as samples of language used by people within a specific interactive situation”* (ibid: 93). She adds that *“the learning of pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar is probably most effective when these are also integrated into activities that use the target items meaningfully for some communicative purpose”* (p. 98). This means that the introduction of new notions and functions is better achieved when these latter are combined with the language aspects. This makes the teaching meaningful and helps the learners to be in contact with different language manifestations.

## **2-Method and materials**

This section deals with the materials we intend to evaluate in terms of language aspects and functional language. It also deals with the method we have to follow in our investigation. The materials to evaluate are the Algerian and Tunisian textbooks on which our dissertation is based. We intend to analyze the materials (grammar, vocabulary, notions, functions and pronunciation) provided in all the units of both textbooks in order to answer the questions raised in the introduction of this chapter.

As far as the method is concerned, we will analyze each aspect in reference to elements discussed in the literature review. As for grammar, it is argued that the inductive approach is the suitable one for the requirements of the CBA. Thus, we discuss the grammatical materials in relation to this approach. Vocabulary and pronunciation, as believed by many authors should be

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<sup>26</sup> Cited in : Penny Ur. 1996:92

taught in context and meaningful situations. Thus, our analysis is related to this context. Finally, the teaching of the foreign culture is believed to occur more suitably with a contrastive approach in which the learners are faced with the foreign culture and make a comparison with their own. In the next section, we will show the results and discuss them.

### **3-Results and Discussion**

The results and discussion section deals with the presentation and discussion of the results arrived to through the analysis of the two language textbooks. It concerns the language aspects (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, notions) and the language functions that are the cultural side of the language as these two cannot be separated. We deal with each aspect in isolation even though in the teaching process, they are interrelated and integrated.

#### **1-Grammar**

The results state that both textbooks give a crucial importance to grammar teaching. Concerning the approach it is dealt with, it is the same. “*New Prospects*” and “*Skills for Life*” teach grammar through an inductive approach in which the learners are given examples and activities and are asked to infer the rules and the structures. Through this approach, Woods<sup>27</sup> says that learners become involved in the process of discovering the language and develop their own learning strategies. Grammar is dealt with inductively to get the students to reflect on language and how it works. The grammar points (rules and structures) intended to be taught in the last year of the secondary level are similar in both textbooks (as articles, the subjunctive, the gerund...)

Grammar teaching materials, in *New Prospects*, are presented in the six units of the textbook. There is teaching of tenses, prepositions, quantifiers...etc. Each unit contains more than five grammar points. Grammar materials are presented in *New Prospects* through texts followed by three graded activities from easy to difficult. The materials and activities are related to tenses, prepositional verbs, and to learners’ productions of correct English messages. *New Prospects*

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<sup>27</sup> Woods. 1995

comprises two to four grammar explorer sections (I, II, III, IV) each of three activities. Grammar materials in *New Prospects* are presented only in the first sequence of each unit (language outcomes part).

The types of grammar activities in *New Prospects* are varied. There are Gap Filling tasks (example: grammar explorer I p. 17), questions/answers activities (example: II p.17), texts for tenses practice (p.18), classification (1 p. 24), explanation (2 p. 24), blank filling (3 p. 24); and sentences combination (3 p. 25). The questions generally start with the expression “*consider sentences/situations...and then...*”. The grammatical notions and structures are presented in context and not in isolation. These points are presented in the textbook through activities. Grammar is taught, in *New Prospects*, through an inductive approach, in which examples and tasks are practised first then rules are inferred (2p24, 2p25). The grammar points and activities are integrated in the “around the text” rubric which comes after “listen and consider” and after “read and consider”. They are called “grammar explorer I, II, III, IV. The activities and examples used to teach the structures and the rules are based on the topics dealt with in the “listen and consider” (grammar explorer I p.17), and “read and consider” (3p24) sections. A summary of the rules and structures is supplied at the end of the textbook inside the “grammar reference” section from page 211 to 238 (Example: p.217 gives the rules presented in page 24).

The grammatical structures, notions and rules treated in the Algerian textbook are diverse. The learners are guided to learn the different types of articles (indefinite, definite and zero articles), prepositions and their use (common prepositions, adjective + preposition, verb + preposition, and verb + object + preposition), adverbs (of time, of manner and of place), different sentence forms, quantifiers (countable, uncountable, comparatives and superlatives), words and expressions like “that”, “as long as”, “so long”, “had better do”, “unless”, conditional, the gerund “ING”, the use of “used for”, Stative and action verbs, expressing preferences (prefer to do/doing, would prefer, ‘d prefer), the subjunctive (in “that” clauses, in main clauses, the “were” subjunctive/subjunctive of

unreality), link words (enumerating, re-enforcing, explaining, comparing, contrasting, conceding, expressing cause/reason, expressing effect/result/consequence, expressing purpose, intensifying, inferring, expressing time, indicating transition, summing up/concluding), and spelling rules and word plurals.

The grammar materials (structures, rules, notions and activities) provided in the Algerian textbook complies with the syllabus on which the textbook is based. This means that the textbook designers followed and relied on the syllabus to design and elaborate the materials intended to teach grammar.

Grammar teaching materials in *Skills for Life* are presented in all the units and almost all the lessons of each unit provide grammar teaching (example: Grammar Focus p. 38). *Skills for Life* presents new grammar elements through activities and examples (1 P. 62). This means that the textbook teaches grammar rules and structures through an inductive approach (example: 1p. 62). The learners practise first and then infer the rule or the structure. Grammar is taught inductively (teacher's book of *Skills for Life*, p. 9). The examples and activities implemented in the textbook to teach and practise new grammar components are based on the topic of the lessons (example: Grammar Focus p. 40, 2p. 456). At the end of each lesson, there is a brief summary of the grammar points treated in the lesson. Clear and precise definitions and explanations are provided under the "Grammar Reference" section at the end of the textbook. It is entitled ADD-ONS from page 261 to page 274. Grammar materials are generally presented with texts (reading or listening selections) which are followed by activities. The grammar notions are presented in the lessons with a set of activities in order to make the learners consolidate, re-invest and memorize them. The coursebook comprises one to two "Grammar Focus" in one lesson, each with different questions and activities.

There is diversity in the activities and tasks used to teach and practise the new grammar points. There are text completion (example: Grammar Focus p. 57), word-matching (p. 45), opposites (p. 44), texts for tenses teaching (2p. 45), writing texts to use the point (1p. 71), sentence

combination (2p. 81), and multiple choice questions MCQ (1p. 84). The activities are varied and contextualized.

The grammar components which are intended to be learned along the year are diverse. There is the study of verbs (which are followed by gerunds or infinitives), the article “the” + adjectives, the use of “used to” + verbs/ be used to + verb + ING, the subjunctive in (“that” clauses, restrictive-main-clauses/non-restrictive clauses: description), inversion (time negative, time adverbials, inverted conditional forms), the use of (need/needn’t have, could have, who, whom, of which), clauses of contrast, parallelism(co-ordinating conjunctions, correlative conjunctions, words in a series, comparison and contrast: as much as..., function words: prepositions, infinitive, introductory words), and tenses (past time, past perfect, present perfect, present, future simple, future intention, future perfect). The Tunisian textbook, as the Algerian one, respects the content and objectives concerning the teaching of grammar. This means that *Skills for Life* grammar teaching materials are based on the recommendations of the syllabus on which the textbook is based.

In the activities provided to teach, practise and reinforce grammar points, there is a variation in both textbooks. There are similarities like sentence-combination activities. Both textbooks base the grammar activities on the context of the units and the lessons.

This leads to say that both textbooks give paramount importance to grammar as it is an important aspect in language teaching/learning. They teach it with the same approach (inductive) that helps the students to be active and motivated (this is how learners are supposed to be in the Competency-Based learning). They also teach the same rules and structures. Grammar helps people to use language correctly in communicative situations (speech and writing). It also helps people to understand and recognize correct spoken and written language. This is why we do not neglect it in language teaching. Both textbooks took into account the grammar system of English.

## **2-Vocabulary**

Vocabulary teaching is present in both textbooks. The new items are presented in context. In other words, the words and expressions provided in each unit are related to the topic of the unit. In both textbooks, the new vocabulary items are presented through different and varied activities. Most of the activities supplied are similar in the two coursebooks as word-formation and word-association. Some of the items presented in the last level of the secondary school are similar and others different given that the choice made in both textbooks is first related to the unit theme and not all the themes of the two textbooks are similar. The materials are rich of new vocabulary in both coursebooks. Accordingly, both textbooks vocabulary materials comply with the syllabuses, on which they respectively rely, thus, provide rich vocabulary in contextualized settings.

Vocabulary materials, in *New Prospects*, are presented through Vocabulary Explorer rubrics. The learners are guided to build their vocabulary skills through word formation activities (n°1p26, 3p27, 1/2p57...), practice of idiomatic formulae (example: 1p150), poems (p150), synonyms and opposites (3p57, 1p79...). The textbook provides different activities to enrich and practise the new items and expressions. Vocabulary items proposed are related to the topic and context of the unit (n°1, 3 p57). The activities to perform for vocabulary learning are varied and diverse. (n°1 p79, n°3 p57, n°4 p57, n°1 p26, n°3 p27, n°5 p57).

Each unit of *New Prospects* offers a number of new vocabulary sets (Vocabulary explorer p 18 and 19). The new vocabulary items are presented through different activities (n°1 p 18, 1 p 26). “Vocabulary exploration” follows “Grammar exploration” materials after “listen and consider” and “Read and consider” sections which deal with language outcomes. The new items in the first unit are related to the topic of the unit “civilization” (n°2 p 18, n°3 p 19, n°2 p 26, n°5 p 27). At the end of the textbook, we find a small section destined to the difference of vocabulary words between American and British English (p 233).

Lexical items, in *skills for life*, are presented through a wide range of strategies and activities. They are inserted in meaningful contexts. Teaching of vocabulary is included in the

grammar focus sections (example: 1p44/45) and in lexical focus (example: p72). They include word matching (example: b p47), word definitions (example: 2p113), synonyms (example: 4p116), antonyms (example: 1p44) and word building (example: N°2 p 91).

Each lesson of each unit in *Skills for Life* provides new vocabulary items. This is summarized at the end of each lesson under “my new words” (example: p 46, p 51, p 58, and p 63). The new items are presented through activities. Some lessons devote a “Lexical Focus” section for vocabulary teaching (p 72, p 145) and other lessons integrate it in the “Grammar focus” rubric (example: p 38; p 44, grammar focus p 48). Generally new vocabulary materials are all presented after a reading or listening selection (example: 6 p 41, 5 p 43, 6, 7 p 44, 4 p 47, 2 p 54, 5 p 75...). At the end of the textbook, there is a rubric devoted to vocabulary strategies and a list of the new items introduced in each lesson (p 275 to 279).

### **3-Pronunciation**

It seems that apart from the difference in the teaching aid (CD audio), pronunciation patterns are presented nearly in the same approach in both textbooks (sounds recognition, stress patterns...). In fact, in learning pronunciation, learners need to hear and recognize English pronunciation patterns through native speakers' conversations, dialogues and songs. *Skills for Life* offers this opportunity for the Tunisian learners whereas *New Prospects* does not offer this kind of teaching materials. The only person the learners hear is their teacher who is, in most of situations, a non-native speaker. This would not help them because the teacher does not speak as a native speaker since he/she still be a foreign speaker. The activities are similar (sound-classification, sound-recognition...). The pronunciation materials and activities of both textbooks do not take into account the learners' mother tongue pronunciation. Learners are generally influenced by their native pronunciation rules given that there are many differences between the sounds and pronunciation rules between different languages.

The main purpose of teaching English pronunciation in *New Prospects* is the recognition of the phoneme-grapheme correspondence of English. Through reading texts, the students draw their attention to the differences existing between the pronunciation system and the spelling system of English. There are several activities dealing with English sounds and stress. There are texts used for weak forms practice (n°1p.20), stress (n°2p. 88, n°1p. 111), and transcription patterns (reading text p. 174/5).

Pronunciation points are presented in each unit after “Vocabulary Explorer» sections. This rubric is entitled “pronunciation and spelling”. It is intended to help the learners to identify the differences occurring between written words and their pronunciation (n°1 p 20, 1, 2, 3, p 28). The patterns of pronunciation are presented through activities (3, 4 p 28, p 57). The subject of the selections and the words used in the activities are related to the unit topic (N°1 p 28, p 57). Weak and reduced forms, pronunciation of sounds which have different pronunciation, cluster of consonants are studied. In addition to this; transcription of difficult words of the reading selections is provided beside the texts (text p.22/3, text p.37/8, text p.54/5). Activities for learning and practising English pronunciation patterns are diverse (speaking and listening: (1, 2 p.20, 4p. 28, 3p. 51, p.57...), reading: (1p. 28, p. 57, 1p. 179), classification: (3p. 28, p.57)). The fact that there is no aural-oral supporting aid, the teachers present the listening activities by themselves and serve as pronunciation reference. At the end of the textbook, there are two pages devoted to pronunciation rules and patterns (pages: 236/237).

In *Skills for Life*, patterns of pronunciation are provided in almost all lessons of each unit. They occur under the title “Pronunciation Focus” rubric which follows the “Grammar Focus” one (example: 1, 2 p. 46, 1p. 57, p. 62...). The patterns are presented through activities using words, listening and reading materials under unit-topics (1p. 46, 1p 57, 2p 58). The reading materials are texts and dialogues studied in the lesson (1p 46 based on the text p 42). The listening materials, songs and dialogues used are provided in a CD as a supporting aid for the teaching of listening



skills and pronunciation components (1p 57, 2p 58). The activities offered in the textbook are varied: listening (1p 57, 2p 58), reading (1,2p 46), classification (p62, p66, and p73), writing (3p 99): speaking (p99, p100): transcription (p140). There is a summary of the pronunciation patterns dealt with at the end of each lesson (p58, p63, p67...).

The two textbooks give importance to pronunciation and present sounds and stress patterns in writing. The fact that pronunciation is oral means that it should be first of all taught through listening materials (as native speakers' conversations). Listening to native speakers help the foreign learners recognize the sounds and different patterns of the language. *Skills for Life* is a language textbook supported by an audio CD to teach listening skills and most of the pronunciation rules and activities. Baker (1982) argues that teaching aids as CDs and cassettes are necessary to teach pronunciation. Unfortunately, even though "*New Prospects*" contains different written listening and pronunciation materials, there is no supporting audio aid which helps the learners to recognize, unconsciously memorize and internalize the sounds as well as the stress patterns of English. This means that there is no means intended to help the learners to distinguish and correspond between written and oral English as spoken by native speakers while *Skills for Life* endows the learners with this opportunity. The two textbooks respond to the two syllabuses they rely on concerning the teaching of English pronunciation except the audio materials that are supplied to support the Tunisian textbook and not the Algerian one.

The language components are provided in both textbooks and comply with the two syllabuses. However, differences exist not only in the organization and the way of teaching but also in the kind of materials provided, as we already referred to the audio aids which are essential in pronunciation acquisition. The Tunisian CD material is made by native speakers as mentioned by the textbook designers, to help the learners recognize the language in its social setting.

The language aspects generally come after a reading and listening texts in the Algerian and the Tunisian textbooks. Therefore, the language content (grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation)

is taught in context as the items and sentences used for practice are taken from the reading and listening selections.

#### **4-Intercultural Skills in the Textbooks**

The intercultural skills are essential in the teaching of foreign languages because culture is part of language, and the learners need to match the language they learn to its social context and function. It is argued that the appropriate way to teach the culture(s) of English is the contrastive approach in which learners are confronted with the important differences that exist between their own culture and the English one(s). This approach would help the learners to acquire a sociolinguistic competence. This latter helps them to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation. In what follows, we will analyze the cultural and intercultural components of both textbooks and compare the results. The themes discussed in both textbooks are similar and turn around civilization, education, science and technology, society, business and advertisement. These themes are relevant to the syllabuses since they are reflected in the textbooks.

*New Prospects* depicts different topics and subject matters throughout the six units. These topics are related to civilization, corruption and fraud in the world, educational systems in the world, advertisement in different cultures, astronomy, and life issues (attitudes, emotions and feelings).

In unit 1, the general theme is ancient civilization. The first lesson page 15/20 deals with ancient civilizations as the Sumerian, Greek and Egyptian ones. The map page 15 illustrates this evidently. The text page 18 also speaks about the Amerindian civilization. The second lesson page 21/28 deals with the history of Algeria, its heritages through time and different civilizations it knew. The text page 22/23 traces this history. It also speaks about Easter Island and European settlement. A text showing how civilizations helped each other for development and progress concludes the lesson. Lesson 3 page 32/35 deals with the Phoenician civilization (map page 32) in the Mediterranean basin in which Algeria and Tunisia symbolized the Maghreb. This helps the learners

to know the history of Algeria from its beginning. Lesson 4 page 36/41 deals mainly with the Egyptian civilization. This unit theme has the purpose to develop in the learners positive attitudes towards their own culture and civilisation and those of other peoples. Furthermore it raises their awareness about the contribution of various civilizations to man's progress (*New Prospects*; 2007: ix).

Unit 2 draws a line on dangerous social phenomena in Algeria as well as in the world (fraud and corruption). Lesson 1 page 46/52 studies the fraud and corruption phenomena and explains their danger on peoples and societies (activity 2 page 50/51). Lesson 2 page 53/58 illustrates counterfeits around the world. Picture on page 53 shows counterfeits of famous European paintings. The text page 54/55 also explains this thievery. Lesson 3 page 61/64 shows the disadvantages of business on the world and environment in general and discusses Algerian business in particular. Lesson 4 page 65/70 tells about the social and environmental issues resulted from business, the importance of being aware, the procedures to undertake in order to avoid these problems and the concentration on workers' needs and rights. This unit theme intends to raise the learners' awareness on business dangers, on the good and the bad of working life.

Unit 3 discusses the theme of school and knowledge. Lesson 1 page 75/81 speaks about the importance of education and its purposes. Lesson 2 page 82/90 explains the education subject in Britain (text page 83/84). Activity 3 page 85 asks the learners to compare primary or middle school with secondary school in Algeria. Lesson 3 page 93/96 discusses the life of an inventor (*Marie Curie*). The last lesson page 97/101 presents the education in United States (text page 98/99). Text page 100 gives a dimension of education which is particular to USA. The purpose of this unit is to raise awareness in the students about the similarities and differences between the educational systems in the world<sup>28</sup> with no explicit contrast or comparison.

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<sup>28</sup> *New Prospects*; 2007: xi

Unit 4 focuses on the phenomenon of advertisement through all its lessons. This unit has the purpose of raising the students' awareness about the effects of advertising on different cultures and societies. It also aims at helping them to understand the importance of integrating cultural features of a society into advertising (ibid). Activity 1 page 110 is based on a text concerning plants. Task page 111 deals with the phenomenon of consumerism. Text 114/115 discusses how people should eat for good safety. Text and picture page 126 show the importance of advertising. Text and picture page 129 deal with advertisement about cooking. The learners are guided in a process of discovering cultural features in the advertisement related to the country or region in which it is published.

Unit 5 (astronomy and the solar system) turns around a scientific and interesting subject. This unit intends to make the learners aware of where earth is situated in universe and to explore it. This unit aims at discovering the scientific dimension of the world hence helps the learners to develop their critical thinking skills and strategies. Therefore, this unit integrates English with a scientific subject. Lesson 1 page 136/141 discusses the different means of communication (TV, radio...) functioning thanks to satellites (e.g. images 1, 2 page 136, the listening selection scripted on page 206). The second lesson discusses the solar system (text and image page 143/144). Lesson 3 page 152/155 tries to explore the universe and what surrounds it (image page 152 and the listening selection scripted page 207). The fourth lesson page 156/161 studies a text (page 157/158) analyzing the scientific experimentations done on earth in order to discover its deep secrets.

The last unit deals with different feelings, emotions and attitudes in different cultures and societies. This unit aims at developing in the learners an understanding of feelings across different cultures and societies. This understanding would help them to accept other's thoughts and feelings by keeping their own values and ethics. Lesson 1 page 166/172 treats the phenomenon of humour across different societies as American, British and Russian (listening text scripted in page 208/209) and compares it to the humour virtue in the Algerian society. Lesson 2 page 173/180 provides a text

talking about similarities and differences in feelings in British and American societies (page 174/175). Lesson 3 page 183/187 deals with the friendship relation and different attitudes of people towards each other. The last lesson page 188/192 discusses the myths and stories in different cultures. This lesson raises in the learners the skills of critical thinking, judgement and discussion of what is real and what is unreal or mythical (activity 1, 2 page 188, text page 189/190).

“Take a break” is a rubric in the Algerian textbook which introduces activities based on jokes, proverbs, and songs. It includes an intercultural dimension which is considered as a means to show other peoples’ experiences in their own milieus<sup>29</sup>. “Take a break” page 30 asks the learners to bring information about “ancient Greek myth of Ulysses” (a civilization theme). “Take a break” page 59 deals with jokes; proverbs and sayings in relation to money. “Take a break” page 91 is a funny crossword game which is based on a school subject. “Take a break” page 121 deals with cartoons, proverbs and sayings about food. “Take a break” page 150 discusses idiomatic expressions as *“now that you’ve passed your exam, you should be over the moon, I suppose”* (b page 150). The last “take a break” section page 181 also deals with idiomatic expressions as *“happiness means to be on top of the world/on cloud nine/over the moon”* (4/d page 181). It also treats a cartoon that should be transformed into a joke. All the themes of this rubric are related to unit topics. This section separates the two main sequences of each unit. It represents a moment of relax for the learners before moving to the second sequence with a slight touch of the foreign culture. Through this rubric, students can put themselves in an English context and try to be as natural as possible. This would help them in the social interaction side of speaking as it teaches them universal themes, expressions and sayings.

There is a section “time for...” at the end of each unit of *New Prospects* which treats poems and songs taken from different cultures (poems page 44, songs page 73, page 105, page 134, page 164, and page 195). This section helps the learners to relax before tackling the next unit. It also is a

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<sup>29</sup> Algerian 3SE teacher’s guide 2007: 66).

means for learning something interesting about other people (e.g. how poetry is developed in other countries, how people sing and which types of songs are sung in other countries). All the themes of the songs and poems are related to the unit topics. Song page 73 “*money, money, money*” is closed to the unit 2 topic “ethics in business: fighting fraud and corruption”, song page 105 “*what did you learn in school today*” unit 3 is linked to the unit topic “education in the world: comparing educational systems”, song page 195 “*love is all*” unit 6 follows the unit topic “feelings and emotions, humour and related topics”.

The units in *New Prospects* deal with different themes and cultural components of different societies. However, there is no evident teaching approach highlighting the differences between the Algerian and the English cultures. It is required from the teacher to lay them down for the students. Teachers and learners are already familiar with the comparison technique with which they came across in the middle school textbooks and the first two textbooks in the secondary school. However, we note that there are some questions in the warning up sections of the book where students are asked to compare. What must also be observed is that culture in the book is not taught in the form of separate items but integratively. In the integrative approach to culture teaching, it is a “capsule” method or approach wherein students are immersed in the target culture to learn its norms and expected behaviours. That fits better than the discrete items characteristic of the comparative method. The capsule and integrative approach corresponds both to the programme or syllabus which emphasises cross-cultural outcomes and the age of students who are already familiar with the main cultural similarities and differences and need to be reminded of them at this stage. What counts more is the capacity of the students to behave according to the target cultural patterns presented to them through written and oral texts.

For its part, *Skills for Life* discusses different themes related to culture, education, technology and life issues and concerns. The first unit of the textbook deals mainly with foreign culture and literature. Lesson 5 page 59/63 in unit 1 treats the culture(s) of United Kingdom. The

map page 59 illustrates this clearly. The students are led to know about the United Kingdom by describing (the text entitled “the city of Edinburgh” page 60), through an ad (see more of London on foot page 61) and by discussing different questions about the different cities of the Kingdom. Lesson 6 unit 1 page 64/7 deals with the Canadian festivals and travelling abroad. Lesson 4 unit 1 page 54/57 talks about foreign songs (Celine Dion’s song “*Immortality*”, her biography and activities discussing her life). Lesson 7 unit 1 page 68/73 discusses travelling and modes of transport. Lessons 8 and 9 unit 1 p74/76 and 77/81 deal with English literature through the study of the famous writer “*William Shakespeare*” by knowing his life (p76), the festivals he gave (p74) and one of his tales (p79) and related different questions and activities. These lessons (unit 1) draw attention to and show the Tunisians the English culture and literature except that there is no clear comparison or contrast with their native culture or literature.

Unit 2 (education matters) discusses different educational systems in the world and presents different world non-governmental organizations as UNICEF. Lesson 1 page 88/92 discusses the importance of educating children in general and argues this point with an ad (page 90) presented by the organization: World Food Programme (WFP). Lesson 2 page 93/96 deals with the same topic as lesson 1 and presents the distribution of children out of school (page 93) and different organisations which help them to go to school, to get food...etc. Lesson 3 page 97/100 and lesson 4 page 101/102 deal with different ways or opportunities of learning through internet (virtual schools in lesson 3 and on line learning in lesson 4). Lesson 5 page 103/106 displays a comparison between different educational systems in the world including England page 104, Australia page 105, New Zealand page 104. The learners are requested to compare them with their own system (Tunisian educational system). Examples of questions and activities about this comparison are n° 4 page 103 and n° 1, 2 page 105. Lesson 6 page 107/110 deals with the Tunisian education. Lesson 7 page 111 (life long learning) discusses the fact that learning is very important and people can learn all along their life.

Lesson 9 page 118/122 turns around a debate about the English inventor Graham Bell (English history and inventions).

Lessons 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the second unit have the purpose of awakening the Tunisian learners about the importance and different ways of learning. They are led to know about children of the world and their education. Lessons 5 and 6 lay down a comparison of the different English educational schools and the Tunisian one. Lesson 7 has the same objective as the first lesson. Lesson 9 shows the learners the way to be thinkers and inventors. It states that the need to communicate led Graham Bell to invent a means for communication (telephone). This encourages learners to develop their thinking and inventing abilities. Unit 2 illustrates clearly the contrastive approach to teach the intercultural side of English. This unit opens, in someway, the world to the Tunisian students as it is pointed out by the authors of the book *“finding out about other people and countries is fundamental to expand one’s knowledge of the world and evaluate one’s own context”*<sup>30</sup>.

Unit 3 (creative, inventive minds) provides discussions about new inventions, science, technology and business. Lesson 1 page 136/141 discusses different inventions and related vocabulary. The lesson helps the students to familiarize with the vocabulary related to technology. Lesson 2 page 142/146 deals with a new technology or invention termed as the iPod digital media phenomenon. Lesson 3 page 147/150 discusses new games. Lesson 4 page 151/155 deals with those inventors and creators who won noble prizes. This lesson aims at encouraging learners to create and use their thinking skills. Lesson 5 page 156/160 considers the good influence women have on business in America. Lesson 6 page 161/167 deals with those educated, highly skilled and qualified people who leave their countries for joining developed countries in order to work and earn more money (brain drain). This lesson shows to the Tunisian learners that travelling is not the best choice to make and people should work for the development of their own countries. Lesson 7 page 168/173

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<sup>30</sup> Tunisian 4SE teacher’s book p. 25



speaks about scientists' achievements and inventions. This lesson shares the same aim with lesson 3. Lesson 8 page 174/179 deals with English poetry (*William Wordsworth*). The unit in whole intends to develop in the learners critical thinking, own respect, esteem and respect of others. The unit initiates the learners to moral values and acceptance of foreign cultures.

Unit 4 (life issues) studies society and environment in general (from feelings and attitudes to urbanism, work, weather...). Lesson 1 page 193/197 deals with life concerns. It discusses different sides of life as job, environment, health and focuses mainly on the danger of smoking (the text page 196 and the two ads page 197 show that danger). It lists the different dangerous problems resulted from smoking. This lesson intends to avert the learners from and make them aware of this social danger. Lesson 2 page 198/201 as its title (attitudes) suggests, presents differences of attitudes in different contexts. It is based on *Shakespeare's* plays and highlights English attitudes. Lesson 3 page 202/204 also presents English Indian attitudes excluding Tunisian attitudes. The learners are supposed to compare unconsciously and logically the differences underlined between the concerned countries. Lesson 4 page 205/210 lists the advantages and disadvantages of the social phenomenon "consumerism". It shows the real values of life, society and technology. Lesson 5 page 211/217 discusses the swift changes occurred to the climate under the title "eco-driving". In these last two lessons, the learners would know the positive as well as the negative influences of progress. Lesson 6 page 218/221 draws the several distinctions existing between rural and urban lives in general and in London in particular (n°2 page 219/220). Lesson 7 page 222/226 discusses the weather and climate in London and America. There is no reference to the climate in Tunisia because the learners normally know how it is, hence, can compare it unconsciously with those discussed in the lesson. Lesson 8 page 227/231 deals with problems in different companies in United Kingdom, attitudes of managers and feelings of employees and their effects on the company in order to make the learners aware of the working environment in different milieus. Lesson 9 page 232/234 "job ads" is intended to help the learners in their choices to get a job and to prepare them for integrating the working

society. This unit has the purpose to teach values and to show attitudes and feelings in other cultures and in different social contexts.

The approach adopted to teach the cultural components of English is not explicitly a contrastive one. It is clearly revealed in the second unit “education matters” where the texts and activities deal with comparison tasks. This leads to say that the teacher has to highlight these differences and/or the students have to deduce them after a process of thinking and analyzing the differences and similarities observed between the Tunisian and English cultures and societies. In this way, they would develop their critical thinking skills and become open-minded. The variation in the topics and the differences/similarities pointed out directly or indirectly in the textbook fits, in some way, the needs and principles of the competency-based teaching. This latter indicates that the learners should know and accept values, attitudes, civilizations of the English speakers, keep and respect their own culture in order to become autonomous individuals, responsible and capable of coping with the demands of the new world (exchange and mixing of cultures and languages).

*New Prospects* contains six units which deal with six themes and topics. Each stream has to study four main units according to the field of interest. Literary stream students, for example, have to work on units 1, 2, 3 and 6 while scientific stream students have to work on units 2, 4, 5 and 6. The similarity of themes and topics in the two textbooks (civilization, technology, education, life issues, consumerism...) is transparent although the organization of units and lessons is different.

The themes provided in both textbooks are, more or less, similar and relevant to their respective syllabuses. This means that the textbooks designers respected the themes provided in the syllabuses and incorporated them in the textbooks in a way that teaching of the skills and components are based on them. The list of communicative functions and strategies provided in the Tunisian syllabus is available in the textbook through the whole units; however, the textbook designers have mentioned the strategies and objectives to follow concerning the intercultural

outcomes while the Algerian syllabus does not provide the functions the learners need to learn at this level.

The functional language proposed in both textbooks seems to be similar. However, the tasks through which the learners are asked to perform and practise these functions are different. *New Prospects* introduces this functional language more through speaking whereas in *Skills for Life* it is included more under grammar tasks. Despite the fact that the learners are guided to learn the same functions but the approach and procedures adopted are different. As instances of these functions, we find cause/effect (p.58 in *New Prospects* and p.81 in *Skills for Life*), expressing likes and feelings (1p.181, 1p.182 in *New Prospects* and p. 187 in *Skills for Life*), describing (p. 46, p. 180, p.192 in *New Prospects* and p.63 in *Skills for Life*) and expressing opinions (p. 46 in *New Prospects* and 5 p. 61 p. 6 p.62 in *Skills for Life*).

The analysis of the tasks designed for the teaching of grammar shows that they are varied in both textbooks. The learners work first on questions and examples and then they are given the rule and only after practise the rule. The types of grammar tasks in both textbooks are in general similar. As instances, we find question answering (2 p. 17, 1 p. 23, 1 p. 86, 2 p. 178 in *New Prospects* and p. 38, p. 117, p. 121, p. 139 in *Skills for Life*), filling the gaps (1 p.17, 1 p. 85, 1 p. 145 in *New Prospects* and p. 57, 2 p. 98, 1 p. 109, 3 p.226 in *Skills for Life*), sentence structure/formation (2 p.138 in *New Prospects* and 1 p. 71, 4 p.114 in *Skills for Life*), sentence combination (3 p. 25, 1 p. 49, 1 p. 138 in *New Prospects* and p.81, 3 p. 216 in *Skills for Life*).

The analysis of the tasks proposed to teaching lexis shows several similarities between the two textbooks materials. Vocabulary is dealt with under “vocabulary focus” section in both textbooks. However, it is sometimes included in the grammar section. The new presented items are different in the two textbooks as new items and expressions are related to the lesson subject. As examples of activities, we find filling the gaps (2 p. 18/9, 1 p. 26, 4 p. 57, 1 p. 139 in *New Prospects* and 3 p. 109, 2 p. 149, 3 p. 171, 2 p. 219 in *Skills for Life*), word formation (3 p. 27, 2 p. 57, 4 p. 80,

3 p. 140, p. 170 in *New Prospects* and 1 p.44, 2 p. 62, 2 p. 84, 2 p. 109, 3 p. 215 in *Skills for Life*), word association (1 p. 57 in *New Prospects* and 6 p. 64, 1 p. 113, 1 p. 194 in *Skills for Life*), dictionary use (1 p. 18, 1 p. 50, 3 p. 80, 3 p. 140 in and 7 p. 75, c p. 177), word/sentence definition (1 p. 79, 1 p. 178, 1 p. 118 in and 2 p. 74, 3 p. 80, 2 p. 199, 4 p. 225 in *Skills for Life*).

Concerning the activities devoted to the teaching of English pronunciation, a difference underlines the two textbooks. *New Prospects* proposes eight types of activities whereas *Skills for Life* proposes only four types, and only three types are similar between the textbooks (reading aloud, sound classification and word transcription). In addition to these latter, the Algerian textbook offers spelling rules and differences existing between oral and written language. It also proposes activities (as role play) through which the learners (by acting) practise the pronunciation system (sound, stress and weak forms). As similar activities, we find sound classification (2 p. 28, 3 p. 28, 1 p. 88, 3 p. 148, 1 p. 171 in *New Prospects* and 1 p. 57, p. 66, 1 p. 150, 1 p. 243, p. 247 in *Skills for Life*), reading aloud (4 p. 28, 2 p. 88, 1 p. 111, 4 p. 140, 2 p. 171 in *New Prospects* and 2 p. 46, 1 p. 99, 1 p. 117, 2 p. 140, 2 p. 204 in *Skills for Life*) and transcription (1 p.140 in *New Prospects* and 1 p. 140, p. 230 in *Skills for Life*).

## **Conclusion**

The two textbooks respond to the needs of the CBA concerning the teaching of the language components and functions. However, the materials provided and their organization are different. The grammatical structures and notions are taught in both textbooks with the inductive approach which is appropriate to the CBA. The lexical items and expressions are rich and contextualized in both textbooks. The pronunciation patterns are dealt with, mainly the basic elements as sounds, stress and weak forms, in both textbooks. Unfortunately, both textbooks do not provide a suitable approach complying with the CBA which is the contrastive one in terms of intercultural teaching.

Therefore, both textbooks respond to the CBA demands regarding the language aspects and do not comply with the intercultural requirements and principles. However, what is worth

mentioning is the fact that the two textbooks reply to the CBA in terms of teaching content. It means that, they provide materials for the teaching of the content the learners need as it is argued by Brown<sup>31</sup> *“in task-based instruction, the priority is not the bits and pieces of language, but rather the functional purposes for which the language must be used”*. Though, the contrastive approach is not formulated, the learners have the ability to compare and analyze the cultural patterns of the foreign culture in relation to their own culture. This ability is built through the previous years they learned the English language and culture.

The language focus/aspects come generally after a reading or listening text in the Algerian textbook as well as in the Tunisian one. Thus the language content (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) is taught in context as the items and sentences used for practice are taken from the reading and listening selections. Consequently, the two textbooks respect the teaching of structures, notions and functions of English the learners need. Thus, both respond to the needs of the CBA and implement the content of their respective syllabuses concerning the language focus and the intercultural dimension of English.

What has finally to be observed is that while the syllabuses specify the items with primacy given to skills and strategies, in the textbooks the order of inventories of items is reversed since both of them start with the learning of the language. This may seem a deviation from the syllabuses but in fact, it does not. The language items, as we have pointed with reference to Dubin and Olshtain figure as an organizing factor that sets order on what is to be learned. Furthermore, teaching the inventory of language items first is a way of paving the way for the teaching of the inventory of skills which is the focus of the next chapter.

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<sup>31</sup>Brown (1994:229) cited in: Gail, K. Oura. *Authentic Task-Based Materials: Bringing the Real World Into the Classroom*. [www.jrc.sophia.ac.jp/kiyou/ki21/gaio](http://www.jrc.sophia.ac.jp/kiyou/ki21/gaio)

## **Chapter Three: the Four Language Skills in *New Prospects and Skills for Life***

### **Introduction**

This chapter deals with the four language skills (listening; speaking; reading; writing) and their representation in the Algerian as well as in the Tunisian textbooks. These skills are essential even vital in any foreign language teaching/learning. Learners need to interact orally as well as in writing, and need to understand and interpret oral as well as written language. This chapter intends to answer the issue whether the two textbooks provide materials for teaching the four language skills, provide teaching approaches that comply with the CBA and whether they are similar or different in the teaching of these crucial skills.

The chapter is divided into an introduction that launches the chapter with raising the issue. A review of the literature that underlines the different teaching approaches of each skill. The research methodology presents the way in which the materials are analyzed. The last section is the results and discussion in which we lay down the results and discuss them in relation to the competency-based approach, hence respond to the issue raised in the introduction.

### **1-Review of the literature**

The role of English as the world's international language pushed the linguists and methodologists to find more effective approaches to teach English from both its spoken and written sides on the one hand, and on the other hand, the fact that nearly all entrance exams in different fields require knowledge of the spoken as well as the written English. The four skills are taught through several and different approaches. Below, we classify the main important teaching and learning approaches applied to the teaching of the four language skills.

## **I-Approaches to Teach the Four Language Skills**

### **1-Approaches to Teach Listening Skills**

According to Richards<sup>1</sup>, three main processes are used in the listening task: *bottom up* and *top down* processing for the purpose of comprehension and *acquisition* processing for the purpose of skill and strategies acquisition.

#### **1-1-Bottom-Up Processing**

In the bottom-up processing of teaching listening, the learners use the incoming input as the basis for understanding the message. The basis of this approach is the listener's lexical and grammatical competence in a language. It goes from language to meaning. Understanding through a bottom-up process of the utterances is made through a logical division called "chunking" of the utterances components. This chunking is possible and appropriate according to our knowledge of the grammar, with a help of the intonation and pausing of the speaker. Learners also need a large vocabulary and know different sentence structure. This processing of learning listening helps, according to Richards (ibid: 5/6), to develop the following listening strategies and skills: The learners acquire knowledge along the listening process; Recognition of word- and clause divisions; Find key words; Recognition of key transitions in a discourse; Recognition of grammatical relationships between key elements in sentences; Use stress and intonation to identify word and sentence functions; Identification of the referents of pronouns in an utterance; Recognition of the time reference of an utterance; Distinction between positive and negative statements; Recognition of the order in which words occur in an utterance; Identification of sequence markers; Identification of keywords which occur in a spoken text; Identification of which modal verbs occurred in a spoken text. The types of activities that are generally suitable in a bottom-up processing are: dictations, cloze listening, the use of multiple choice questions after a text and activities requiring cloze and detailed recognition.

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<sup>1</sup> Richards, 2008

## **1-2-Top-Down Processing**

The second processing (top-down) requires the use of the listener's background knowledge for the understanding of the meaning of messages. It goes from meaning to language. The background knowledge required refers to all what the student knows about the topic, and to situational or contextual knowledge. The abilities developed through a top-down processing to the teaching of listening are<sup>2</sup>: To use key words to construct the schema of discourse; To infer the setting for the text; To infer the role of the participants and their goals; To infer causes or effects; To infer vague and unclear details of situation; And to anticipate questions related to the topic or situation;

The types of activities that could be used for the top-down processing are (ibid): Students produce a set of questions they suppose to hear about a topic, and then listen to see whether they are answered; Learners generate a list of elements they already know about a topic and those they would like to learn further about, then listen and compare; Learners predict the second part of the speakers' conversation after listening to the first part, then listen and compare; Students read a list of key words covered in a talk, and then listen to see which ones are mentioned; Completion of the end of a story after listening to its part, then listening and comparing the endings; Comparing what the learners hear when listening to news with what they guessed to happen after reading the news headlines;

Bottom-up and top-down processing are concerned with listening as comprehension. They help learners to develop ability for understanding oral discourse. Bottom-up is based on words and form whereas top-down is based on meaning.

## **1-3-Acquisition Processing**

This approach to teaching listening concerns the teaching of listening for skill and strategies acquisition. The acquisition listening, according to Richards, uses two kinds of activities: noticing

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<sup>2</sup> Richards, 2008:9/10



and restructuring. **Noticing** activities consist of listening again to a selection used for comprehension activities for language awareness. This kind of activities involve the following skills and strategies<sup>3</sup>: Identifying differences between what is heard and what is written; Complete a part or parts of the listening selection; Verify openings from a list of expressions that occurred in the text; **Restructuring** activities can be oral or written tasks. They are productive tasks based on the listening text. They involve (ibid): Pair works in conversations (speaking and listening); Tasks for sentence completion that require the use of expressions and different linguistic items occurred in the selection (writing); Using the texts for interacting dialogues; Role plays in which learners are asked to apply key language from the listening selections;

Generally, a listening course states comprehension and acquisition as its goals since they are interdependent. It is divided into two parts: -listening as comprehension that concerns bottom-up and top-down processing –listening as acquisition in which the learners work on noticing and restructuring activities, therefore, construct knowledge and engage in speaking activities.

## **2- Approaches to Teach Speaking Skills**

Richards bases his work on that of Brown and Yule<sup>4</sup>. He lists three main approaches for teaching speaking. He argues that speaking can be classified in three human talks: interaction, transaction and performance. These three speech activities are needed in the development of the learner's communicative competence.

### **2-1-Interactional Talk**

Interaction talk helps people to establish and maintain social relationships. It is based on a social function. Its main features are: It focuses on a social function; It reflects role relationships; It reflects speaker's identity; It applies natural and native conventions and expressions; It employs many and different generic words; It can be formal or casual according to the participants<sup>5</sup>; the social and interactional aspect of speaking involves many skills related to general "rules" of

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<sup>3</sup> Richards; 2008/16

<sup>4</sup> Brown and Yule (1983) cited in Richards; 2008

<sup>5</sup> Richards; 2008:22

conversations. This implies that it helps or guides the learners to do things such as (ibid: 23): Opening and closing conversations; Choosing topics; Engaging in small-talks and conversations; Joking; Retelling personal experiences; Turn-taking; Answering and responding; Interrupting; Asking for clarification, Explanation; Reacting to others; Using an appropriate style of speaking for each situation. The interactional variety of speaking is taught through asking the learners different questions about the topic which leads to dialogues and conversations (e.g. *“What sport do you play?”*<sup>6</sup>).

## **2-2-Transactional Talk**

Talk as transaction emphasizes the exchange of information. The important element is what is said or done unlike interaction in which the participants and how they interact socially are the basis. Transaction talks include classroom group discussions and problem-solving activities, class activities in which pupils design a poster, discuss sightseeing plans with a hotel clerk or tour guide, make a telephone call to obtain flight information, ask someone for directions, buy something in a shop and order food for a menu in a restaurant...etc. Among its features (ibid: 26): Information based (message); Participants use to be understood by different communication strategies; It may be there questions, repetitions, comprehension checks; It may be negotiation and digression; Linguistic accuracy is not always important. And among the skills involved (ibid), we find: Explaining a need or intention; Describing; Asking questions; Asking for clarification; Justifying an opinion; agreeing and disagreeing; making suggestions; Clarifying understanding; and Making comparison.

This type of talk could be taught through activities that help the learners to share and obtain information, and carrying real-world transactions. This can be achieved through group activities, information gap activities and role plays. These activities include ranking, values clarifications, brainstorming and simulations.

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<sup>6</sup> Richards; 2008:30

### **2-3-Performance Talk**

The third category of speaking is performance. It refers to public talks as classroom presentations, public announcements and speeches, giving a class report about a school trip, conducting a class debate, giving a speech of welcome, making a sales presentation, giving a lecture.... It concerns the transmission of information before an audience. This type is close to written language than to the oral but it is an important aspect of the oral competence. Among its features<sup>7</sup>: A focus on both message and audience; Predictable organization and sequencing; Importance of both form and accuracy; Language is more like written language; It is often monologue. Among the skills it involves in the learners (ibid): Using an appropriate format; Presenting information in an appropriate sequence; Maintaining audience engagement; Using correct pronunciation and grammar; Creating an effect on the audience; Using appropriate vocabulary; Using an appropriate opening and closing;

This kind of talk can be taught through providing real examples or modals of speeches, oral presentations, stories, videos, audio recordings.... This is a typically text-based teaching. The learners learn first the type of text and its features and then follow different steps to write their own piece before presenting it to the classroom. It can be group, pair or individual work. It also includes project works which are presented orally in the classroom. This type leads to a classroom debate and an evaluation/correction from the part of the teacher.

These three speaking angles are all required. Thus, in an EFL classroom, a combination of the three should take place. Learners need to create and maintain social interaction, exchange information and develop the ability to make a public talk and the skills of information transmission. The speaking skill is related to reading mainly performance and information transmission skills.

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<sup>7</sup> Richards; 2008:28

### **3- Approaches to Teach Reading Skills**

It is generally agreed that reading is an input source as well as an end in itself. The former means that through reading learners acquire different input they need and the latter refers to the reading skills that should be acquired since it is an everyday activity and not a simple activity limited to the classroom setting. As the notion of teaching reading is not recent, many different approaches to teaching reading have been developed through time. In this research, we will mention the three major approaches to reading instruction.

#### **3-1-Bottom-Up Process**

It is an approach which teaches the relationship existing between the letters (graphemes) and the sounds (phonemes). This makes the learners read the text by pronouncing the printed word by blending the sounds together. This approach makes a link between oral and written language. It is a simple process of decoding words into thoughts. It is an approach which works from the parts to the whole building up gradually in a process of growth. In other words, it goes from teaching small features to higher features and it has a unique path. That is to say, the teaching of reading through this approach starts from letters and words and leads to meaning and context. It is also called “part to whole” and “phonics” approach. It is a text-based and “analytical” approach where students analyze the letters, letter combinations and syllables in a word in an effort to decode:

- The speech sounds represented by the letters;
- The meaning of the text;

The activists in the bottom-up reading approach focus their attempts on the primary grades and emphasize the importance of the fact that learners need to have “phonemic awareness”. This latter is an understanding of the alphabetic principle which states the relation between the spelling of words and their sounding. The mistaking of this approach, in EFL context, is that in English words, we find irregularity in the sound-symbol correspondences, because most of the English sounds are not represented by one letter and vice-versa.

This approach emphasizes the ability to decode or put into sound what is seen in a text. It ignores the help of emerging readers to recognize what they bring to the information on the page. The sequence of this process proceeds from the incoming data to higher level encodings (i.e. teaching key vocabulary items, the area of grammar and the teaching of various cohesive devices<sup>8</sup>).

### **3-2-Top-Down Process**

The learners in the top-down approach are supposed, on the basis of their background knowledge, to guess the meaning and the context of the reading selection before reading it. It goes in the opposite path of the phonics approach. It goes down from meaning to smaller features of texts. Top-down as bottom-up approaches are based on the fact that comprehension is the final outcome of the reading process. Students learn to read by reading and re-reading “big books” together with the teacher who monitors them gradually. This approach states that reader learners begin with expectations and ideas about the text based on its title, format and style before they begin to look for words that would substantiate or refute these expectations. It is an approach which begins with a picture of the whole and goes down to its parts. In this teaching process, a rich environment in which the four language skills are combined is provided by the teacher. It puts the accent on the personal meaning constructed by the readers who use their prior knowledge to interpret the reading selection (ibid).

According to Abisamra N.S. (ibid: 29), the top-down approach is knowledge-based. Readers bring meaning to and interpret texts on the basis of their experiential background and prior knowledge. Accordingly, as many specialists point it out (Goodman 1967, Smith 1971, 1982...), the focal point is set on what the readers bring to the process. The learners make a general sample of the text and compare it to their own knowledge, helping to give sense to what is written. The focus is on the readers as they interact with the text. It starts with hypotheses and predictions, then attempts to verify them by working down on the text. This is what specialists term as “*a psycholinguistic*

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<sup>8</sup> Cited in : N.S. Abisamra :2007

*guessing game*". Abisamra argues that the whole language should be seen in its social context in which competence must be separated from performance and language must be studied in a process and in its human context.

### **3-3-Interactive Approach**

This approach stresses on the interaction (happening unconsciously in the learner's mind) which occurs between the reader (his/her background knowledge) and the information provided in the text in order to decipher its meaning. That is to say, the reader builds meaning of the text according to what he/she already knows and to what is encoded by the writer. Most reading specialists deem that reading is an interactive process which raises an interaction between the reader's background knowledge and the text for the sake of creating meaning. This approach is based mainly on Goodman's psycholinguistic model in which the readers are supposed to use their background knowledge to understand the meaning of the text. In other words, when approaching the text, the reader starts to build general ideas and expectations which would be reinforced, adapted or discarded more as he/she goes on reading the text.

Abisamra<sup>9</sup> asserts that reading in this approach is the process of combining textual information with that the reader brings to a text. It stresses both what is on the written page and what a reader brings to it relying on both top-down and bottom-up skills. Thus, reading is the interaction between the reader and the text. It assumes that skills involved in the reading process are interactively available for text processing and interpretation. However, students may over-rely on text or context for a lack of relevant feedback.

In a typical reading lesson, under the interactive approach, we generally find three main phases<sup>10</sup> with a conjoint development of top-down and bottom-up since both contribute directly to the successful comprehension of the text:

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<sup>9</sup> Abisamra, 2007

<sup>10</sup> Phil's EFL Support Site for English Language Teachers studying for masters or diplomas.

### **1-Pre-reading Phase**

In this step, the learners have to be motivated and attracted to read the text by:

- Introducing and stimulating interest in the topic;
- Motivating them by providing a reason for reading;
- Providing language preparation for the text.

### **2-While-reading Phase**

In this phase, the learners read the text and work on:

- Clarifying content and vocabulary of the text;
- Understanding the writer's purpose;
- Understanding the structure of the text;

### **3-Post-reading Phase**

The final stage has the purpose of:

- Consolidating and reflecting upon what has been read;
- Relating the text to the student's own knowledge/interest/views;
- Providing a stimulus for other language activities;

Over the years, different researchers and educators argued that no single approach to teaching reading is fundamentally superior. A combination of approaches is seen more effective and suitable. The type of activities for developing the reading skills and strategies when combining these three approaches are: *preview/predict/anticipate*, *scanning/skimming*, *comprehension questions* ("wh" questions), *jigsaw reading* (jumbled and reorder), *information transfer* (draw diagram/map/plan, complete a table), *directions/instructions* (follow directions, complete a task, arrange something...), *cloze*, *disappearing lexis*, *reference identification* (pronouns, anaphoric, cataphoric), *inference*, *write headlines*, *write/complete summaries*, *make/complete notes* (tree diagram, mind maps), and *integrated skills activities* (oral summary, text paraphrasing, rewriting in own words...).

## **4- Approaches to Teach Writing Skills**

It is argued that writing is a difficult process that any language learner should master to achieve language proficiency. Teaching the writing skill involves many researchers' curiosity and motivation to work on and find a suitable approach. Writing has its own rules and conventions. Writing could be taught through three main approaches (product-based, genre-based and process-based) according to the aim traced at the beginning of learning to write.

### **4-1-Product-Based Approach**

This approach to writing emphasizes the final product the learners present to the teacher. It focuses mainly the grammatical features and structures and correctness of the writing piece. It considers writing as an individual task and focuses on the correctness of the writing product, i.e. it is an approach applied for achieving the linguistic accuracy without any context or social extent. The purpose of writing, then, is only for evaluation. This makes the learners without any ability or competency to “produce” a piece of writing outside classroom or in other contexts.

In teaching through the product approach, writing instruction begins with controlled writing exercises and gradually move towards freer writing once the learner has memorized the underlying models he/she is intended to follow. It is considered as an attempt to mimic a model in which there is more predictable outcome. The learners study first a model, manipulate its components and then produce a parallel text. The product-based approach to writing focuses on the end result of the act of composition. The final piece has to submit to some features as readability, grammatically correct and obey-discourse conventions relating to the main points and supporting details.

Richards<sup>11</sup> argues that the product-focused approach to writing sustains that writing is taught through guided practice in producing the various kinds of texts. According to the same author, the following features are the basis of the product-based approach (ibid): Learners are evaluated for having specific product which links between writing needs as how to write an essay, a report,

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<sup>11</sup>Richards (1985:329) cited in: Qi HongYing & Zhang Xuzhong, *Teaching Writing with Comparison-Contrast Approach*. Page 2 [www.celea.org.cn/.../QingHongying&ZhangXuzhong](http://www.celea.org.cn/.../QingHongying&ZhangXuzhong)



letters...etc; Students should learn how to recognize different kinds of rhetorical patterns used in particular kinds of writing (e.g. Differences between descriptive and narrative writings), different ways to organize information in paragraphs, and formats used to present information in different text types; These samples should supply models for different kinds of writing; The procedure of writing has to be taught from handwriting, capitalization, punctuation and spelling; Grammatical skills have to be considerably emphasized; The learners follow the models provided for the purpose of avoiding errors. The following are activities used and adopted in the product-based approach: Fill in the gaps; complete sentences; Transform tenses or personal pronouns.

#### **4-2-Genre-Based approach**

In this approach, writing is seen as a social act that combines both form and functions. It helps the learner writers to write in different ways for different purposes. It falls into narrative, descriptive and persuasive texts, as it is argued *“the genre-based approach [...] attempts to teach the learners the “moves” of a genre and to raise awareness of the linguistic features associated with the moves as a way to overcome learners’ difficulties in writing appropriately and effectively”*<sup>12</sup>. In other words, the genre-based approach helps the learners to recognize features and principles of one genre at time as each genre controls a set of communicative purposes within certain social situations. Knowledge of language is closely related to a social purpose. Thus, the focus is more on the reader rather than on the writer.

Hammond and Derwianka<sup>13</sup> provide a definition to the genre-focused approach to writing instruction as *“the way to language and literacy education that combines an understanding of genre and genre teaching together in the writing class”*. The aim of writing in this approach is integrating the knowledge of particular genre and its communicative purpose. Learners are guided to write their written pieces to communicate to others in the same discourse community

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<sup>12</sup> [Ict/intimal.edu.my/.../2B-02-Paper%2092 \(Malaysia\).doc](http://ict.intimal.edu.my/.../2B-02-Paper%2092%20(Malaysia).doc)

<sup>13</sup> Derwianka (2001) [www.journal.au.edu/abac\\_journal/.../01\(1-9\)\\_article01.pdf](http://www.journal.au.edu/abac_journal/.../01(1-9)_article01.pdf)

successfully. Badger and White<sup>14</sup> share the same view that “*a genre-based writing reflects a particular purpose of a social situation and allows students to acquire writing skills consciously by imitation and analysis of each writing genre*”. The learners are supposed to produce essays after studying each genre by highlighting its features and principles.

#### **4-3-Process-Based Approach**

Writing is conceived as a constructed cognitive act. That is to say, it focuses the creative process the learners undergo, the role of the learner in writing and the social aspects of writing (students’ identities, disciplinary conventions and social context). It puts emphasis mainly on what the writers do as they write and not on the textual features.

The learners are supposed to ask questions and create meaning in attempts to put down ideas into paper. Thus, there is less or no predictable outcome. The learners are expected to study the task-requirements, communicate as much as possible, study a model if necessary, or obtain advice from peers and/or teacher. Finally, redraft to have a final product which is a phase among others in the process-based approach. This latter empowers learners with<sup>15</sup>: Enabling them to make precise choices about the guidelines of their writing; Providing formative feedback during the process of each student’s compositions; Helping them to develop their critical thinking and not depend on teacher’s help; Encouraging them to assume bigger responsibility for making their enhancements; It helps the learners through the process procedures, to develop more effective ways of conveying meaning and to better comprehend the ideas they want to express; It is a writer-centred approach;

The process-focused approach has many stages that the learner writer has to follow along the act of writing<sup>16</sup>: prewriting, planning, drafting, reflecting, pair/group review, revision, writing the final product, presentation, correction and evaluation. In **Prewriting** Activity, many things happen as the choice of the topic, generation of ideas, collection of data and brainstorming.

**Planning** is the step where the learners organize and choose the important ideas and information

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<sup>14</sup> Badger and White (2000) cited in [www.journal.au.edu/abac\\_journal/.../01\(1-9\)\\_article01.pdf](http://www.journal.au.edu/abac_journal/.../01(1-9)_article01.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> [www.yementimes.com/article.shtm/?...](http://www.yementimes.com/article.shtm/?...)

<sup>16</sup> Cited in: *approaches to teaching writing*. [www.rochester.edu/Warner/faculty/curry/.../TAWChap2](http://www.rochester.edu/Warner/faculty/curry/.../TAWChap2)

and listing them. **Drafting** is the initial writing draft. The writing piece focuses mainly on the point of development, organization and elaboration of ideas for the future text. **Reflection** is when the learners come back to their draft and read it to add or omit ideas and details. At the **Pair/Group review**, each group of writers exchanges drafts with others to get more information, correction and opinion. This is done in order to get feedback from authentic readers. In the **Revision** phase, the learners have to make further developing and clarifying ideas and pay attention to the structure and organization of the text. At **Writing the Final Product** step, the learners are supposed to produce a well-organized and structured piece of writing with correct grammar and language. After writing the final product, the pupils present orally the work. This **Presentation** stage is optional although essential in the learning process. After presenting the work orally (if there is an oral presentation), the learners give the writing product to the teacher who evaluates and corrects the oral presentation and the written work according to specific criteria and reward the learners (**Correction and Evaluation** stage).

Generally, the writers do not follow all the steps of the process writing in a linear way. They tend to omit some of them according to their writing proficiency level. The process approach to teaching writing is based on the view that process writing helps the learners to develop organization as well as meaning, to invest different self strategies, to be cooperative, work in pairs and groups and try to get a better writing piece.

From the review, we can see that the priority in teaching skills increasingly shifts towards process and integration in learning. Moreover, what matters is not the mechanical process of presentation, practice and production that marks even textbooks supposedly inspired from the communicative, but the mastery of language and social skills, a mastery that dictates another process known as the three Ts: Teach, Test and re-Teach. Mastery learning supposes correction and evaluation as an internal cognitive process that is student-centered. It is related to the importance of the quality education in the modern world.

In real world, we tend to integrate two or more skills in one situation. Therefore, materials provided in a language textbook should concentrate this integration so as to make the learners use the language in an effective way and transport it in real-world without difficulty. Cunningsworth sustains that *“being able to communicate effectively in English means being proficient in the various language skills involved in the communication process”*<sup>17</sup>. He adds *“most communicative interactions through language involve the use of more than one ‘skill’”* (ibid: 20). This means that learners need to acquire different strategies related to the four skills as these are crucial and interrelated in any given communication or interaction hence should be taught in an integrative approach. The integration of the four language skills can be realized by tasks as note taking, dictation, reading aloud, participating in a conversation, taking a telephone message and many others.

## **2-Method and materials**

This section deals with the materials to analyze and the method to follow in the analysis. The materials are the Algerian and Tunisian English language textbooks of the last year secondary education. In the analysis, we focus our intention on the four language skills: listening; speaking; reading and writing. However, each skill is discussed in isolation though the two textbooks and the syllabuses they rely on advocate the integration of skills.

The listening and reading skills are analyzed in terms of tasks and activities, teaching approaches and authenticity of texts. The teaching approaches are provided in the literature review of this chapter. The tasks are analyzed in relation to the types provided in the syllabuses which focus on communicative purposes. The authenticity is related to the texts as well as to the tasks. In their analysis, we refer to Freda Mishan<sup>18</sup> work on task-based and authentic materials. Concerning the speaking and writing skills, they are analyzed according to the types of tasks and activities

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<sup>17</sup> Cited in Cunningsworth; 1984:43

<sup>18</sup> Freda Mishan; 2005

provided to its teaching with reference to the approaches discussed in the review. We also intend to analyze the types of texts the learners are asked to produce.

### 3-Results and discussion

#### Introduction

The purpose of this section is to analyze each language skill, its presentation, organization and related activities and tasks provided in both textbooks. The analysis will lead us to compare and contrast these skills in terms of the competency-based approach principles. We will discuss each language skill in isolation.

#### 1-Listening

Listening courses generally aim at the comprehension of the listening selection and at the acquisition of listening skills and strategies. Accordingly, the textbooks provide listening materials for both comprehension and acquisition purposes. *New Prospects* as much as *Skills for Life* listening materials and teaching approaches comply with the bases of the competency-based approach on which the two textbooks are based. Although differences in the material presentation and in the means are noted, the purpose is the same. Listening in the Algerian textbook is presented clearly through a three-step way (pre-, while-, and after listening). This three-step presentation is implicit in the Tunisian textbook and replaced by the blend “**into**” as it is argued in the teacher’s book “*the label ‘into’ replaces the traditional divisions of the lesson into **pre**, **while** and **post** main skill stages. Lessons used to be divided into a pre-listening stage, followed by the while-listening stage which would lead to a post-listening stage devoted to writing or a speaking activity*”<sup>19</sup>. This means that both textbooks use similar basis in listening lesson structure though the organization is different. As far as the texts are concerned, they are authentic in both textbooks since they are extracted from materials as novels and newspapers. The tasks and activities proposed are diverse and different.

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<sup>19</sup> Cited in the Tunisian teacher’s book; 2008: 8

*New Prospects* listening lessons are of two kinds **listen and consider** and **listening and speaking**. The **listen and consider** section is mainly related to the teaching of the grammatical structures, vocabulary items and pronunciation features. It starts with a listening activity that aims at making the students listen intently to a selection by showing a particular focus to the features to study. This type of listening is meant “*to help the student develop an ability to listen for a purpose*”<sup>20</sup>. The listening task in this section starts with **Getting started** that is intended to activate the learner’s background knowledge and then listen to the passage in the phase **Let’s hear it** that includes a number of activities. The “listen and consider” section is followed by other activities related to the study of language components. The **listening and speaking** section is divided into four main rubrics through which learners go from understanding to producing. **Before listening** stage intends to prepare the learners to understand, by predicting, content through a set of questions and to activate their prior knowledge and make hypotheses. **As you listen** helps the learners to check their hypotheses. **After listening** helps the students to give significance to and shape the selection. “**Saying it in writing**” builds in the learners confidence through production and reinvestment. As a sample, we take the listening lessons of all units. We arrange the activities in the following table. This intends to help us to know whether the two textbooks give importance to the comprehension of the listening selections provided and to the development of the listening skills and strategies in the Algerian textbook:

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<sup>20</sup> Algerian teacher’s guide p.63

Top-down processing (comprehension)	Bottom-up processing (comprehension)	Acquisition processing (skills and strategies acquisition)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Question/answer ( page 32, p. 93, p. 123, p. 152, n°2 p. 153)</li> <li>• Predicting/infering (n° 1 p. 33, n° 1 p.94, n°1 P. 153, n°2 p. 184)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selecting (n° 3 P.33, n°1 p. 62)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Table completion (n°2P.33,taskp.34,n°1p.94)</li> <li>• Preparation of an oral account, dialogue (p.34, p.63, n°4 p. 94, task p.125, p.127, n°1 p. 154, n°2 p. 154, p. 155 )</li> <li>• Discussion/debate (p. 61, n° p.62, n°1 p.64, p. 183)</li> <li>• Paraphrasing(n°2p.124)</li> </ul>

Table n° 4: **Evaluation of the listening activities in *New Prospects***

The table 4 shows that the acquisition approach to teaching listening in the Algerian textbook dominates with some use of top-down and bottom-up processing (comprehension). This means that the textbook gives importance to the comprehension of the listening texts and the acquisition of the listening skills and strategies. In other words *New Prospects* provides listening teaching materials for comprehension (top-down and bottom-up approaches) and for acquisition. The learners are led to listen, comprehend, internalize and construct, expand and reinvest knowledge on the basis of what they have understood. Hence, the learners produce, construct, create, build and reuse knowledge as required by the CBA objectives and principles. As an example of these latter, the activity n°3 page 33 asks the kind of questions that lead the learners to think and reinvest knowledge:

*Listen again to the same lecture and select from the box below the four terms that best describe the qualities of the people who developed the civilization represented in the map on page 32. Justify your choice.*

It engages the learners in the process of making decisions, arguing and justifying. This process leads them to a deeper understanding of the listening passage and thus develop their thinking and analytical skills. We also find in the “**listen and consider**” section listening activities

which vary from top-down (sentence order n°2 p. 16) to acquisition (note taking n° 1 p. 16). This section is a means for teaching the linguistic system rather than developing listening skills and strategies. However, the learners acquire the strategy to listen for a purpose.

The listening texts in *Skills for Life* are used as a source of information and linguistic content and serve as “facilitator” for production in which the learner is led to construct knowledge and learn how to reinvest it in a range of real-life situations<sup>21</sup>. Listening appears in two skills integration (speaking into listening, listening into speaking). The lessons consist of listening to texts (which can be a song, a passage, or a dialogue) and answer questions. All the lessons are structured in the same way (appendix No 3 page iii). When listening is the first skill of the blend, it is organized as follows:

- Questions and activities (phase 1);
- Listening to a text and activities (phase 2);
- Listening activities and related Speaking activities (phase 3);

The first phase intends to help the students use their background knowledge and personal experiences related to the lesson topic (n°1 p. 97). In the second phase, the learners listen to a selection and perform tasks (n°2, n°3 and n°4 p. 97/8). The last phase engages the learners in discussions and debates, in which they argue, explain and justify. This means that the organization of listening lessons highlights the three-step lesson structure: pre-, while and after listening. When listening is the second skill of the integration, it is organized into two sections which are structured as follows:

- Listening to part 1/part 2 and answer different questions;
- Activities engaging learners in discussions and debates, language functions activities (grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary).

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<sup>21</sup> : Skills for Life : 2008 : 3



The learners listen to the first/second part of the selection and do the activities assigned. This step follows a speaking lesson where the learners are supposed to get familiarize with the topic. Therefore, the speaking lesson is considered as the first phase (pre-listening) of the listening lesson. The activities after the listening selection engage the learners in different tasks, discussions and debates. The organization, then, of listening lessons when listening is the second skill of the blend is:

- Pre-listening phase (speaking lesson, from 1 to 4 p. 54/55);
- While listening and activities (n°1 p. 55, n° a p. 56);
- After listening phase (n°2, 3, 4 p. 55, n° b, c p. 56).

We present the activities in the following table according to the three listening teaching approaches discussed in the review of the literature section of this chapter for the purpose of checking which approach is adopted or dominated. The textbook covers four units with one to two listening lessons each. Thus, we rely on all listening lessons. The classification of the activities intends to help us to check whether the textbook gives importance to comprehension as well as to skills and strategies development:

<b>Top-down processing (comprehension)</b>	<b>Bottom-up processing (comprehension)</b>	<b>Acquisition processing (skills and strategies acquisition)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inferring/predicting (n°2 p.55, n°1 p.71, n°1 p.97).</li> <li>• True/false activities ( n°1p.70)</li> <li>• Question/answer (n° 2 p.71, n°3 p.71, n°5 p.71)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple choice (n°3 p. 55)</li> <li>• Identification tasks (n° b p. 56)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circle what you hear (n° 1 p.55, n° a p. 56)</li> <li>• Listen/complete table (n°4 p. 55, n° 2 p.70,)</li> <li>• Paraphrase (n° c p. 56)</li> <li>• Complete a selection (n°3 p. 70, n°2 p. 97)</li> <li>• Discussion/debate (n° 4 P. 71, n°5, n° 6 p.98)</li> </ul>

Table n° 5: **Evaluation of the listening activities in *Skills for Life***

It follows from the table 5 that the acquisition approach to teaching listening is the dominant one without a total rejection of the comprehension processing (top-down and bottom-up). This means that the learners practise comprehension and spend most of the listening lesson in

restructuring and reinvesting what they understand and comprehend. In fact, the learners do not need to spend much time in comprehension since the activities provided by the acquisition approach also have the aim of deepening their understanding of the selection and thus develop indirectly comprehension strategies. As an example, the activity n°c page 56 requires a paraphrasing work which needs comprehension as well as acquisition. The activity n°2 page 70 “*listen and complete the following table*” helps the learners to make a difference between what is provided in the hotel and what “*Marion*” has in her package. Thus, the activity involves information transferring, activating of knowledge and note taking, and so the learners understand more the vocabulary of the text. The activity n° 3 page 70: “*complete the following sentence with an adjective from the listening*” leads to a deeper understanding of the listening passage.

*Skills for Life* is dominated by the acquisition approach to the teaching of the listening skill without rejecting the comprehension approaches which are crucial for building meaning. This approach helps the learners to create, reconstruct, imagine, give opinions, reinvest, analyze and discuss. These are among the principles and aims of the CBA concerning the kind of citizens it aims to form. Therefore, the listening teaching approach and its materials in *Skills for Life* and objectives are in conformity with those of the competency-based approach as the Algerian textbook is.

It is argued<sup>22</sup> that “*a typical lesson in current teaching materials involves a three part sequence consisting of pre-listening, while listening, and post listening and contains activities that link bottom-up and top-down listening*”. The pre-listening phase consists of activities which prepare the learners (for both bottom-up and top-down) and by activating prior knowledge, making predictions and reviewing key vocabulary. This stage is present in all the listening lessons of both textbooks (*Skills for Life*: **in groups** page 54, **in groups** page 70, **n°1** page 97, **in pairs** page 147, **in pairs** page 198, **in pairs** page 222. *New Prospects*: **before listening** page 32, page 61, page 93,

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<sup>22</sup> By Field 1998 cited in Richards 2008 :10

page 123, page 152, page 183). We notice that the number of the listening lessons in both textbooks is the same (6).

The “while listening” phase aims at listening for purpose (gist or detail) and check, confirm or reject the already made expectations and hypotheses. This phase is generally done through a top-down processing. This stage is present in both textbooks (*Skills for Life*: **listen** page 55, **section 1** page 70, **section 2** page 71, **n°2/ n° 3** page 97, **n°4** page 98, **listen to section 1/listen to section 2** page 148, **n°1/n°2** page 199/200, **listening** page 223. *New Prospects*: **as you listen** page 33, page 62, page 94, page 124/125, page 153, page 184/185).

The “post-listening” phase reinforces comprehension and rise different opinions, and discussions about the topic. This last stage is considered as an extending and deepening of comprehension as well as developing abilities and skills (acquisition: ‘savoir-faire’). It is also provided in both manuals (*Skills for Life*: **a/b/c** page 56, **n°4/n°5** page 71, **n°5/n°6** page 98, **n°3/n°4/n°5/n°6** page 149, **answer these questions** page 200/201, **answer the following questions** page 224. *New Prospects*: **after listening** page 34, page 63, page 94/95, page 125/126, page 154, page 185/186/187). The kind of activities provided in this phase guide the learners in a process of discussing and debating, justifying and arguing. This last phase of the listening lesson generally links between listening and speaking or writing tasks, thus offers opportunities for the learners to notice and learn how language is used in different communicative contexts<sup>23</sup>, hence an integration of skills.

The texts used for the teaching of listening are authentic in both textbooks. They are taken from different materials as newspapers, encyclopaedias, novels, magazines, songs, ads, internet and poems<sup>24</sup>. These materials are not designed for teaching purposes. This means that these materials are taken from real life situations. This makes them authentic and leads the learners to consider

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<sup>23</sup> Richards; 2008:18

<sup>24</sup> According to Mishan’s arguments, 2005

different language meanings in different contexts and situations. Mishan 2005 argues that these kinds of materials are cultural products and a crucial resource in teaching a foreign language.

The tasks provided in both textbooks to teach and practise the listening skills are varied and diverse. In general, they are arranged under three stages **pre**, **while** to **after** listening. Each stage includes a set of different types of listening questions and activities. There are similarities and differences underlying listening in both textbooks. There are listening activities adopted for the teaching of pronunciation (4 p. 28, p. 57, p. 81, 1 p. 111, 3 p. 112, 2 p. 119 in *New Prospects* and 1 p. 57, 2 p. 58 in *Skills for Life*) and for the sake of teaching listening (ask and answer (1 p. 33, 1/2 p. 76 in *New Prospects* and 2 p. 71, 1/4 p. 200, 7 p. 223 in *Skills for Life*), listen and select (3 p. 33, 1 p. 62, 1 p. 153, 5 p. 185 in *New Prospects* and 3 p. 148, 2 p. 58, 4 p. 71, 5 p. 71 in *Skills for Life*)). Most of the tasks proposed in both textbooks are not similar. The Algerian textbook provides tasks as taking notes (1 p. 16), true or false questions (3 p. 16, 1 p. 94, and 1 p. 108), reading aloud (4 p. 28, 2 p. 88, 2 p. 119), answer/ask questions (1 p. 33, 2 p. 137, 2 p. 153), select and justify (3 p. 33, 1 p. 62, task p. 124, 1 p. 153, 5 p. 185), filling the gaps/table (p. 47, 1 p. 16), listen and check (b p. 125, 2 p. 184, 4 p. 184), sentence ordering (1 p. 137, 1 p. 167, 1 p. 184) and song listening in order to take a break (p. 73, p. 105, p. 134, p. 164, p. 195). While *Skills for Life* provides activities as circle the words you hear (1 p. 55, 2 p. 55, a p. 56, 2 p. 148, a p. 200, 1 p. 245), multiple choice questions (3 p. 55, 4 p. 148, 3 p. 148, 5 p. 223, 5 p. 224), filling the gaps/table (4 p. 55, 2 p. 70, 3 p. 70, 2 p. 97, 4 p. 98, 1 p. 148, b p. 200, 8 p. 223, p. 224), identify/guess the meaning (b p. 56n, 1 p. 97, 2 p. 223, p. 245), paraphrase (c p. 56), sentence match/combination (3 p. 97 1 p. 199), listening for pronunciation (1 p. 57 2 p. 58), ask and answer (p. 70, 2 p. 71, 1-4 p. 200, 5-8 p. 201, 1-4 p. 223, 7 p. 223), listen and correct (1 p. 70, 1 p. 148, a-c p. 224), select/choose (3 p. 148), listing (3 p. 71) and discuss/justify (4 p. 71, 5 p. 71, 5 p. 98, 6 p. 98, p. 147/8, 3-6 p. 149, 5 p. 245). Therefore, the kinds of listening activities adopted in both textbooks are mostly different. Listening is generally related to speaking.

## 2-Speaking

It is argued that it is through speaking that people measure their ability to communicate in a foreign language. Teaching speaking involves the teaching of its three dimensions (interaction, transaction and performance). In what follows, we will try to show whether these three interdependent skills are implemented in the Algerian textbook as well as in the Tunisian one and whether the implementation fits the bases of the CBA. The analysis shows that both textbooks give importance to the teaching of speaking skills and developing different speaking strategies in different contexts and situations.

On the one side, speaking in *New Prospects* is present in almost all lessons. However, it is emphasized in the section “listening and speaking”. Speaking is generally presented through discussions by asking and answering questions. Learners are supposed to speak with accuracy and appropriateness<sup>25</sup>. Speaking activities have to be accomplished by the learners for different purposes in different situations. Each section of each unit ends with a speaking or writing task. Thus, the learners are provided with more opportunity in order to use English orally as well as in writing.

In the table below, we analyse the types of speaking activities in *New Prospects* according to the three speaking teaching approaches (interaction, transaction and performance). The tasks are taken from all the speaking lessons in the textbook:

Interaction talk tasks	Transaction talks tasks	Performance talk tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Task p. 63</li><li>• N° 1 p. 64</li><li>• N° 1/2/3/4/5 P. 93</li><li>• N) 1/2/3/4/5/6 p. 123</li><li>• P. 183</li><li>• Task 125</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Before listening p. 32</li><li>• Task p. 34</li><li>• N° 2 p. 96</li><li>• Task p. 125</li><li>• N°2 p. 184</li><li>• N°1 p. 185</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• N° 4 p. 94</li><li>• A p. 125</li><li>• Say it in writing p. 127</li><li>• Task p. 185</li><li>• N° 3 P. 187</li></ul>

Table n° 6: **Evaluation of the speaking activities in *New Prospects***

The table 6 shows a balance in the use of the speaking skills. Learners need to create and maintain a social relationship, exchange information with English speakers and talk in front people.

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<sup>25</sup> Algerian teacher's guide 2007:63

Therefore, learners have the same opportunities in the learning of each kind of speaking skills and strategies.

Most of the speaking activities of *New Prospects* involve more than one type of talk. As an instance, the task page 63 says:

*With your partner, prepare a short dialogue asking for and giving opinion about ethics in business-agree or disagree with your partner's opinions.*

It involves an interaction between two learners which is based on a social problem and a transaction of information based on learners' different opinions. The activity 3 page 187 involves transaction and performance talks as it announces it:

*Compare your answers to task 2 on the previous page with those of your partner. Then discuss the following questions...*

The activity involves an exchange of information (transaction) about rules of a public statement and thus helps the learners to prepare a public statement efficiently by having unconsciously internalized its rules and conventions.

Speaking activities in the **listen and consider** and **read and consider** sections discuss mainly linguistic aspects (grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation). **Getting started** task page 15 involves an interaction and exchange about different ancient civilizations. **Getting started** tasks page 21, page 113 involve similarly interaction and exchange talks about Algeria's seven world heritage sites. In all **Getting started** activities of both sections, interaction and transaction talks are taught. We also find performance activities n°2 page 108 in the "listen and consider" section which requires an oral summary of an interview (the task is completed by the students).

Teaching of interactional and transactional talks is also provided in the **research and report** section. Activity 1 page 60 involves a discussion about social phenomenon "fraud" by exchanging information about fraud in England, America and Algeria. The discussion occurs after a research and collection of needed information about the subject. N° 2 page 60 has the same purpose with a different subject. Finally, there are oral presentations (performance talk) made by students in

individual or group works. The activity n°3 page 92 involves a classroom presentation of a homepage of a lycée prepared by individuals. Furthermore, all the project works provided in the textbook are concluded with a classroom oral presentation which leads to discussion. This develops mainly performance skills and strategies with, in some way, transaction and interaction ones.

On the other side, speaking in *Skills for Life* is almost present in all the lessons if we consider the number of speaking lessons per unit (6 lessons for unit1, 6 for unit2, 3 for unit3, and 6 for unit 4) with the fact that there are nine lessons per unit. Speaking is organized through different skills integration (speaking into listening, speaking into reading, speaking into writing, and reading into speaking). The speaking lessons under all the blends are organized in the same way:

- In groups/in pairs (from 1 to 3 p. 37, from 1 to 6 p. 41, n°4 p. 42, p.54, p. 56, p. 98).

The Tunisian pupils are supposed to interact and construct knowledge orally, use English in different situations and apply oral language rules (pronunciation, appropriateness, structures, vocabulary) as it is stated in the syllabus on which the textbook is based. In the following table, we will consider the speaking materials and activities provided in the six lessons of the first unit of the book, according to the three approaches of speaking (interaction, transaction and performance):

Interaction talk activities	Transaction talk activities	Performance talk activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In groups p. 37</li> <li>• In pairs p. 37</li> <li>• In pairs p. 41</li> <li>• N° 7 p. 42</li> <li>• In groups p. 49/50</li> <li>• B and C p. 51</li> <li>• In groups p. 54/55</li> <li>• In pairs p. 64</li> <li>• In groups p. 68</li> <li>• In groups p. 70</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizing text type (n° 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 p. 38)</li> <li>• N° 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 p. 61</li> <li>• N° 6 p. 62</li> <li>• N°1, 3 p. 64</li> <li>• N° 1, 2, 3 p. 65</li> <li>• N° 4, 5, 6, 7 p. 66</li> <li>• B p. 68</li> <li>• N° 4, 5 p. 69</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report to the classroom the work p. 37</li> <li>• C p. 51</li> <li>• Develop your speaking skill p. 63</li> </ul>

Table n° 7: Evaluation of the speaking activities in *Skills for Life*

It seems that the designers of *Skills for Life* emphasize the three speaking skills (interaction, transaction and performance) with a domination of both interaction and transaction talks that the

learners need more in learning English. This means that the designers of the coursebook offers materials to teach the students how to exchange information, interact, engage and maintain social relationships with English people as well as English learners, as it is the case of *New Prospects*.

We also find activities which develop integratively two or three of the speaking skills (interactional, transactional and performance) at the same time. For example, in the **“In groups”**-1, 2, 3 activities page 37; learners are supposed to interact (interaction skills) about British and Tunisian summer preferences and to exchange some information (transactional skills) on these preferences. **“In pairs”**-2 page 37 is an activity involving a social interaction (discussion about holidays) and a kind of performance since one learner is supposed to take the floor and speak about the type of holiday he/she prefers, gives his/her reasons and justify his/her sayings. The activities numbered from 1 to 5 page 38 have a transactional aim but help the learners to identify some aspects of an oral report (performance skills). N°2 page 38 *“is the information given orally? Justify your answer”* is a task which leads the learners to recognize the opening statement of an oral report (performance and interaction and transaction skills). The activity C page 51 asks the students to prepare a poster, then present it, exchange information and discuss. The task **develop your speaking skill** page 63 asks the students to give/exchange information and to perform a planned guided walking tour for visitors. This activity involves performance skills (presenting the place to the visitors with arguments) and transactional skills (answering the visitors’ questions and giving information). The activity n° 2 page 64 is interactional and transactional like the activity **“In groups”** page 68.

This means that the three speaking skills are interdependent because it is difficult to separate them when speaking. Hence, the learners are required to master them. Given that the interactional, transactional and performance speaking skills, strategies and approaches are present in *Skills for Life* and in an interdependent way, the textbook responds to the needs of and complies with the principles of the CBA which states that the learners should interact, exchange information and



know how to speak before and to address a public. The speaking materials and objectives of *Skills for Life* as *New Prospects* rely on the competency-based approach. The difference exists in the organization of materials.

The types of oral productions required from the learners to produce are diverse in both textbooks. They are asked to describe, argue and justify, debate, narrate, and report. Speaking is an important skill in both textbooks. This is why there is a diversity of tasks and activities in both of them. What is attractive is that the types of tasks and activities adopted in both textbooks to teach the speaking skill are similar. We find acting and role play (2 p. 20, 4 p. 112, 1 p. 154, 4 p. 171, 3 p. 176 in *New Prospects* and 2 p. 84, 2 p. 89, 3 p. 231, 2 p. 84, p. 98, p. 110, p. 172, 1/2 p. 231 in *Skills for Life*), discussing/debating and justifying (2 p. 26, 2 p. 88, 3 p. 119, 5 p. 120, 3 p. 122, 5 p. 125, 3 p. 33, 1 p. 46, 2 p. 62 in *New Prospects* and p. 37, 3/5 p. 41, 7 p. 42, p. 49, 1 p. 54, 2 p. 64 in *Skills for Life*), explaining (2 p. 46, 2 p. 68, 2 p. 83, 2 p. 110, 3 p. 159 in *New Prospects* and 3 p. 94, 5 p. 194, 2 p. 209, a p. 222, 3 p. 211 in *Skills for Life*), preparing an oral work (p. 20, p. 34, p. 52, p. 63, p. 125, 2 p. 154, 2 p. 168 in *New Prospects* and p. 63 in *Skills for Life*), singing a song (p. 73, p. 105, p. 134 in *New Prospects* and p. 53, p. 58 in *Skills for Life*), answer questions (p. 15, p. 21, 2 p. 25, p. 32, 3 p. 55, 1 p. 84, 1 p. 76, 1 p. 100, 2 p. 137, 2 p. 191 in *New Prospects* and a, b p. 68, 1/6 p. 70, 1, 2 p. 142, 3/5 p. 230 in *Skills for Life*). In addition to these, the Tunisian coursebook provides other activities related to the teaching of the speaking skills and strategies. As instances of these, we find filling the gaps (1 p. 37, 3 p. 64), translation to the mother tongue L1 (1 p. 41), paraphrasing/rephrasing (2 p. 41, 4 p. 95, 2 p. 142), comparing (5 p. 69, 2 p. 103, 5 p. 105, 2 p. 194), information transfer (4 p. 69), sentence combination (1 p. 88, 1 p. 93, 1 p. 193, 2 p. 199), classification (1 p. 64, 3 p. 68), describing (3 p. 222) and word association (6 p. 41, 1 p. 94, 2 p. 193). Therefore, all the speaking activities that are provided in the Algerian textbook are also provided in the Tunisian textbook. However, the latter offers other activities than those provided in

the Algerian textbook. This means that the variation of tasks and activities is richer in the Tunisian textbook.

Consequently, there is a difference in the organization of speaking materials between *New Prospects* and *Skills for Life*. The aims of teaching speaking in both textbooks are similar but the way followed to reach these aims is different. Both apply the bases of the competency-based approach in teaching and learning the speaking skill but in different ways. However, the essential element the learners need is mastery (in some way) of the three types of talks and this is what is provided in both manuals. As far as the speaking tasks and activities are concerned, there is a difference that advantages the Tunisian textbook since it supplies the learners with more tasks and activities than the Algerian one.

### **3-Reading**

Reading is an important skill in language teaching, especially in a school year as the last year of secondary education which is expected to end with a national examination. Here, we intend to analyse the reading skill through the activities provided in both textbooks. The analysis of reading in both textbooks shows a closer relationship with the interactive approach. Therefore, the latter is adopted in both textbooks since it is considered as the suitable approach for teaching reading under the competency-based approach. Both textbooks end the reading lessons with writing practice which is in some way a means to deepen and enlarge comprehension and knowledge construction.

Reading in *New Prospects* as well as in *Skills for Life* is presented through the three stages (pre-, while and post-reading) process of the interactive approach. The Algerian textbook grants the teaching of reading interactively as the Tunisian book makes. That is, the teaching of reading in both textbooks meets the needs and objectives of the competency-based approach. The first phase of the reading lessons in both textbooks provides individual, pair and/or group activities and the last section provides several and varied activities. The main difference is the fact that *New Prospects*

provides tasks to perform while the learners read in all lessons whereas in *Skills for Life*, this kind of tasks is rare.

On the one side, reading lessons in *New Prospects* are of two sorts and each sort has one way of organization. The “read and consider” is similar to the section “listen and consider” of listening except the fact that in this section the learners read a text instead of listening to it. **Getting started** is the first stage intended to activate the information the students already know about the topic. **Taking a closer look** involves the reading of a text and related activities. A third stage is followed in which the analysis of grammar structures, vocabulary and pronunciation patterns are the basis (language form). The “reading and writing” section is organized under three explicit stages: “before reading”, “as you read” and “after reading”. Through these lessons and steps, the learners are guided to develop different reading sub-skills and strategies, construct knowledge and relate the texts to real life situations and contexts.

### **a-Before Reading**

The students would first activate the knowledge they already acquired in order to make predictions and guesses about the topic<sup>26</sup>. All the “before reading” steps contain a set of questions and activities related to the topic of the text. The activities can be individual (1, 2, 3, and 4 page 36, 1, 2 and 3 page 156), in pairs or in groups (“before reading” page 128). The learners are given a set of questions to answer (1, 2, 3 and 4 page 36, 1, 2 and 3 page 188...), diagrams to analyze or paragraphs followed by questions (“before reading” page 97/98, “before reading page” 156), questions to be discussed in pairs or in groups (1, 2, 3 and 4 page 65, “before reading” page 128...).

### **b-While Reading**

In this stage, we find texts to read, questions and tasks to complete while reading. The tasks generally turn around skimming (1 page 37, 3 page 39, 1 page 66, 1 page 98), scanning (task page 39, 2 page 66, 2 page 99), checking predictions and guesses made in the “before reading” part (1

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<sup>26</sup> Algerian teacher’s guide: page 68

page 157). This means that the learners should read and reread the text many times in order to answer the questions.

### **c-After Reading**

This stage is concerned with tasks and activities to carry out after reading. They vary in type from sentence re-ordering (3 page 68, 2 page 101), explanations (2 page 68), word/sentence matching (1 page 68), identification (1page 40 ), questions and discussions (1page 100, 2 page 130, task page 159, 1 page 190, 2 page 191), inferences (1 page 159 ), summary writing (2 page 40), to writing something related to the text ( 1 page 130, 3 page 192) while there is no comprehension question in this step.

In *New Prospects*, we find a rubric “**read and consider**” in which there are texts and activities which have for purpose the teaching of language structures, vocabulary items, pronunciation and spelling patterns. In this rubric, we find comprehension questions (“taking a closer look” page 21, page 54, 1, 2 page 83, 1 page 113, 2 page 142...). Grammar activities (“grammar explorer” III page 56, 1 page 84, 1 page 85, 1 page 86, 1 page 116...), vocabulary activities (“vocabulary explorer” 1 page 57, 1 page 87, 1, 2 page 118, 1 page 147...), pronunciation and spelling activities (1, 4 page 28, page 57, 1, 2 page 88, 1 page 119...). The structure of listening task in “listen and consider” and the structure of the reading task in “read and consider” shares strong similarities with the model task proposed by Willis<sup>27</sup>. The task according to Willis is divided into three stages. The pre-task concerns the introduction of the topic and task. It corresponds to the phase “getting started”. The task cycle deals with the task, planning and report. In this stage, the learners should be exposed to language samples in order to focus on the form intended to study. It corresponds to “let’s hear it” and “taking a closer look”. The third stage “language focus” deals with an analysis and practice of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. It corresponds to the phase

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<sup>27</sup> Willis (1996) cited in Skehan Peter ; 1998 :127

“around the text” coming after “let’s hear it” and “taking a closer look”. Therefore, the Algerian textbook is task-based.

The reading texts in *Skills for Life* are used by the learners for information and linguistic content<sup>28</sup>. The learner is led to read and develop reading skills and strategies integratively with the three other skills in the way: “speaking into reading”, “reading into writing” and “reading into speaking”. Reading is presented through texts which are preceded and followed by questions and tasks. The questions before the texts are used as brainstorming or means for activating the learners’ background knowledge and attracting their attention. These questions function as a **pre-reading phase**. The presentation of reading materials differs according to the skills blend. In other words, when reading is the first skill of the skills blend (**reading into...**), it is presented differently from when it is the second skill of the blend (**...into reading**).

We begin by analyzing reading within the blend “**reading into speaking**”. Reading leads the learners to construct meaning and prepare them for the speaking section. Reading is presented in the following way:

- Individual/pair/group activities;
- A text for reading;
- Questions and activities on the text read.

The first phase involves a set of activities and discussions which turn around the text topic. Through these activities, the learners activate their background knowledge and think about related themes and personal experiences. This linking would facilitate the process of making predictions about what follows.

### **a-Individual Activities**

This type of activities involves no sharing and no cooperation or collaborative learning. The students perform them on their own. Each learner works on the activities before reading the text. The activities are varied: activity 1 page 47 is divided into two reading questions. The first “*fill in*

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<sup>28</sup> *Skills for Life* 2008 :3

*the table*” asks the learner to work on keywords written in bold type and complete the table. This section helps the students to identify the important features of the text to read later. In the second “*match the words in column A with their explanations in column B*”; the learners are invited to understand more the key words by matching them with suitable definitions. These two activities lead the students to approach the text with predictions and ideas about the topic and what would happen. Questions 2 and 3 (page 48) also have the same purpose of knowledge activation and preparation.

### **b-In Pairs Activities**

The learners work in pairs to solve the problem of the tasks. Thus they share, negotiate and collaborate. The questions in this section are discussed in pairs. The subject of the discussion is related to the text to read. These questions serve as a pre-reading phase followed by a reading selection. Questions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 (“in pairs” page 107) are supposed to engage the learners in a discussion which prepares them to read the text with easiness, ideas, predictions and motivation.

### **c-In Groups Activities**

This type involves activities to be performed in groups before reading the text. The learners negotiate, cooperate, discuss, share and collaborate. The purpose of this phase is the same as the “individual” and “in pairs” activities. The activities 1 and 2 (“in groups” page 168) discuss topics treated in groups. The discussions lead to choice making, decisions making and debating.

The second phase “**a text for reading**” generally includes texts the learners have to read in order to confirm some expectations and predictions, construct meaning and build linguistic content. The text is sometimes accompanied by activities to perform while reading (activities from 6 to 10 page 50).

The third phase is related to the different activities to perform after reading the text. The activities turn around the text as comprehension questions and expanding activities. After reading questions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 (page 48) are comprehension questions and the question 6 (page 48) is an

expanding one which engages the learners into another subject matter (grammar) as the question puts it: “*what’s specific about the gifts? Pick out an adjective describing them. How many parts is this adjective made up of?*”. After reading activities 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 (page 108) are diverse in types. There are table completion activities (2 page 108), comprehension questions (1 and 3 page 108) and “find, identify and pick out” activities (4, 5, 6 and 7 page 108). The activity 8 (page 108) relates reading to writing “*paraphrase this statement...*” and the activity 9 (page 108) relates reading to grammar. This means that to use reading for grammar purposes “*choose the adjective that best fits the statement...*”. After reading activities B (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8) and C (1, 2, 3 and 4) page 170 are varied from comprehension activities (B: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6/C: 1, 2 page 170), reading aloud for pronunciation purposes (B: 7 page 170) and discussion and extending tasks (B:8, C: 3, 4 page 170).

This means that the reading lesson in the blend “reading into speaking” is subdivided into the three steps (pre-, while and post reading) of the interactive approach to teaching reading, although the steps are not clearly stated. In other words, the structure of the reading lesson is implicit and when dividing the steps, we get the following:

1. Pre-reading phase:
  - Question/activities (individual/in pairs/in groups);
  - Discussions;
2. Reading/as you read/while reading:
  - Text for reading;
  - Sometimes questions and activities;
3. After reading:
  - Activities related to reading;
  - Expanding questions/discussions/debates;
  - Grammar/writing and speaking related activities.

Another argument which points out this structure of the reading lesson is the citation “*the label ‘into’ replaces the traditional divisions of the lesson into pre, while and post main skill*

*stages. Lessons used to be divided into a pre-reading stage, followed by the while-reading stage which would lead to a post-reading stage devoted to writing or a speaking activity”*<sup>29</sup>

We now move to the analysis of reading under the skills blend “**speaking into reading**”. Reading in this blend is the second skill. Thus, speaking is used as a preparation to and knowledge activation for the reading lesson. Reading in this placement of the skills blend is a means to develop self reading strategies and skills. Reading texts and activities (reading lessons in general) come after speaking lessons. That is to say, the latter is used as a pre-reading activity which helps the learners to activate their knowledge about the topic and relate it to their personal experiences (e.g. “in pairs” page 41/42) as it is argued in the Tunisian teacher’s book “*one skill leads to another with the first meant to activate the learner’s knowledge of the world, to help him/her relate to it in a personal way as to guarantee a greater involvement and a deeper interest in the issue at hand. The first skill activities serve as a stepping stone to the second skill in focus*” (page 8). In the reading lessons under this blend, we find:

1. Questions and activities (pre-reading);
2. Texts for reading (while reading);
3. Questions and activities (after reading).

The first phase, in addition to the speaking lesson, is concerned with different questions and activities intended to activate the learner’s background knowledge regarding the text topic. It helps them to make guesses, predictions and expectations, attracts and interests them for the while reading step (“in pairs” page 42, “in pairs” page 88/98, “in pairs” page 93, activity 1 page 94). The first phase is followed by a text (while reading) in which the learners engage in a process of comprehension, meaning construction, responding questions and confirming their expectations and predictions. The text is followed by a set of activities (post reading phase). The after reading activities are varied and diverse. We find table/diagram completion activities (1 page 43, 6 page 90...), word/sentence matching (6 page 44, 3 page 65...), word definition/explanation (5 page 43, 7

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<sup>29</sup> Tunisian teacher’s book; 2008: 8



page 44, 7 page 90...) true/false statements (2 page 43...). This lesson structure goes along with the three-step reading structure under the interactive approach (pre-, while and post-reading).

The last blend in which reading appears in *Skills for Life* is **reading into writing**. Reading is used in this skill integration as an activator of the learners' knowledge of the world and a preparation for the writing lesson. Reading in this blend resembles reading in "speaking into reading" and "reading into speaking". The reading lesson (e.g. Lesson page 74/75) through the blend "reading into writing" is structured as follows:

1. before reading questions and activities;
2. text for reading;
3. After reading activities and.

The lesson (page 74/5) as those discussed above contains a "while reading" phase that constitutes only the text while other lessons as the lesson (page 77/81) includes in the "while reading" step an activity (1 page 81) which is intended to be performed as the students read (it says: *read and take notes*) and the lesson (page 118/120) in which there are while reading activities (2 page 118, 3 page 120).

From this analysis, we arrived to the point that reading with all its aspects and blends, is provided in *Skills for Life* through the three-step lesson structure (pre-, while and post-reading). These steps characterize the process involved in teaching of reading through the interactive approach. This latter is believed to be a process which combines textual information with the information brings by the readers to the text. In view of that the learners use top-down and bottom-up skills in the process of reading, what is written and what the learners know about the subject are essential features. Therefore, *Skills for Life* makes the teaching of reading possible through the interactive approach, with bottom-up and top-down processing, which meets the needs of the CBA concerning teaching the reading skill. CBA in this respect is argued to teach reading interactively by

involving an interaction between the information of the text and the background knowledge of the learner about the topic, related subjects and personal experiences.

The texts used for the teaching of reading are authentic in both textbooks. They are taken from different materials as newspapers, encyclopaedias, novels, magazines, songs, ads, internet and poems. These materials are not designed for teaching purposes. This means that these materials are taken from real life situations. This makes them authentic and leads the learners to discover different language meaning in different contexts and situations. Mishan<sup>30</sup> argues that these kinds of materials are cultural products and a crucial resource in teaching a foreign language.

Reading in both textbooks can be arranged under three main stages (**pre, while and post reading**). The analysis of the tasks and activities shows that there is a variety in the kinds of reading tasks and activities adopted in both textbooks and the majority of them are similar: discussion (1 p. 100, 2 p. 113, 1 p. 116, 2 p. 159, 1 p. 190, 2 p.191 in *New Prospects* and 1 p. 38, 1/4 p. 42, 1 p. 61, 1/2 p. 65, 3 p. 89, 4p.101 in *Skills for Life*), skimming (1 p. 37, 3 p. 39, 1 p. 66, 1 p.98 in *New Prospects* and 2 p. 143, 1 p. 205, 1 p. 236 in *Skills for Life*), scanning (task p39, 2 p.66, 2 p.99 in *New Prospects* and 5 p. 120 in *Skills for Life*), filling the gaps (1 p. 85, 1 p. 86, 3 p.111, 1 p. 129 in *New Prospects* and 1 p. 43, 2 p. 78, 1 p. 80, 2 p. 126, 4 p. 137 in *Skills for Life*), identification (1 p. 118 in *New Prospects* and 5 p. 108, 2 p. 116, 3 p. 162 in *Sills for Life*), answer questions (p. 36, p. 53, p. 82, 3 p. 142 in *New Prospects* and 4 p. 120, 2 p. 164, 4 p. 127, 7 p. 153, 2 p. 202 in *Skills for Life*), true or false questions (p. 21, 1 p. 113 in *New Prospects* and 2 p. 43, 6 p. 49 in *Skills for Life*), reference (5 p. 39, 1 p. 68, 3 p. 113 in *New Prospects* and 4 p. 43, 5 p. 206, 2 p. 218, 5 p. 228 in *Skills for Life*), sentence order (3 p. 68, 2 p. 101 in *New Prospects* and 1 p. 156 in *Skills for Life*), sentence combination (3 p. 39, 3 p. 67, 2 p. 98 in *New Prospects* and 6 p. 44, 10 p. 50/1, 3 p. 80 in *Skills for Life*), explaining in one's word (1 p. 68, 2 p. 83, 3 p. 159 in *New Prospects* and 7 p. 44, 3 p. 48, 9 p. 50, 4 p. 95 in *Skills for Life*), reading aloud for the teaching of pronunciation (4 p. 28, 2

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<sup>30</sup> Mishan ; 2005

p. 88, 2 p. 119 in *New Prospects* and 1 p. 99, 1 p. 117, 4 p. 141, 3 p. 184 in *Skills for Life*) and making a choice/select (2 p. 39, 1 p. 40, 3 p. 192 in *New Prospects* and 1 p. 74, 5 p. 90, 9 p. 108 in *Skills for Life*). In addition to these, both textbooks offer other activities related to reading which are not provided in the other. We find in the Algerian textbook activities as inference (2 p. 158, 1 p. 159) and summarizing (2 p. 40). The Tunisian textbook, on the other hand, provides activities such as multiple choice questions (p. 40, 3 p. 60, 2 p. 115), information transfer (4 p. 103), definitions/synonyms (5 p. 43, 2 p. 48, 2 p. 89), paragraph writing (5 p. 137, 2 p. 151), sentence completion (1 p. 89, 2 p. 118, 3 p. 214), dictionary use and note taking (3 p. 52, 7 p. 75, 4 p. 137). Therefore, there are similarities and differences in the kinds of reading tasks provided in both textbooks. However, what is important is the fact that both textbooks arrange the teaching of reading under the three stages of a task of the interactive approach. Reading is related to writing.

#### **4-Writing**

Writing is a crucial skill to master especially for the last level of secondary education which ends with a written final national exam (*baccalauréat*). The learners need to know to and how to write, recognize writing features, text types and genres in order to understand the text and make their writing clear, readable and comprehensible for the teacher correctors. Both textbooks adapted the process-genre approach to writing. This approach is a means to reach the objectives set by the competency-based approach on which the two textbooks are based. These objectives state that writing should be taught in a social context and the learners should know how to write (process) in a given communicative situation (genre) for the purpose of communication.

Writing in *New Prospects* is present in all lessons. However it is mainly focused in three sections “think, share, pair”, “research and report” and “writing development”. Teaching of writing aims at leading the students to produce a correct and readable writing piece in one particular genre<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> Algerian syllabus: 2007: 11

In the section “reading and writing”, “research and report” and “project outcomes”, writing is introduced under the heading “writing development”. The learners in these tasks are asked to write/produce different text types following the guidelines and steps provided to them (story writing: page 40/41, policy statement page 69/70, expository article page 101/102, letters page 130/131, newspaper article page 160/161, review article page 192...). The writing activities propose to the learners to write different types of texts (different genres) through the steps of process writing. Here, we list these steps<sup>32</sup>:

1. **Jot down ideas about** the story using the cycle of episodes below...
2. **Select ideas** from your cycle of episodes and **start writing your draft** narrative. **Don’t pay attention to mistakes at this stage;**
3. **Check whether your ideas are developed coherently. Then review your story for grammar and spelling mistakes;**
4. **Exchange drafts with your partner for error checking;**
5. **Hand your revised version of the story to your teacher.**

Writing, therefore, in the “reading and writing” section is taught through the process-genre approach regarding the steps (process) and the different text types (genre). Other writing activities are offered in the “listening and speaking” section under the heading “say it in writing” and in the “listen and consider” and “read and consider” rubrics under the heading “think, pair, share”.

In “Say it in writing” activity, learners are asked to produce a piece of writing after listening and speaking lessons (discussion) (page 34/35, page 64; page 95/96, page 127, page 155 and page 187). The learners are asked to produce a historical account (page 34/34), argumentative texts (page 64, page 127, and page 155), descriptive writing (page 95/96), and a public statement (page 187). These writing pieces are supposed to be presented orally in the classroom. The learners, when performing the activity, are required to follow steps as *“list, select, organize, exchange drafts and write a final version”* in order to write different types of texts (narration, argumentation, description). Therefore, this writing activity is also taught through a process-genre approach.

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<sup>32</sup> *New Prospects*: 2007: 41 under “writing development” section

In the “think, pair, share” rubric, the learners are led to reinvest in writing or speaking what is acquired before<sup>33</sup>. The pupils work on preparing oral talks which would be written at the end (page 20), expository essays (page 29, page 119, page 141 and page 149), public statements (page 52), opinion articles (page 58), poems (task1 page 81), checklists (task 2 page 81), letters (page 89), free-writing (page 112), argumentation (page 155), letter advice (page 172), newspaper articles (page 180). The genre approach is adopted in the “think, pair, share” activities by following the steps of process writing. The steps followed in the realization of this kind of activities are listed below (*New Prospects*; 2007:29):

1. **Work individually. Select three ideas** from the thesis statement in the essay structure below;
2. **Jot down details about the ideas you have selected using a network tree;**
3. **Write a first draft essay** using the structure provided above. Then **exchange drafts with your partner for error checking;**
4. **Write a revised version and share your ideas with your class.**

The mentioned steps are those provided by the process-based approach to teaching writing.

In the following table, we will analyze the writing activities in the whole textbook in terms of the three writing teaching approaches. The following analysis would help us to attest our sayings:

<b>Product-based approach</b>	<b>Genre-based approach</b>	<b>Process-based approach</b>
Sentence re-ordering (n°2 p.101)	-Talk/public statement preparation (p.20, p. 52, p.69/70, p.112) -Expository essay (p.29, p. 31, 1,2 p.60) -Historical account (p.34/34) -Summary (p.40/41) -Opinion article (p.58) -Argumentative text (p.64, p.127) -Poems (task 1 p.81) -Recommendations (task2p.81,n°2 p.122) -Letters(p.89/90,p.172) -Homepage (p.92) -Description (p95/6) -Advertisement article (n°1 p130, writing development p.130) -ID card(n°1 p.151) -Newspaper article (p.160, p.180) -Review article(p.192) -Prediction essay (p.149)	P.20, P. 29, P. 31, P. 34/35, P. 40/41 P. 52, P. 58 N° 1; 2 p.60, P.64/P. 69 P 81, P. 89/90 P. 95/96, P. 101, P. 112 P. 119/120, N°2 p. 122 P. 127, P. 130/131 P. 141/P.149 P. 155/ P. 151 P. 160, P. 172, P. 180/P. 187, P. 192

Table n° 8: **Evaluation of the writing activities in *New Prospects***

<sup>33</sup> *New Prospects*; 2007: v

The table 8 shows a variation of activities concerning the genre to which the learners are faced as well as the steps and strategies undertaken to produce the different genres.

Writing in *Skills for Life* is present in almost all lessons and units though with simple questions such as summarizing and paraphrasing. It is generally presented in the skills blend “speaking into writing” and “reading into writing”. Writing in these blends helps the learners to be autonomous, to develop their creativity and to reinvest the knowledge they already constructed into real life situations. It is highlighted under the heading “develop your writing skills”. The learners are given tasks to perform in order to produce a piece of writing.

We start by analysing writing lessons under the skills blend “speaking into writing”. Writing is introduced under the heading “develop your writing skill” (page 39). In this task, the learners are asked to write for the sake of description. The activity n°1 page 39 tells the students to write a postcard by describing a landscape and their feelings about it. The second activity n°2 page 39 tells them to write a paragraph which compares two described types of holidays. The descriptions are provided in a table. The lesson “speaking into writing” is the first and the unique lesson of the first unit.

“Reading into writing” lessons are several in the textbook and provided in each unit more than one time. Writing is presented under the heading “develop your writing skill” with varied types of writings (a biography page 76, a summary page 81, 122, 159, 244, a letter page 102, 166, 234, imitation of a model page 155, 234, poems page 204, postcards 220...). The question in this kind of lessons is clear “*write...*” and sometimes is followed or preceded by “*...follow the steps...*”

We find writing activities in all other skills blend (“develop your writing skill page 66 in the blend “speaking into reading”, n° 2 page 72 in the blend “speaking into listening”. The analysis of the activities would tell us which approach to teaching writing is adopted or dominated:

Product-based approach	Genre-based approach	Process-based approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paraphrasing (n° 2 p. 41, c p. 56? 6 p. 153)</li> <li>• Paragraph ordering (n° 5 P. 137)</li> <li>• Paragraph completion (n° 5 P. 152)</li> <li>• Sentence/summary completion (n° 5 p. 157, D p. 177)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing a descriptive text (n° 1 P. 39, n° 2 p. 39, p.220, 3 p. 222)</li> <li>• Demanding information (p.66)</li> <li>• Expository text (p. 76, p. 166)</li> <li>• Narrative text/summary (p. 81, 1 p) 155</li> <li>• Complaining letters (p. 102)</li> <li>• Argumentative text (p. 181)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N° 2p. 39</li> <li>• P. 66</li> <li>• P. 76</li> <li>• P. 81</li> <li>• P.102</li> <li>• P. 122</li> <li>• N° 5 p. 137</li> <li>• P. 159</li> <li>• P. 166</li> <li>• P. 181</li> <li>• P. 234</li> <li>• P. 244</li> <li>• P. 247</li> </ul>

Table n°9: **Evaluation of the writing activities in *Skills for Life***

The above table shows an inclination to the process approach with asking the students to write about different genres (description: n° 2 page 39, argumentation: page 181, exposition: page 76). This leads us to proclaim that writing in *Skills for Life* is taught through a combination of genre and process approaches. It is entitled the **process-genre** approach.

The writing lesson “writing as a process” page 180/181 has the purpose to refresh the steps of process writing and help the learners to appropriately apply them. This doesn’t mean that it is until unit 3 lesson 9 that the students are in first contact with the process approach. This is a remembering and a reinforcing lesson. Most of the writing activities proposed in the textbook do not show or list any writing step. The teacher is supposed to explain them at the beginning of the year and at the beginning of each writing lesson or activity as it is argued in the teacher’s book: “*teachers are kindly requested to devote a whole session to developing the writing skill as stated in the tasks included in the book and raising students’ awareness to the different steps of the writing process*” (page 9). These steps are given in the teacher’s book (ibid):

1. generating ideas;
2. planning and organizing the ideas;
3. writing the first draft;
4. sharing and responding (peer review);
5. Revising and editing; 6. Writing the final draft.

The difference between the process writing steps in both handbooks is in the fact that the Algerian textbook addresses the pupils by using the imperative mode (jot down, select, start, pay attention, check, review, exchange, and hand) whereas the Tunisian teacher's book addresses the teachers, thus lists them in general.

Consequently writing in *Skills for Life* is process-based and genre-based. It is taught through the different steps of the process referred to above with applying different types of texts (descriptive, narrative, argumentative, expository...). The process-genre approach to teaching writing, as stated by authors like Badger and White<sup>34</sup>, helps the learners to develop writing skills and strategies in different social situations and contexts. This purpose is, indeed, in conformity with the competency-based teaching writing purposes. We also find project works which are intended to be written.

The writing skill is also manifested in both textbooks through project works. *Skills for Life* offers two project works. The first is provided in the first unit (page 67) and the second in the second unit (page 123) while *New Prospects* contains a project work ending each unit-6 (page 42, page 71, page 103, page 162 and page 193). This makes Algerian learners have more opportunity to write hence strengthen their writing skills and strategies. *New Prospects* comprises a section entitled "research and report" in which the learners execute research required and write down the results. Each unit contains this kind of activity (p31, p60, p92, p122, p151, p182). This rubric resembles the "webquest" rubric in "*Skills for Life*" in which learners undertake research and report their findings to the classroom. This section is included in few lessons of the Tunisian handbook (page 39, page 96, page 123, page 155, and page 172). The text types provided in both textbooks are in someway similar. Reading and writing text types are: Summaries; Articles; Different types of letters; Argumentation; Description; Expository texts; Storytelling. The steps of the writing process are clear and listed in each writing activity of "*New Prospects*"; however, this does not prevent the

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<sup>34</sup> Badger and White (2000) cited in [www.journal.au.edu/abac\\_journal/.../01\(1-9\)\\_article01.pdf](http://www.journal.au.edu/abac_journal/.../01(1-9)_article01.pdf)



teaching of process writing in the Tunisian textbook. In addition, there is a variation of text genre, in both coursebooks, which would make the learners write in different situations for different purposes

On the subject of punctuation which is an important factor in the process of writing, *Skills for Life*, shows less interest to its teaching. It provides only two elements of punctuation. On the one hand, the rules of using comma under the “punctuation Focus” rubric page 101. On the other hand, an activity (n°4 page 252) in the unit “check your language and skills 2” which deals with a paragraph to punctuate. Conversely, *New Prospects* offers full explanations on the use and the rules of the different punctuation symbols at the end of the textbook. The learners are endowed with ample clarifications on punctuation however no task intended to practise it is supplied. It is apparent that punctuation is not given so much importance in both textbooks although it is an essential language component which helps to understand and produce comprehensible written texts. Lack of punctuation leads readers to do not identify the meaning and ideas of the writer in a right way. Nevertheless, Algerian students have more opportunity to learn the punctuation system than the Tunisians.

The organization and implementation of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in the two textbooks are noticeably different despite that *New Prospects* and *Skills for Life* focus their English teaching on these skills. Both of them present situations for skills integration. In *New Prospects*, it is revealed through the word mark “**and**”. The combination is of two sorts: speaking **and** listening, reading **and** writing. The integration of skills is supported more in *Skills for Life*; in which the integration is shown with the label “**into**” through which the first skill leads to the second. There are combinations of two skills in this way: speaking **into** reading, speaking **into** writing, speaking **into** listening, reading **into** writing, reading **into** speaking and listening **into** speaking.

In *New Prospects*, the emphasis is merely on aural-oral skills and on written skills which are presented in the second part of each unit (speaking and listening, reading and writing). These two sequences help the learners to practise the language skills. In fact, the first parts of the units provide materials merely for language aspects instruction (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation). This means that the first unit part integrates different linguistic aspects and abilities while the second emphasizes the practice of the four language skills and strategies. This shows the appliance of their titles; the first part is identified as “language outcomes” and the second as “skills and strategies outcomes” in the syllabus. The technological skills and intercultural dimension are developed along with the language skills and aspects.

In *Skills for life*, the integration is of three varieties: oral skills integration (speaking into listening and listening into speaking), written skills integration (reading into writing), and oral and written skills integration (speaking into reading, speaking into writing and reading into speaking). In each skills-blend lesson, the practice and the association of two or more language skills take place along with other language aspects (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, technological skills and intercultural components). In other words, in *Skills for Life*, the skills and language aspects are organised and practised as parts or sections of the same lesson where each leads to and practised through another. Therefore, the lessons of the Tunisian textbook rely more on the task proposed by Willis. The lessons are structured in three steps: pre-task, task-cycle and language focus. Therefore, it is a task-based textbook.

The teaching of language skills is not arranged in isolated skill teaching in both textbooks. The skills are presented and meant to be taught in an integrative approach. Most of the tasks and activities proposed in both textbooks involve the teaching and learning of more than one skill. The best example is the project work which involves first reading (sometimes listening), gathering information, negotiating, collaborating, information sharing, speaking (whenever there is an oral presentation) and writing. All this is integrated and used with the appropriate words, structures,

notions, functions, pronunciation and punctuation. The following examples which are taken from the Algerian textbook show the integration of two or more skills. the task 3 page 33 involves listening and speaking; the task page 39 involves reading and speaking; 2 page 40 deals with reading and writing; page 52 contains a task involving reading (n°1), speaking (n°2) and writing (n°4); and page 47 contains a task involving listening and writing. The following examples which are taken from the Tunisian textbook show the integration of two or more skills. The task 1 page 39 involves reading, writing and speaking; 3 page 48 involves reading and writing; C page 56 involves listening and writing; 6 page 62 involves reading and speaking and 4 page 71 involves listening and speaking. Therefore, both textbooks integrate the four language skills.

As far as the types of writing activities are concerned, there are resemblances in both textbooks. However, the procedure is different. The Algerian textbook arranges the teaching of writing mainly through the steps of process writing. This is very obvious. The other types (rewrite, order, summarize) are adopted when the purpose is not basically writing. Conversely, the Tunisian textbook does not endow the learners with enough tasks intending to teach writing and develop writing skills and strategies. Most of the tasks provided are adopted for the sake of teaching writing and language aspects as grammar. Therefore, in the Algerian textbook, we find whole writing lessons under the different steps of the process approach in which the learners write first a draft (2 p. 20, 3 p. 29, 2 p. 41, 3 p. 52, 2 p.64) and then write a final version (4 p. 20, 4 p. 29, 5 p. 41, 4 p. 52, 3 p. 64), as we find filling the gaps (1 p. 23, 3 p. 24, 1 p. 179), note taking (1 p. 129), write a report/summary to the class (2 p. 40, 2 p. 49, 2 p. 603, p. 192), and rewriting/ordering (3 p. 19, 2 p. 33, 3 p. 39, 1 p. 49). Whereas, in the Tunisian textbook, we find rewriting (3 p. 233), paraphrasing/rephrasing/say it in other words (2 p. 41, 2 p. 95, 4 p. 95, 8 p. 108, 5 p. 162, 3 p. 240), paragraph writing for language aspects teaching (2 p. 39, 2 p. 72, 3 p. 161), write a report/summary to the class (1 p. 39, p. 63, p. 85, p. 128, p. 181), sentence completion (3 p. 70, 5 p. 114, 5 p. 152, d p. 177), note taking (p. 195), paragraph punctuating (2.185), model imitating (p. 155), information

transfer (3 p. 72). Therefore, it is clear that there are more types of activities related to writing in the Tunisian textbook. Thus, the way of teaching writing is different but the aim is the same. It is to teach process writing through different genres.

## **Conclusion**

The chapter results show similarities concerning the approaches adopted to teach the language skills. Listening is mainly taught by the acquisition approach in both textbooks. However, the bottom-up and top-down approaches are not totally rejected. The speaking skill is taught from its three angles (interaction, transaction and performance) though the emphasis is different in both textbooks. Reading, in both textbooks, is trained under the interactive approach though with different presentation and organization. Writing follows the process-genre approach in both textbooks so as to help the learners to develop different writing skills and strategies in different communicative contexts. Concerning the types of tasks and activities devoted to the teaching of each skill, it is obvious that there are similarities and differences. The analysis of the tasks and activities devoted to each skill shows that there are similarities as well as differences in the kinds of tasks and activities undertaken by the two textbooks' designers. Thus, we find that listening practice is different in both textbooks as only three types are similar. Concerning speaking, there are similarities but the Tunisian textbook provides more speaking activities. The reading activities are varied in both textbooks and most of them are similar. As for the writing activities, they are different. The Algerian textbook stresses more the teaching of writing through processed procedure than the Tunisian textbook. However, the Tunisian one offers more varied activities, thus, gives the learners a change that leads to a higher motivation. Writing is taught through the process-genre approach. Therefore, both textbooks provide varied materials for the teaching of the four language skills. Each skill is taught under a teaching approach that responds to the CBA requirements. The activities are diverse in both textbooks.

The fact that the language skills are taught in the structure **pre- while** and **after** especially listening and reading in both textbooks shows the importance given to the development of cognitive skills in the learners. As Skehan<sup>35</sup> makes it clear when saying that a task is the one that is performed through three main stages (pre, while and post) and that helps to develop high-order and cognitive skills in the learners. These skills help them to analyze, interact, judge and argue. In the next chapter, we shall see how the teaching of the four traditional skills are integrated and supplemented with other materials, and assessed.

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<sup>35</sup> Skehan; 2001

## **Chapter Four: Supporting Teaching Materials in *New Prospects and Skills for Life***

### **Introduction**

After the analysis of the two textbooks in terms of language content and skills, we move our focus to other teaching materials and aids that promote the teaching as well as the learning process. Therefore, this chapter intends to discuss the ICT integration in the two textbooks, the adoption of project works that are essential for the development of the learners' socio-psychological skills. We also intend to analyse the structure of the units and lessons that plays an important role in the teaching and learning processes as organization and presentation of materials are essential. Finally, we work on the supporting materials provided in and for each textbook that play a central role in the process of teaching and learning and the types of tasks provided in both textbooks. In the analysis, we analyze and discuss each criterion in isolation. This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section deals with the ICT in the two textbooks. The second section discusses the project work task in the textbook. The third section deals with the structure of the units and lessons in the textbook. The last section discusses the types of activities and their authenticity.

### **1-Information Communication Technology (ICT) in Foreign Language Teaching**

The use of computer in a language classroom is a research method that helps the learners to get and gather information, to develop research strategies and to be in contact with the new technologies. According to Beatty K.<sup>1</sup> *“the learning and computer use in language learning improve the learners' language”*. She also argues that learning a foreign language through computer can be used in classrooms both as a reward for better learners and a remedial aid for weaker ones. The purpose of using internet technology and computing strategies in foreign language teaching/learning is to help the learners develop their critical thinking in that language and to acquire the skill of transfer of what they learn in the classroom to different real world situations. In short, the technological skills help the learners to develop their thinking skills.

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<sup>1</sup> Beatty K. 2003:7

Learners use the new technology of internet in order to conduct research. This would help them to develop their thinking abilities, their oral and writing skills. The use of computer and research technology helps the learners to develop their creativity, thinking and transfer skills. Thus, it is important to use computer as a means in the teaching and learning processes in all fields and not only in scientific disciplines. The technological and computing skills help the learners to search for different information, develop their critical and analytical abilities. These skills also lead them to integrate knowledge in different disciplines. Therefore, it is important to include the teaching of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in FL Teaching.

The technological activities are not current in *New Prospects*, unlike *Skills for Life*. Skills and strategies of this kind are intended to be developed in the previous years as the authors argue “...the technological skills are intended to be less obtrusive. At this stage, most students are computer-literate. They will resort naturally to Internet search either on their own or following the occasional webliography given to them as an aid to the Research and Report and Project Outcomes Assignments”<sup>2</sup>. This year reinforces research skills of the learners without an explicit emphasis as it is argued in the Algerian syllabus:

*A l'issue de la 3<sup>e</sup> AS, l'élève aura déjà été familiarisé au fonctionnement de l'outil informatique et aura développé certaines **compétences d'ordre technologique** qui lui auront permis **d'intégrer les TICE** dans les activités de communication de la classe de langue. Ces pré-requis en TICE lui permettront de travailler dans un cadre pédagogique motivant. Les TICE devront être utilisées comme **moyens/outils** de communication, de documentation, de découverte, de simulation de rôles...*<sup>3</sup>

Concerning the ICT activities proposed in *New Prospects*, they are manifested in two sections “research and report” and “project outcomes”. The “research and report” rubric are activities, in which the learners make research, report the findings, interact and negotiate meaning. It is a procedure which prepares them for the realization of project works. In this activity, the learners are asked to search on internet (and/or in books) information about the topic and present the

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<sup>2</sup> *New Prospects*; 2007: vi

<sup>3</sup> The Algerian 3SE syllabus;2007: 13

product to the class. The themes of the tasks are related to the unit topic. For instances, the activity page 31 unit 1 deals with civilization as the title of the unit suggests “ancient civilizations”, task page 60 unit 2 discusses the theme of fraud and corruption under the unit title “ethics in business: fighting fraud and corruption”, task page 92 deals with designing a homepage for a lycée as the unit 3 suggests the study of “education in the world: comparing educational systems”, task page 122 unit 4 talks about food contents and health in the unit topic “advertisement, consumers and safety”, task page 151 unit 5 deals with the solar system as the unit works on “astronomy and the solar system” and task page 182 unit six deals with courage and pride in the unit dealing with attitudes, emotions and feelings. This type of tasks encourages the interdisciplinary teaching as well. The following examples show this kind of teaching. The activity “research and report” page 31 unit 1 asks the learners to:

*Carry out a research to fill in the spidergram below with relevant information. Then present your findings to the class. Enliven your spidergram by including pictures of achievements in Islamic civilization”.*

This task relates the English language to the civilization discipline. The activity “research and report” page 60 unit 2 provides two assignments to be performed. The first assignment tells them to:

*Carry out a research into the punishment meted out to people guilty of the frauds below in England, America and Algeria. Then compare and discuss the severity of the punishments for each of the frauds.*

The second assignment (question n° 1) requires from the pupils to:

*Choose two or three of the practices listed below and document yourself on the ethical issues they have raised in some foreign countries.*

The two tasks link English language to culture, civilization, society and its system.

“Research and report” page 92 unit 3 carries the aim of making the learners aware of the system and components of education in Algeria. It invites the learners to design a homepage for secondary school. The learners are led to know about the location of their school, the curriculum and objectives of studies, the exams and disciplines, to know about sports practised and extra-



curricular activities and to know about staff and parents-teachers association and its aims. This aims at motivating the learners by putting them in the centre.

“Research and report” page 122 unit 4 is composed of two assignments. The first assignment (question n°1) invites the students to:

*Choose three brands of processed food that you consume most (pasta, biscuits, yoghurts, etc.). Read their labels and make a note of their ingredients, additives, etc. in the comparative table below.*

This task aims at helping the learners to understand what are the healthier and essential rations. It makes the learners aware about good feeding habits in order to build up their health and physical condition. The second assignment deals with home safety and the question needs no web research.

“Research and report” page 151 unit 5 deals with four tasks requiring a web research. The first one asks the learners to:

*Make a short ID card of any one of the historic celebrities below for a ‘who’s who?’ class competition. Emphasize their respective contributions to astronomy.*

The second task entails the pupils to:

*Carry out a research into **solar and lunar eclipses** for a classroom presentation. Compare and contrast them using graphic representations.*

The task n° 3 invites them to make research in an encyclopaedia not on internet. The task n° 4 invites them to carry out a research by asking their ancestors. The aim of these tasks is to approach the physics discipline through the English language. Thus the first two tasks of this rubric integrate English language, history and physics.

“Research and report” page 182 unit 6 discusses social values and feelings. It asks the learners to design an FAQ (frequently asked questions) about values, feelings and attitudes as:

- Love (for one’s country/family/job...)
- Friendship, selfishness, hatred, anger dislike
- Honesty, generosity, kindness, jealousy, heroism, patriotism.

The example to follow by the students is provided in addition to the guidelines. There is another computer research activity in the textbook. It is for the sake of project works realization.

The designers provided sites that help the learners to find directly the information needed. “The project outcomes” section is present all along the units. The presentation and objectives of each project are provided at the end of each unit. Specific sites to use in order to conduct research on the topic are also made available. [www.civilization.ca](http://www.civilization.ca) , [www.historyforkids.org](http://www.historyforkids.org) are sites for finding information about civilization in the first project page 42 in unit 1. [www.careersandoccupations.com](http://www.careersandoccupations.com) , [www.theworldchallenge.co.uk](http://www.theworldchallenge.co.uk) are among the ones to visit for the realization of the project work page 71 in the second unit which deals with business, fraud and corruption. [www.meducation.edu.dz](http://www.meducation.edu.dz) , [www.espacefr-education.com](http://www.espacefr-education.com) are among those sites to use for the project n° 3 page 103 under the unit dealing with education in the world. <http://www.advertopedia.com/consumer-behavior-basics.htm> , [www.speedtv.com/speed/advertising](http://www.speedtv.com/speed/advertising) are sites to visit for the project work n° 4 page 132 in the unit dealing with advertisement and consumerism. [www.educationplanet.com](http://www.educationplanet.com), [www.kidastronomy.com](http://www.kidastronomy.com) , [www.earth.satellite.map](http://www.earth.satellite.map) are sites to use for research in the project work n° 5 page 162 in the unit which talks about astronomy and universe. [www.friendship.com](http://www.friendship.com), [www.kidsemotions.net](http://www.kidsemotions.net), [www.humour.com](http://www.humour.com) are sites for the project n° 6 page 193 dealing with feeling, attitudes and emotions. The websites are provided by the textbook designers in order to facilitate the process of information research and gain time as the learners would type the sites hence get all the information needed.

The technological skills in *Skills for Life* are underlined through the activity “webquest” which is almost present in all the units of the textbook. Webquest page 39 unit 1 invites the learners to:

*Access a search engine and type in the word ‘Seychelles’ to gather information about the geographical location, the languages spoken, the traditions and the people of Seychelles. Present it to your class when you are ready*

This activity asks the learners to type a name of a place in order to discover information about its people and their life style, thus to access to their culture. It has the aim to integrate the English language, civilization and geography disciplines in one activity. This task carries the same aim with

the Algerian “research and report” tasks (page 31 unit 1 and 1/2 page 60 unit 1). The webquest activity page 123 unit 2 solicits the learners to:

*Use the Google search engine. Type in the phrase ‘**expository texts**’ to see samples. Select the sample text you like best. **Try to produce a similar text which you will keep in your portfolio.***

This activity has the aim of working on a text type through internet. The learners are asked to make research and produce a text on the basis of that research. Therefore, English language and literature disciplines are integrated. The activity webquest page 138 unit 3 asks the learners to:

*Search for ‘robots’ and find out the latest inventions in the field. Choose a specific robot and gather information about it. Say out what you obtained and prepare a talk for your school technology club. Tell the audience how the robot functions and what it is used for.*

The learners in this activity work on technology and physics subject through English. Therefore, the task integrates English language, technology and physics disciplines. It shares the same aim with the Algerian “research and report” 1/2 page 151 unit 5. The activity webquest page 172 unit 3 requires from the learners to:

*Read the information in the box and choose a name or an invention to conduct a webquest which you will present to your class in the form of a poster.*

The activity integrates English language with history, technology and physics in one task. Therefore, it carries the same objective as the Algerian “research and report” 1/2 page 151 unit 5. This integration of disciplines is primarily required in the competency-based teaching (the need for interdisciplinary teaching).

There also are other works which need research on the web as the project works provided in the textbook. Project work n° 1 page 67 claims research on the web for information. The aim of this research is to carry information about different festivals and the regions where they take place and their differences. This is a linking of the English language with different cultures in which this festivity occur.

The learners also work on developing their writing skills on the computer through the writing of an E-mail page 66 under “develop your writing skill” rubric. The activity integrates a social event (festivals in Canada), writing skills and computing skills. Thus, the learners use technological strategies (E-mail) for writing about a social manifestation. There is a section page 138/139 unit 3 which is devoted to make the learners recognize internet and computer vocabulary. This latter intends to help them to search in a correct way and learn how to use the computer and the internet learning means. *Skills for Life* gives several opportunities for the learners to search on the web for different aims which help them develop their technological skills.

## **2-Project Work**

Project work is a group task in which learners work, gather information, share and discuss information, collaborate and negotiate. Thus, it is a suitable teaching means in the implementation of CBA, CLT as well as TBLT. Therefore, it should be present in both textbooks. The project works in *New Prospects*, unlike those provided in *Skills for Life*, are rich of tasks. These tasks can be done through different steps, and lead the learners to use different strategies and skills. The learners are required to write a product with correct language and structures and present it orally to the whole class.

*New Prospects* contains six main units with six project works. Each unit is based on a project work given at the beginning. It is presented in the classroom orally at the end. Finally it is given to the teacher for correction. These projects have the objective of developing socio-psychological skills in the learners, on the one hand, and each one carries a specific goal according to the unit theme and purpose, on the other hand.

The projects are divided into seven parts which are signalled one by one along the unit. At the top of the first page of each unit (appendix n°4 page iv), there are pictures related to and the title of the project work. This step is supposed to be the one in which the teacher introduces the theme, the objectives of and the strategies to follow in the realization of the project (e.g. page 14, page 45,

page 74, page 106, page 135, and page 165). *Brainstorming* is the step in which the learners work on the possible sources of information to adopt, the format and the content of the final product. This step is signalled in the units by the sign:



### **BRAINSTORMING**

Figure n° 4

The sign for the “brainstorming” step appears at the “listen and consider” section (page 15, page 46, page 75, page 107, page 136 and page 166). The third step is entitled “fact finding”. It is a step which could be completed outside the classroom. The learners are supposed to enquire where and how to get the needed information, list the strategies to use and the places they may visit. It is signalled with sign:



### **FACT FINDING**

Figure n°5

This sign appears always in the section “read and consider” of each unit (page 21, page 53, page 82, page 113, page 142 and page 173). “Organizing” is the stage where the learners are arranged in groups of five and devise the work into parts. It is done outside the classroom. It is signalled with the sign:



### **ORGANIZING**

Figure n°6

The step is supposed to be started at the sign given in the “research and report” section (page 31, page 60, page 92, page 122, page 151 and page 182). “Writing up” step can take place inside or outside the classroom. The learners gather in order to write the final product. They are helped by the teacher. The teacher usually plays the role of a soft monitor in order to help them use correct

English, correct grammatical structures, appropriate vocabulary, and focus their attention to important details. It is signalled as:



Figure n° 7

The sign is present in all the “listening and speaking” lessons (page 32, page 61, page 93, page 123, page 152 and page 183). The last step to be followed is “assessing”. The unit is supposed to end with an oral presentation of the final product. The learners elect a board of assessors (one student from each group) who select which is the best project. As a result the group of students who triumphs is offered the first prize. This step is manifested in the textbooks in the section “reading and writing” (page 36, page 65, page 97, page 128, page 156 and page 188) through the sign:



Figure n°8

The project work is manifested in the unit for the last time in the final page of each unit (appendix n°5 page v). Details, objectives, strategies to follow and develop, documents and websites to use are provided (page 42, page 71, page 103, page 132, page 162 and page 193) in this page. The information of the page is generally exploited throughout the different steps of the project work.

Project work n° 1 aims at exploring the rise and collapse of civilizations. Project n° 2 has the goal of demonstrating awareness of and ability to deal with ethics in business. Project n° 3 aims at increasing an understanding of educational systems in the world. Project n° 4 deals with the issues of consumption and safety in a modern society. Project n° 5 requires from the learners to explore the solar system and learn about astronomy. The last project work aims at exploring the realms of

feelings and humour. The themes and objectives of the project works follow the themes and objectives of the units respectively.

Conversely, *Skills for Life* contains four main units however not all of them carry a project work. Only the first two units include project works. The purpose of these projects is to foster students' autonomy and creativity beyond classroom, research strategies and socio-psychological skills<sup>4</sup>. In the project work n° 1 page 67, the pupils are required to make research on a known festival, describe it, make the others discover it and explain it to the class at the internet room. The project work can be completed individually or in groups. The learners are given an opportunity to learn how to describe an event (festival). Writing is not so important given that the work can be presented and explained at the internet room of the school. The learners use visuals to illustrate and describe the specific features of the festival (step 2 page 67). The group work is not specifically emphasised.

The second project work page 123 directs the students to work on different types of expository texts and related vocabulary provided in the manual. In this case, there also is no writing task and no group work. The purpose of the two project works is to know how to describe and know about different types of texts. There is no activity requiring from the students to write or transfer knowledge from classroom to outside or vice-versa except the research prepared through internet. This means that, there is less opportunity to acquire different writing strategies.

Writing is given paramount importance in *New Prospects* more than in *Skills for Life* concerning the project works, although writing is a crucial skill in both textbooks regarding the level of study. The level in question requires from the learners to master writing given that the final and national examination (*baccalauréat*) is in the written mode. As it is argued in both coursebooks:

*The fact that the 'baccalauréat' is exclusively in a written mode. (New Prospects; 2007: iv) and  
special emphasis has been laid on writing as a process to ensure a respectable mastery of the writing skill...to ensure proper training in writing with the hope that*

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<sup>4</sup> *Skills for Life*; 2008: 3

*marks in the Bac exam will improve thanks to this intensive training* (Tunisian teacher's book; 2008: 4).

The quotation given in the Tunisian teacher's book shows the importance of writing in this level however it is not practised or reinforced through the project works provided in the textbook unlike those provided in the Algerian textbook which lead the learners to apply and strengthen their writing skills and strategies. Project works are among the means which help the learners to acquire writing competence and writing strategies. This is why *New Prospects* offers enough projects for the learners.

Subsequently, the Tunisian textbook is not in a complete compliance with the requirements of the syllabus on which it is based regarding the implementation and adoption of project works. While the Algerian textbooks responds to the syllabus needs by adopting project works for each unit. Therefore, in this context, the two textbooks are different. The following is concerned with the way in which the lessons and units of each textbook are organized.

### **3-Unit and Lesson Structure in the Textbooks**

Penny Ur<sup>5</sup> argues that *"the lesson is a type of organized social event that occurs in virtually all cultures. Lessons in different places may vary in topic, time; place, atmosphere, methodology and materials, but they all, essentially, involve the participation of learner(s) and teachers(s) and are limited and pre-scheduled as regards time, place and membership"*. She adds that *"a varied lesson, besides being more interesting and pleasant for both teacher and learners, is also likely to cater for a wider range of learning styles and strategies, and may delay onset of fatigue by providing regular refreshing changes in the type of mental or physical activity demanded"* (ibid: 216). Therefore, a language lesson should contain all language components and skills put together and presented in context.

All the units in *New Prospects* are organized in the same way. Each unit contains two sequences. The first sequence contains two sections and the second sequence contains five sections.

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<sup>5</sup> Penny Ur; 1992: 213



At the end of each sequence, we find a time for relaxation and entertainment. The structure of the units can be presented in the following way:

1. Language outcomes;
  - Listen and consider;
  - Read and consider;Take a break
2. Skills and strategies outcomes;
  - Research and report;
  - Listening and speaking;
  - Reading and writing;
  - Project outcomes;Assessment  
Time for...

The first section of each unit is considered as a preview of the language objectives to be achieved at the end (the grammatical structures, vocabulary items, idioms and features of pronunciation are meant to be understood, used and practised)<sup>6</sup>. The last section of the units ends with a rubric which is devoted to writing as a process. All the units of the textbook deal with language outcomes (functions, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation), skills and strategies (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and learner's outcomes and intercultural outcomes (appendix n°6 page vi).

All the units of *Skills for Life* are organized in the same way. Each unit contains nine common core lessons and two or three lessons for Arts students; these are labelled session1, session2. The first lesson of each unit usually provides an introduction to the topic and a contextualized presentation of the major lexical items related to the topic and subtopics to be dealt with in the unit<sup>7</sup>. The ninth lesson of each unit is devoted to writing as a process. All the units deal with constructing meaning (listening and reading skills and strategies), communicating (speaking and writing skills and strategies), functions and linguistic components (grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation) (appendix n° 7page vii).

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<sup>6</sup> Algerian teacher's guide; 2007: 63

<sup>7</sup> Tunisian teacher's book 2008: 5

It is apparent that the structure of the units in the two textbooks is quite different. However what is attractive is the fact that the first lesson/section of the units in both textbooks has the same aim. It introduces the topic and the language components to be practised and mastered throughout the unit. The last lesson/section of the units in both textbooks is devoted to writing as a process. The fact that the structure of the units is different is a matter of social convenience, or just a choice between others. What is important is the fact that the two textbooks follow a similar pathway which leads to similar objectives in teaching the English language under the competency-based approach.

There is a difference in the structure of lessons in both textbooks. The organization of language aspects and skills is not similar though the lessons integrate different language skills and aspects. However, if we compare the first section of each unit in the Algerian textbook to the lessons of the Tunisian textbook, we find that they share resemblances with the model task proposed by Willis<sup>8</sup>. This means that both of these are structured in the way: *pre-task*, *task-cycle*, *language focus*. The difference is in the second section of the Algerian textbook that is devoted to the skills and strategies acquisition and pays no attention to the language components. This kind of section is not found in the Tunisian textbook as all the language aspects and skills are integrated in the same lesson.

*New Prospects* is designed in such a way that each section of a unit contains similar lesson structure with the corresponding sections in the other units. The first two sequences of each unit are structured in the same way and the last two sequences are organized in the same way. The two lessons of the first sequence, which are based on Willis' model, are composed by:

- Language outcomes;
- Getting started;
- Let's hear it/taking a closer look;
- Around the text:
  - Grammar explorer I, II...
  - Vocabulary explorer I, II...
- Pronunciation and spelling;

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<sup>8</sup> Willis; 1996 cited in Skehan, 1998

- Think, Pair, Share;
- Take a break

The second sequence which contains five sections is organized as follows:

- Research and report;
- Listening and speaking/reading and writing;
  1. Before listening/reading;
  2. As you listen/read;
  3. After listening/reading;
  4. Say it in writing/writing development;
- About the project;
- Assessment;
- Time for...

The first lessons of the first sequence include grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation features which are taught through listening and reading. The lessons of the second sequence focus the language and social skills. The lessons in general integrate different language components and skills hence respond to the needs of the competency-based approach. The organization of language integration does not appear similarly in both textbooks. What is important, on the whole, is the fact that both reply to the requirements of the approach on which they are both based though in different ways.

All the lessons in *Skills for Life* are arranged in the same manner (appendix 3 page iii). The lessons integrate the different language components and language and social skills. Thus responds to the needs of the competency-based approach. This lesson structure is quite similar with the lesson structure of the first section of *New Prospects*.

Generally each unit is divided into two or more lessons in order to present and teach different language aspects set in the official syllabus. The lessons are structured so as to provide a general and an integrated teaching of the different language contents as grammar; vocabulary, pronunciation, language and social skills. A language lesson should include a variety of activities

which combine different types of language input and output. An effective lesson<sup>9</sup> has five parts: preparation, presentation, practice, evaluation and expansion.

Textbook lessons generally contain preparatory questions which help to introduce the topic or the notion to study. The preparation part is called a “warm up”. It can be a question, an illustration, a listening task, a picture (map diagram...), a reading selection, or a situation of daily life habits. This step exists in the lessons of both textbooks. In the presentation of textbook lessons, there is the linguistic and topical content with the relevant learning strategies. Sometimes, we find the objectives of the lesson presented at the beginning. The structure of the lessons provides the language input which gives students the foundation for knowledge of the language. The lesson presents the structures and the input to the learners. We find this step in the first sections of the units in *New Prospects* and in all lessons of *Skills for Life*. In the practice part of the lesson, the focus is on the practice of the form, the structure and/or the rule they just studied. The learners work on tasks and activities presented in the textbook lessons. We also find this step in both textbooks. After the practice section, we find generally a set of activities devoted to evaluate the acquired knowledge. The learners are evaluated on the content of the lesson in order to reinforce that notion or structure whereas the teachers are enabled to monitor individual student comprehension, learning and difficulties. The expansion part is the part where the learners use the new knowledge outside the classroom. At the end of the lessons, home works and project works are presented. The Algerian textbook responds to these requirements only in the first section of each unit whereas the Tunisian textbook follows this structure in all its lessons.

The lessons should be structured so as to offer to the learners different knowledge and activities related to the different aspects of the language being taught. These language aspects are the different grammatical notions and structures, vocabulary items, pronunciation components, language and social skills, intercultural aspects, activities and tasks, project works and group, pair

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<sup>9</sup> According to the National Capital Language Resource Centre, Washington, DC; 2003/2004

and individual works. In general, both textbooks are consisted with similar lesson structure which strongly resembles the one mentioned above. Though the organization and presentation of new language are different, the aim is the same. However, the second section of the *New Prospects* lessons is based on language and social skills but there is no linguistic focus. The following section deals with the supporting aids accompanied the two textbooks to help the teachers as well as the learners.

#### 4-Suporting Materials in the Textbooks

Supporting materials are meant to help and support the teaching as well as the learning process. Cunningsworth<sup>10</sup> classifies different materials as supporting aids for the teaching and the learning process. These are **visual** materials (video-tapes, pictures, illustrations, flash cards, wall carts, film ships and slides), **audiotapes** (conversations, discussions, interviews, dialogues, and songs), **teacher's guide**, **an index of grammatical items**, **functions**, **vocabulary lists** and **test samples**.

The visual materials are meant to be seen and heard by the learners. They help the teachers in the presentation and explanation of language in a much contextualized manner. The learners not only listen to the language in its social situations but also see the faces and the behaviours of the native speakers when talking (because body language helps the listeners to understand the meaning conveyed by the speaker). Hence, learners can unconsciously internalize the appropriateness and a well use of the language to learn. Cunningsworth argues that “*where they are both attractive as illustrations and integral to the course as teaching material, we have a bonus*” (ibid: 52). Therefore, this kind of teaching aids plays an essential role in the teaching as well as in the learning process.

Conversely, the audiotapes are materials meant to be only heard by the learners. In this kind, what is recorded on tape is generally available in printed form as tapescripts. Audiotapes contain,

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<sup>10</sup> Cunningsworth; 1984

according to Cunningsworth, authentic materials and help to develop listening abilities and skills as well as pronunciation system of the language (sounds, stress, rhythm and intonation of English). This teaching aid is important even crucial in foreign language teaching and should be provided to the learners.

Teacher's guides are those documents designed for the teachers. They supplement the textbook and provide all needed and missed information and details on the textbook content. They also provide teaching processes that help the teachers on his/her work. They vary tremendously in the amount of assistance offered to the teacher. Some of them, according to Cunningsworth, reproduce the student's textbook with a few additional notes for the teacher indicating the objective of each unit, suggesting ideas for one or two supplementary exercises. Some of them provide great details and take the teacher step by step through every stage of every unit to the extent that every visual to be drawn on the board is given, providing details of what the teacher has exactly to say at each moment. This means that they give very detailed instructions. Some of teacher's guides comprise detailed plans for teaching one or two units and follow this up with more abbreviated notes for the rest of the units.

Vocabulary lists and grammar indexes are important for teachers as well as for learners. They help them to locate any structure, function or item for reference. Thus it is fruitful if the textbook provides them. Concerning the materials for testing, it is expected that the textbook includes an **entry** testing in order to determine whether the student's English is a high enough standard for him to begin using the coursebook<sup>11</sup>. It can also have a **diagnostic** function in that it provides the teacher with the student's abilities, strengths and weaknesses. **Progress** testing is given periodically during a course and is related to what has been taught in the units. It allows the student to know his progress and the teacher to monitor the student's performance. **Achievement** tests, on the contrary, are related to the content of the course and come at the end of each coursebook (a

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<sup>11</sup> Cunningsworth; 1984

year's/a term's work). Therefore, a textbook should offer this kind of material as it plays an important role in the teaching as well as in the learning processes. Functions refer to those cultural expressions introduced in the textbook which should offer a summary at the end in order to help the learners to refer to whenever there is need. For all these reasons, these teaching supporting materials have to be included in any foreign language textbook. They influence the teachers and the learners in a positive way. They provide fruitful results thus should not be neglected.

References of grammar, vocabulary and functions are all provided at the end of both textbooks. However, pronunciation and punctuation references are available only in the Algerian textbook. Both textbooks are accompanied with a teacher's guide. The audiotape (CD ROMs) is offered only in the Tunisian textbook. However, the Algerian textbook provides tape scripts at the end which are meant for the teaching of listening skills and pronunciation patterns supposed to be uttered by the teacher. Concerning the video tapes, they are not available in both textbooks. Pictures, maps and illustrations are provided either following a text or used for tasks accomplishment in both textbooks. They are taken from different sources as science facts, civilisation, advertisements, social facts...

Accordingly, both textbooks are similar in the kind of supporting aids they provide to help teachers as well as learners, except the audio-tape which is provided only in the Tunisian textbook. However, this is replaced by written tape scripts which are also provided in the Tunisian teacher's guide and pronunciation reference in the Algerian textbook. A document accompanying the textbook and the teacher's guide is designed for only the Algerian teachers. It provides missed and additional details.

The grammar reference provided in the Algerian textbook summarizes all what is introduced about structures, notions and rules in the whole textbook. The reference contains all the grammar contents proposed in the Algerian syllabus. Thus, considering this grammar reference, the Algerian textbook respects and implements the syllabus.... Similarly, the grammar reference provided in the

Tunisian book offers all the details about all the grammatical rules, structures and notions dealt with in the textbook. This content complies with the proposed one in the syllabus. The Tunisian textbook respects and implements the teaching materials and content of grammar provided in the syllabus on which it is based. Thus, both textbooks are similar regarding the grammar reference and the implementation of the syllabus needs. Besides, both are similar in the kind of rules, notions and structures proposed to be taught for the Algerian and Tunisian secondary education level learners (eg: gerund “ing”, past simple, other tenses, relatives, linking words...). Consequently, the learners have to attain the same objectives concerning the teaching of grammar materials.

Both textbooks provide a vocabulary reference, but the content of the references is different. In the Algerian textbook, the vocabulary reference deals with differences between British and American words/expressions most used and with rules of word formation whereas the Tunisian textbook offers vocabulary reference dealing with a summary of useful strategies used to find the meaning of unknown and unfamiliar items. *Skills for Life* also offers a list of the new words introduced in the whole book by reference to the unit and the lesson in which each is introduced for the first time. Therefore, in terms of vocabulary reference, the two textbooks offer different materials. Indeed, what is needed more by the students is to acquire the strategies provided in the Tunisian textbook; however, the differences existing between British and American English are also important to be known by the students.

The pronunciation and punctuation references are provided only in the Algerian textbook and summarize all the points and rules of pronunciation and punctuation dealt with inside the coursebook, though we find no lesson dealing with punctuation rules in the Algerian textbook. This is also not found in the Tunisian textbook. Pronunciation lessons and activities are found in both coursebooks.

Concerning the teacher's guides content, it is different. The Algerian teacher's guide is divided into three parts whereas the Tunisian teacher's book is divided into six parts with a glossary



of important language teaching terms the teacher should know, a reference for project work and a web quests sources. The first section of the Algerian guide provides a correction of the errors made in the textbook. The second part gives details on the objectives of as well as the structure of the textbook and the third part guides the teacher in the teaching of each unit by providing details, explanations and tasks correction. The first part of the Tunisian guide describes the student's book, the unit and lesson structures. The second part explains the approach adopted (CBA) and accentuates the skills integration. The third part deals with the language components and skills to teach and the way to teach them. The fourth part lists the different sub-skills and strategies of each language skill to develop in the learners. The fifth part provides the answers and solutions of tasks and activities provided in the student's book. The last part provides a written version (tape scripts) of the content of the CD. The audiotape material provided in the Tunisian context contains dialogues and songs produced by native speakers and are meant for the teaching of listening skill and pronunciation features. This kind of materials is important in English teaching. Unfortunately, it is not provided in the Algerian context. Therefore, the Tunisian students are more fortunate concerning the listening material which is a crucial element for acquire an affective communicative competence. Consequently, both textbooks contain a teacher's book as a supporting material; however, the content is different. The Algerian and the Tunisian teacher's guides comply with the second type of those discussed above. However, the explanations of the units in Algerian one are more detailed than those of the Tunisian guide.

In both textbooks, we find a reference concerning the functions dealt with in the whole course. This reference shows a compliance with the syllabuses content. It also is similar regarding content in both textbooks, as we find cause/effect; contrast... idioms, collocations, metaphors, songs, proverbs.... As for the last functions, though the type is similar (songs, proverbs...) the selected and used ones in each textbook are different. The themes of each of these latter are generally related to unit and lesson topic. As far as the teaching supporting materials provided in

both textbooks, there are clear similarities. However, there are materials provided in one book and not in the other, but what is more unfortunate is the non-availability of an audio-material for the Algerian students. Besides, the Algerian textbook is accompanied in addition to the teacher's guide, by a document consisting of more details and missed information as well as explanations and definitions of important items. Another material which is important for the learners and provided in both textbooks is the use of portfolio; a means that helps the students to gather all what they learn and to know their weaknesses. According to Perrenoud<sup>12</sup> this type of material is essential for the teaching/learning process as well as the assessment process.

Concerning the use of illustrations, pictures and maps, we find that they are taken from real-life settings, thus they are authentic in both textbooks. However, the Algerian textbook is full of pictures and illustrations than the Tunisian coursebook. As an example, the pictures and illustrations page 45, page 53, page 65, page 123 and page 166 in the Algerian textbook are taken from real situations. They show respectively people near a court (used in a unit talking about frightening fraud and corruption), a customs officer showing paintings in a museum (in the same unit), child labour in a shoe factory (in the same unit), a famous mannequin advertisement (used in a unit dealing with safety and advertisement) and Algerian TV actors (used in a unit dealing with society and feelings). In the Tunisian textbook, we find pictures showing a man on the moon (page 41 in a lesson dealing with space and tourism), a child working on a computer (page 97 in a lesson dealing with education and virtual schools), animals and nature (page 211 in a unit dealing with society and life concerns) and traffic and weather (page 222 in the same unit). As far as the maps are concerned, there are only two maps in the Algerian textbook (both deal with ancient civilizations and the regions where they were developed page 15 and 32), and 5 maps in the Tunisian textbook (p. 29 showing the whole world and focusing on the parts speaking English in a lesson dealing with the use of English in the world, p. 59 is a detailed map on Britain used in a lesson dealing with

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<sup>12</sup> Perrenoud; 1997

holidays, p. 104 is about New Zealand, p. 105 is on Australia (both deal with education in the world), and p. 222 deals with the weather in Los Angeles used in a lesson dealing with weather and life concerns. Therefore, there is more geographical domain integrated in the Tunisian textbook than in the Algerian textbook. While the diagrams, spidergrams, mindgrams and charts are not frequent in both textbooks. In the Algerian textbook, we find 2 p. 16 (a listening activity based on a diagram), p.31 (a writing activity based on a spidergram), 1 p. 57 and 2 p. 88, (semantic chart for vocabulary teaching), 1 p. 95 (spidermap for writing instruction) and p. 97 (diagram for reading purposes). In the Tunisian textbook, we find information transfer in teaching speaking (p. 69, 2 p. 161), grammar instruction (6 p.90), vocabulary teaching (2 p. 92, 1 p. 227, 6 p. 228), reading instruction (2 p. 105, 2 p. 126, 1 p. 162), writing purposes (p. 181), semantic chart for speaking purposes (1 p. 194, 2 p. 111, 2 p. 161), and information transfer in reading instruction (4 p. 219). Therefore, it is obvious that the Tunisian textbook, unlike the Algerian one, adopts many diagrams for teaching different language components and skills. The following section deals with the types of tasks provided in both textbooks. It also analyses the task types meant to teach and practise each language skill and component, as it deals with the authenticity of these tasks.

### **5-Types of Tasks provided in the Textbooks**

It is important to vary and diverse the activities and tasks in practising any language aspect and skill. Nunan<sup>13</sup> argues that activities “*specify what learners will actually do with the input which forms the point of departure for the learning task*”. This means that activities are the way which leads the learners to apply, practise and internalise what they learned before. This view is shared by many authors (as Richards, Platt and Weber (1986:289)) when arguing that “*...the use of a variety of different kinds of tasks in language teaching is said to make language teaching more communicative*”<sup>14</sup>. For the same author “*classroom activities should parallel the ‘real world’ as*

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<sup>13</sup> Nunan; 1989: 59

<sup>14</sup> Cited in Gail, K. Oura. *Authentic Task-Based Materials: Bringing the Real World Into the Classroom*. [www.jrc.sophia.ac.jp/kiyou/ki21/gaio](http://www.jrc.sophia.ac.jp/kiyou/ki21/gaio): p. 73

*closely as possible*” (ibid). The activities which are proposed to the learners should be as authentic as possible.

Nunan gathers different types of activities proposed by Prabhu and Pattison. Prabhu<sup>15</sup> arranges activities under three main categories: **Information Gap activity** involves a transfer of information from one person to another or from one form to another or from one place to another. Pair work is an example of this kind of activities. It is generally a decoding or encoding of information. **Reasoning Gap activity** involves deriving new information from a given one through: inference, deduction, practical reasoning or a perception of relationships or patterns. **Opinion Gap activity** is the type of activity which involves identifying and articulating a personal preference, feeling or attitude in response to a given situation (story completion, discussion about a social issue). It involves the use of factual information and formulation of one’s arguments to justify his or her opinion.

Pattison<sup>16</sup>, for his part, proposes a list of different types of activities: **questions and answers** can be used to practise almost all structures, functions and notions. **Dialogues and role plays** can be repeated or created and uttered by the learners in pairs. This kind of activities makes, to borrow Nunan’s words, the learners participate more willingly and learn more thoroughly. Role play, according to Penny Ur<sup>17</sup>, is the kind of activities of spoken interaction where the learners play the roles of the speakers/listeners of a dialogue. They exchange their places and try to be fluent in spoken language. **Matching activities** consist of linking between phrases, words, sentences, recognizing matching items and completing pairs or sets. **Communication strategies** help to paraphrase, borrow or invent words, use gestures, and ask for feedback. They are activities fostering the learners to develop their communication strategies. **Pictures and picture stories** are activities like spot differences, memory tests, sequencing pictures to tell a story. **Puzzles and problems** help the learners to make guesses, draw on their general knowledge and personal experiences, use their

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<sup>15</sup> Prabhu; 1987 cited in ; Nunan. 1989: 67

<sup>16</sup> Pattison; 1987 cited in; Nunan. 1989: 68

<sup>17</sup> Penny Ur; 1996

imagination and test their reasoning ability. **Discussions and decisions** have the purpose to collect and share information to reach a final decision.

Concerning the activities using authentic task-based materials, Gerhard (1996)<sup>18</sup> proposes many examples that can be adopted in the classroom. There are materials using **cultural objects**, **listening** activities, **listening/viewing** activities and **role play**. The first category uses products of culture as post cards, photographs, symbols, money, receipts, images in song lyrics and bus/air tickets. They are called *culture composition* and have for purpose the development of writing skills and the recognition of cultural artefacts. In pair/group works, the students share and discuss, identify and make a story, and then present the story to the rest of the class where each student takes a turn and talks. Therefore, speaking skills development is also included. In individual work, each student writes his/her own version. Besides, this kind of tasks teaches culture in the way that the students interpret the information within the context of the target culture and in comparison to their own culture.

The listening materials develop real-world listening skills and strategies. They are called *eavesdropping*. The learners are guided in a process of listening and answering questions and taking notes. Thus this type uses audio tapes and CDs whereas the listening/viewing activities use videos in the class. In the latter type, the students guess what is going on, watch the first part and guess the end. It helps to develop listening skills and abilities, collaboration and negotiation strategies as well as critical and analytical skills. It is generally done in group works in which half of the class watches the first part while the other half watches the second part and work in groups or pairs in order to reconstruct the story. The last category (role play) intends to face the learners with natural language in real situations. Thus it is based on real-world scenarios. The learners are asked to play the roles of a given dialogue or create a dialogue and play the roles. Therefore, this kind of tasks is important in the classroom as it integrates different skills, aspects and strategies. The learners are

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<sup>18</sup> Cited in Gail, K. Oura. *Authentic Task-Based Materials: Bringing the Real World Into the Classroom*. [www.jrc.sophia.ac.jp/kiyou/ki21/gaio](http://www.jrc.sophia.ac.jp/kiyou/ki21/gaio): p.67

engaged in a process of language creation (creative skills), speaking and listening, using different structures, notions and functions, and reading and writing (if the students are asked to create first the dialogue). The adoption of task-based authentic materials, according to many researchers, is essential because they develop many needed competencies in the learners as linguistic, structural, cultural and functional competencies.

The appendices n°8 page ix, n°9 page viii, n°10 page ix, n°11 page x, n°12 page xi, n°13 page xii, n°14 page xiii, n°15 page xiv and n°16 page xvi confirm that the variation of activities is similar in both textbooks. The types of tasks provided to practise and reinforce each skill, strategy and linguistic components are in general similar. These types could be ranked under the types proposed by Prabhu and Pattison. This means that the two textbooks are in a parallel route with each other as well as with the competency-based approach. This latter suggests a variation of communicative tasks which lead the learners to more practice and acquisition and reinforcement.

As far as the authenticity of materials is concerned, both textbooks adopt authentic and task-based activities as they resemble those proposed above. Therefore, both textbooks are based on communicative, authentic and task-based tasks activities.

## **Conclusion**

As far as the teaching of the ICT is concerned, there is a difference in the importance given to it in both textbooks. In fact, the Tunisian textbook provides more tasks requiring web research than the Algerian textbook but this does not mean that the latter neglects this side as the designers argued it. While the project works are adopted in the Algerian textbook unlike the Tunisian one as a central teaching procedure through the whole units. They also display differences concerning the organization and the presentation of the content, the structure of the lessons and units, and the general shape. Concerning the supporting materials supplied in the two textbooks, there are similarities and differences. Teacher's guides, grammar index, functions and vocabulary lists are provided in both textbooks. Pronunciation and punctuation references are supplied only in the

Algerian textbook. Illustrations and pictures are provided in both coursebooks however they are abundant in the Algerian one while the maps are used more in the Tunisian textbook. The audio CD follows only the Tunisian textbook. Concerning the assessment materials, in the Algerian textbook, we find the four types (summative, diagnostic, formative and formatrice) whereas in the Tunisian textbook, we find only two types (summative and formative).

## General Conclusion:

Our analysis has led us to the conclusion that the two textbooks; *New Prospects* and *Skills for Life* are similar and different depending on the perspective with which we consider them. The evaluation study of the final year syllabuses and textbooks of the Algerian and Tunisian secondary education leads us to the following conclusions. The syllabuses are similar because both of them are task-based and communicative. Both of them seem to be informed by a humanist educational philosophy. Both of them are shaped by theories of learning that appeal to socio-cognitive processes that encourage critical thinking and reflexion. Both of them suffer from a lack of specification of separate objectives for school learners and for those students who will enter university. The descriptors of items whether in terms of competencies, skills, grammar, vocabulary and functions are given as a bulk without distinction whatever. The inventories of items are more or less similar going from issues of environment to those of culture and science.

However, these similarities in the syllabuses do not come alone; we have noted that project pedagogy is more prominent in the Algerian syllabus than in the Tunisian one. We have suggested that the over emphasis on project work in the Algerian syllabus is not helpful for students who will take the *baccalauréat* exam. On the contrary, the Tunisian syllabus has even given a lesson plan for the textbook designers to follow. An instructional plan is likely to maximize the chances of leaving and success in the *baccalauréat* exam, chances that can be forfeited by too many projects as is the case in the Algerian syllabus. Therefore, we can say that the Tunisian syllabus targets exam students who have not much time to have their efforts dispersed in a large number of projects. The lesson plan provided in the syllabus seems to be inspired from mastery learning theory which demands that students knowledge be taught, tested and re-taught if necessary in order to ensure its mastery. It is this mastery which will ensure success in the *baccalauréat* exam.

Project work responds more to the competency-based approach in that it provides an opportunity for students to mobilize their knowledge of the language and to evaluate the



competencies of the students in concrete terms. More importantly, it encourages critical faculties and autonomy in learning. However, as we have already said, it does not respond to the students' needs in terms of taking a final exam wherein the finished product, i.e. what the students can produce in a limited period of time, is given more importance than the processes on which students who do projects are evaluated.

The above conclusion can be nuanced by a political consideration. Indeed, project pedagogy is more in compliance with the humanist educational philosophy that informs the syllabuses in their preambles. So if seen from this political perspective, we can say that the Algerian syllabus is not contradictory in its policy statement and its methodology. Both aim at developing critical faculties and autonomy, human aspects that constitute the basis of a real citizenship and entry into modernity. So if the Algerian syllabus does not respond to the immediate need of taking the *baccalauréat* exam, it caters to the social skills necessary to function or democratic citizens. This is confirmed by the explicit inclusion of the theme of citizenship in the syllabus.

The other remark is that project work gives a reflective dimension to learning missing in the mechanical application of the competency-based approach. A narrow understanding of the CBA is likely to lead a utilitarian conception of learning English. This utilitarian view of learning an additional language is not the goal fixed for teaching English in the Algerian and Tunisian syllabuses. So we can say that the Algerian syllabus designers have taken the competency-based approach without making it their own by giving it a reflective dimension. This does not seem to be the case with the Tunisian syllabus which affirms the utilitarian dimension of learning English that it disavows in the statement of policy included in the preamble.

The Algerian and Tunisian syllabuses are task-based since they are designed on the basis of tasks. Therefore, the task-based syllabuses, as it is suggested, are process-oriented syllabuses; hence they are in compliance with the CBA, which focuses the process rather than the product. They lead the learners, through different tasks, into the development of communicative skills while the project-based syllabuses lead them, through project and research works, to the development of their

cognitive and social competences. Accordingly, one may say that, apart from the difference between them (project works) which is an important component in language teaching/learning, both countries have made a similar and suitable choice in terms of syllabus design since, to borrow Richards' words, both syllabuses are based on skills, tasks, functions, conventions, notions and other non-grammatical units of organizations.

The textbooks also share many points in common, but they differ significantly in the way the CBA is understood and implemented. So, we have noted that the textbooks are thematically organized. These themes are more and less similar involving contemporary issues like the environment, health and economics. Both of them are task-based. They include pedagogic tasks related to language and authentic tasks appealing to language and social skills. Themes and tasks especially authentic ones are components of the CBA because they encourage students to learn content and consistent instruction does not only take the students outside the classroom but gives flesh and bone to communicative teaching which in its absence can be reduced to a "talk and chalk approach".

Apart from similarity of themes and tasks, the textbooks pay attention to the intercultural skills that help students contextualize their learning of the language. However, in spite of these similarities and others, the two textbooks have employed the CBA with a different opinion. One of these differences is in the organization of the teaching items inventoried in the syllabuses. The Tunisian textbook is organized in the form of lessons. It looks like a compilation of "fiche pédagogiques", pedagogic files. There seems to be no difference between the textbook designers and the teachers in terms of decision. So, the role of the teacher is not to take decisions of his own but apply those dictated to him/her first by the syllabus designers and by relay the textbooks writers. In so doing, the teachers do not have enough elbowroom to the immediate pedagogic partner of the students: the teacher who is reduced to that of a sergeant major.

By fleshing out the themes in the form of larger units with rubrics demanding both individual, pair and group work, the Algerian textbook empowers the teacher to take decisions at

his/her level. Though language learning is distinguished from skills developments in different sections, the approach as a whole is holistic and global rather than discrete as is the case in the Tunisian textbook. The lack of the empowerment of the teacher and student in the textbook is of course political in nature. The straight jacketing of the teachers is one way for the political powers to impose their authority in the educational sector.

Another significant difference between the two textbooks is evaluation. As we have suggested in our analysis, it is the *formatrice* evaluation that receives the most attention in the Algerian textbook while the summative one holds more importance in the Tunisian one. We can explain this difference of emphasis by the fact that the Tunisian textbook caters for students' needs in terms of the final exam of the *baccalauréat*.

Accordingly, on the whole, while the two textbooks follow the competency-based approach principles, these principles are not understood and applied in the same way in both textbooks. The humanist educational philosophy is more obvious in the Algerian textbook which gives more power to the students through the incorporation of project works and more scope for the teacher to take decisions through unit organization. On the other hand, the Tunisian textbook is more utilitarian in its orientation, aiming to ensure a higher rate of success at the *baccalauréat* and to guarantee competencies that will be used by the students (a future labour force) in the economic field (tourism, trade). Therefore, the competency-based approach is appropriate from a predominantly economic perspective in the Tunisian syllabus and textbooks and from a humanist perspective in Algeria. This, more or less, reflects the socio-economic and political realities in all Algeria and Tunisia.

We have to admit that one cannot find two textbooks which are similar in all aspects. Nonetheless the fact that *New Prospects* and *Skills for Life* though used in two neighbouring countries and apply the same teaching and learning approach, one cannot but expect many similarities.

In general, the investigation done has allowed us to account for the research issue stated in the introduction in a way that the two textbooks provide materials and tasks that help the learners to learn English, to be active and to learn in an integrative way. One may also say that the two syllabuses have many features in common. The pedagogy of integration or the Competency-Based Approach puts into evidence the fact that the crucial element is that the learner knows to do “savoir-faire” something. It helps the learners to appeal to their different interdisciplinary knowledge and skills in order to solve problems, realize projects.... It makes possible the integration of resources and knowledge in a given situation, especially in problem-solving situations, since as Perrenoud P. (2000) rightly puts it, CBA transforms the acquired knowledge in different disciplines into resources to solve problems, realize projects and take decisions. In other words, the CBA emphasises the academic and social skills as well as language aspects and components that help the learners to understand and communicate in English through oral and written means, avoid misunderstanding, misinterpretation and producing incorrect language that could not be understood by the listeners or the readers. Through CBA, the learners consider the acquired knowledge as conceptual and theoretical bases as well as procedural knowledge through which they gain more opportunities to relate this knowledge to different social practices. Teaching through CBA is generally an approach that proposes cooperation and collaboration in which all the learners are equally responsible for and control their learning, learn to select, transform information, make hypotheses and take decisions. For that reason, both countries opted for this teaching/learning approach and what is provided in both textbooks is based on the CBA, although in a different manner.

The Algerian as well as Tunisian syllabuses and textbooks are based on task-based (TBLT), communicative and competency-based principles because the three approaches have in common their basic elements. Competency-based education gathers the communicative approach and task-based language teaching in that it is based on *“a set of outcomes that are derived from an analysis*

of tasks typically required in life role situations”<sup>1</sup>. The two authors consider CBA and TBLT as “direct descendents of communicative language teaching” (ibid: 173). According to the same authors, CBA and TBLT “incorporate principles associated with Communicative Language Teaching”. Thus, the two textbooks are elaborated in a coherent process with the syllabuses on which they are respectively based.

At last, no textbook is perfect. The teachers of languages try to build their lessons relying on the school book and other resources in order to make something they think more appropriate. The textbook provides ready-made teaching texts and learning tasks. It is considered as a cheap way for providing teaching and learning materials and a facilitator for the designing of the final exams because the learners coming from different regions are supposed to learn and base their learning on the same material. Thus for teachers, especially novice ones, it means security, guidance, and support. This is why it should provide as good and suitable materials as possible, should integrate knowledge and varied and diversified tasks that allow the learners to develop the knowledge, skills and abilities needed as argued by Richards<sup>2</sup> for a textbook to be “*un manuel intégrateur*”, two conditions should be present and taken into consideration; “*it should previously define the competences to be developed along the year and/or the terminal objective of integration*” and “*it should contain integrative tasks centring on these competences*” (as it is the case for “*New Prospects*” and “*Skills for Life*”). The activities and tasks and their variation and diversification are important in the learning context since as Richards (2008:16) points it “*learners need to take part in activities that require them to try out and experiment in using newly noticed language forms in order for new learning items to become incorporated into their linguistic repertoire*”.

The Algerian and Tunisian textbooks take into account the interest and needs of the learners, thus presenting to them a consistent, wide and integrated range of materials that guide them to achieve the objectives set. The way in which the materials are integrated in both manuals is in fact

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<sup>1</sup> Cited in: Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 141

<sup>2</sup> Richards; 2001

different but this doesn't prevent them from providing knowledge integration as pointed out by Roegiers X.<sup>3</sup> « *il existe plusieurs façons d'intégrer les acquis. La conduite de projets de la classe, des activités de résolution de problèmes complexes, les travaux de fin d'études, sont autant d'activités d'intégration qui visent à donner du sens aux apprentissages en les articulant les uns aux autres* ». This means that the method to follow for knowledge integration and presentation is not so important if we pay attention to the essential component that is integration through problem-solving activities, interdisciplinary teaching and pair works and tasks. This is the case of both textbooks.

Algeria and Tunisia could not escape or be marginalized by the new world developments. Thus, the educational systems of both countries are reinforced and readapted to the new progress in order to form citizens who could be able to be active and interactive and be capable of integration. In other words, education needs to meet new challenges and progress. Educational systems must generate awareness in students concerning the world's values, attitudes and practices. Because of the swift development of science, technology and commerce in the world, learners need to master the English language in order to keep pace with the changing world through exchanges. Since schooling means socializing, the role of education is to equip the learners with aptitudes and abilities that would allow them to cope with different problem situations in different contexts. It should also endow the learners in order to help them to integrate successfully the world of business and work. These objectives are the basis on which both textbooks are designed.

The findings of the present work may propose the following suggestions:

- The lessons of *New Prospects* should be reorganized so as to make the teaching language components easier because the textbook is divided into sequences and sections which contain more than one rule. This is difficult to teach and to learn.
- To give the listening skill, in *New Prospects* consistent materials as CDs and audio- or visual aids, as it is the case for *Skills for Life*.

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<sup>3</sup> Roegiers X. 2001: 146

- Implement the Tunisian textbook with more project works in order to help the learners develop their socio-psychological skills, search strategies and writing strategies.
- It is important to clearly state the general objective (profil de sortie) to achieve in teaching/learning English for *Skills for Life*.
- The skills in the Algerian textbook should be organized in a similar way as the Tunisian one, so as to help the learners to develop skills and strategies in a more integrative way; that is to say, to teach oral and written skills as “listening and writing”, “reading and speaking”...because the skills in *Skills for Life* seem to be more integrated.
- It would be better if the countries of the developing world share their ideas and opinions and work together in order to remedy to their problems since they share similarities in terms of culture and political status. I think that they could work together and come out with similar and better products, of course by referring to the developed countries and referential books and standards.
- I suggest encouraging the learners to be in contact with, at least, one native speaker (via e-mail). This is a fruitful means to learn English in its social context.

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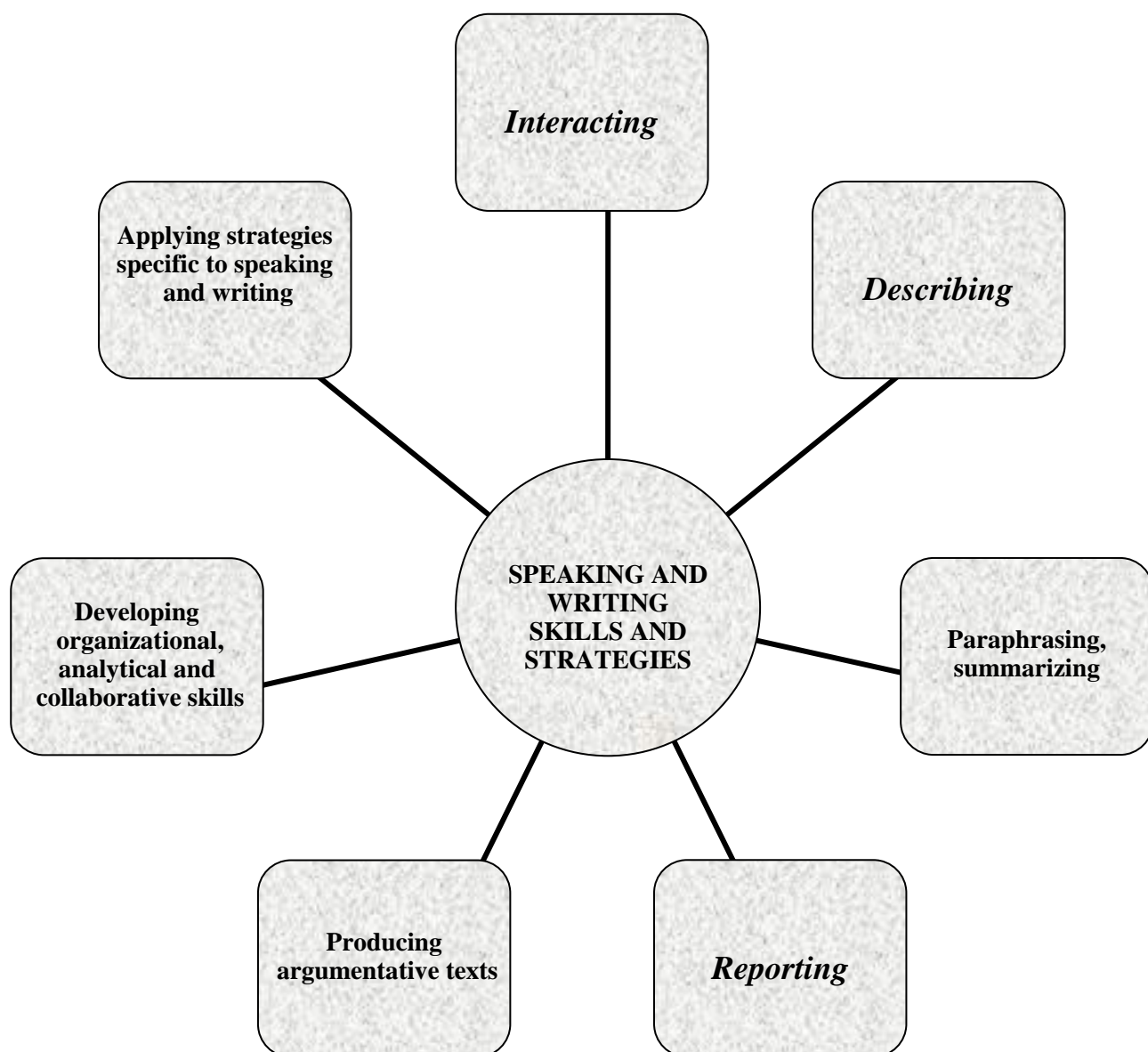
# Appendices

Appendix N°1

## READING AND LISTENING SKILLS AND STRATEGIES



## **SPEAKING AND WRITING SKILLS AND STRATEGIES**



TYPICAL STRUCTURE OF A LESSON		
LESSON ( number)	Title of text or topic	
<b>INTO READING or any other 2 SKILLS BLEND</b>		
<b>SPEAKING</b>		
<b>IN PAIRS or IN GROUPS</b>		
<b>READING or LISTENING comprehension activities</b>		
<b>LEXICAL FOCUS</b>		
<b>GRAMMAR FOCUS</b>		
<b>PRONUNCIATION FOCUS</b>		
<b>*Develop your Writing Skill/Develop your Speaking Skill</b>		
At the end of each lesson ,a summary of the linguistic elements and the competencies developed appear in the 3 boxes below.		
My New Words	My Grammar	WHAT I CAN DO NOW

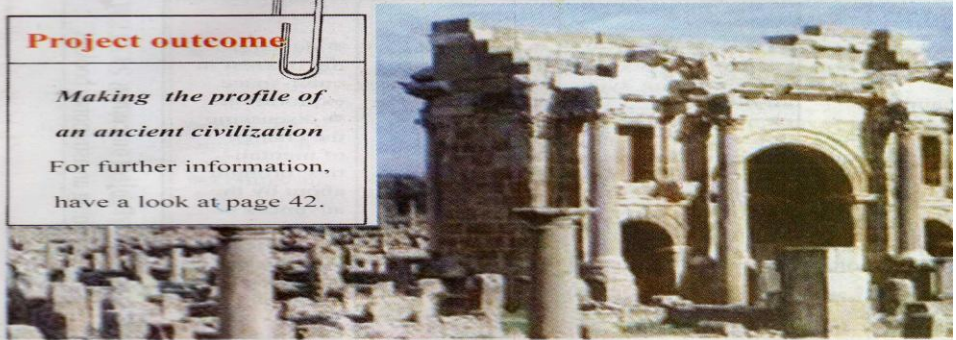
Tunisian teacher's book, p7.

Unit one : Exploring the past

**Project outcome**

*Making the profile of  
an ancient civilization*

For further information,  
have a look at page 42.

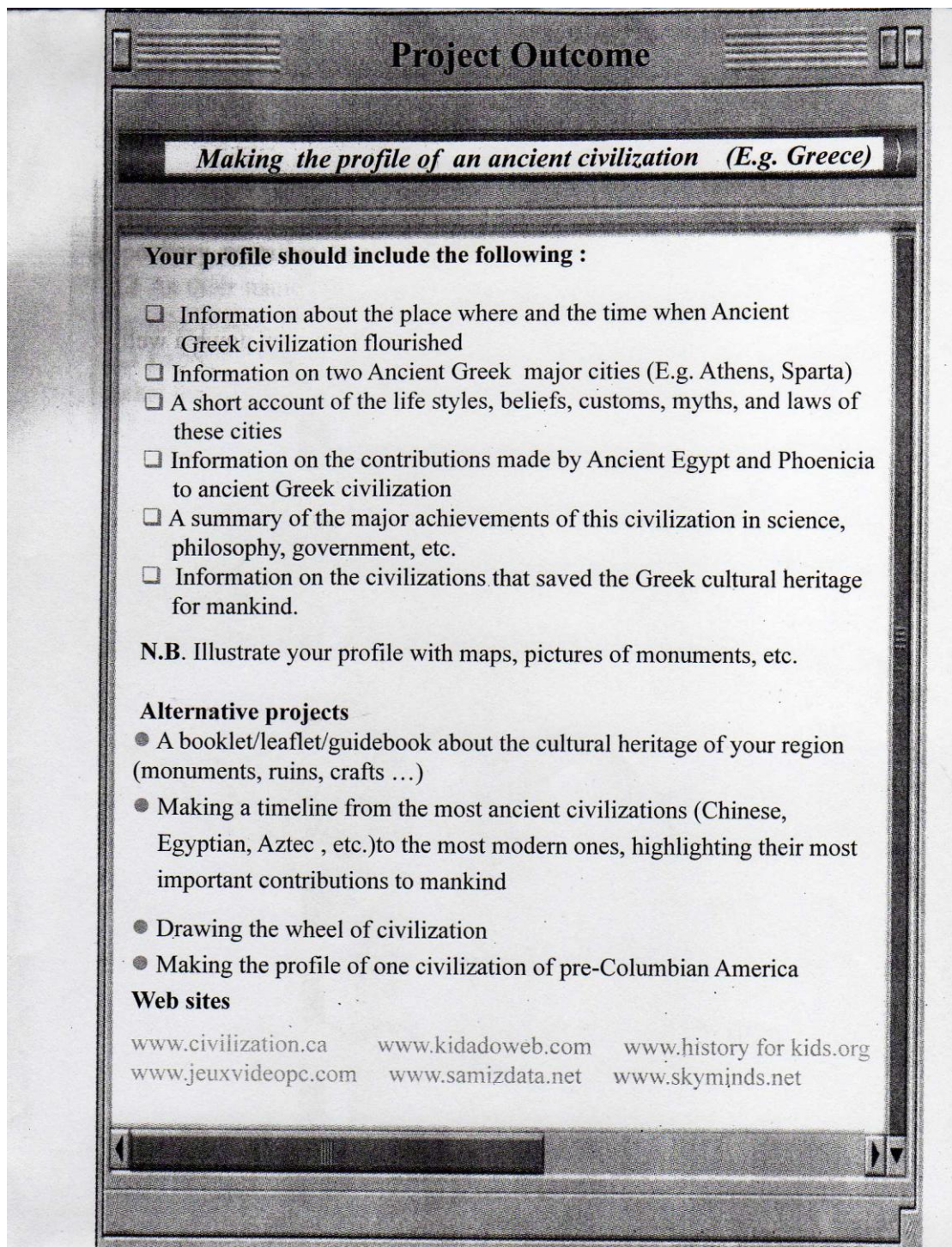


Thamugadi (Timgad)



The Hanging Gardens of Babylon







# BOOK MAP

Skills and strategies outcomes		Learner's outcomes	Intercultural outcomes
<b>Listening and speaking</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● reciting a poem</li> <li>● predicting</li> <li>● note taking</li> <li>● summarizing</li> </ul>	<b>Reading and writing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● skimming</li> <li>● paragraphing ideas</li> <li>● scanning</li> <li>● making logical links between sentences and paragraphs</li> <li>● writing a descriptive essay</li> <li>● writing an expository article</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● raising awareness about issues related to education, the choice of careers, dedication to science, citizenship, economic and social development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● comparing educational systems : past and present</li> <li>● raising awareness about the similarities and differences between today's educational systems in the world</li> </ul>

**Project outcome:**  
Designing an educational prospectus



## UNIT OUTLINE

Lesson	Title	Constructing meaning	Communicating	Functions and linguistic exponents	Pronunciation
1.	School-related words	Reading: Exploiting an ad	Speaking: Expanding vocabulary	Persuasion Word building	
2.	Education for all Webquest (Acronyms)	Reading: Exploiting a graph and data Reading an ad	Speaking: Understanding acronyms	Expressing opinion Hypothesizing If / Unless	
3.	Virtual schools	Listening to a report	Speaking: role play	Expressing agreement and disagreement Emphatic form	Emphasizing words in a sentence Silent letters
4.	Online Learning	Reading quotations	Writing: Punctuation Commas in apposition Writing a formal argumentative letter	Expressing opinion	
5.	Comparing Educational Systems	Reading: Interpreting data Analyzing information	Speaking: Discussing in pairs	Comparing and contrasting	
6.	Age or ...?	Reading a newspaper article	Speaking: Producing a speech	Expressing satisfaction and certainty Prepositions with verbs	
7.	Lifelong Learning	Reading: Recognizing text structure and outlining	Speaking: discussing a quote	Expressing opinion Affixation: -hood	
8.	The Back Cover of a Book	Reading a book cover		Compound adjectives Affixation	Minimal pairs Syllable stress
9.	Alexander Graham Bell	Speed Reading Extensive reading	Writing a summary	Exclamation The + adjective	[j] [tʃ]
	PROJECT WORK	Expository texts			
ForArts Session 3	Later	Extensive reading of a short story		Reporting verbs	
ForArts Session 4	Writing a Narrative		Writing a narrative for the PORTFOLIO		

## Appendix n°8

### A comparison of the speaking activities provided in both textbooks:

	<i>Skills for Life</i>	New Prospects
<b>Speaking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transfer into the native tongue (1p41...)</li> <li>• Questions/answers (4p41, 7p42, 1p54, 2p64, a p68, p70, 4p238...)</li> <li>• Table completion (3p64, 1p68, 3p68...)</li> <li>• Explanations (2p169, 1p222...)</li> <li>• Picture description (3p222, 2p214, p63...)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions and answers (1p33, p61, 2p62, task p63...)</li> <li>• Pair works (p20, 2p52) for dialogue creation and acting</li> <li>• Group works (3p52, 5p120, 2p122) for exchanging about a writing piece</li> </ul>



## Appendix n°9

### The comparison of the listening activities provided in the two handbooks:

<b>Listening</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dialogue/text/song/table completion (2p97, 4p55, 2p78, 3p70, 2p97, 4p98, 1p148...)</li> <li>• Word identification (1/2p55, a p56, 2p148, a p200...)</li> <li>• Multiple choice questions (3p55, 2/4p148, p224...)</li> <li>• Word-meaning b p56...)</li> <li>• True/false statements (1p70, 1p148...)</li> <li>• Guessing/predicting/infering (3p70, 1p71, 3/4/5p71, 1p97, 5/6p98...)</li> <li>• Questions/answers (2p71, p200, 7p223, p224...)</li> <li>• Matching (3p97, 1p199...)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Radio interview/conversation/story listening (1/3p16, p47, 1p76, 2p76, 1/2p94...)</li> <li>• Dialogue completion (5p17, a p125...)</li> <li>• Discussion-questions/answers (p32, p61, p93...)</li> <li>• Lectures (1p33, 2p33, 3p33...)</li> <li>• Sentence order (p34, 1p137, 1p167...)</li> <li>• Sentence matching (3p184...)</li> <li>• True/false statements (1p108...)</li> </ul>
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## Appendix n°10

### The comparison of the reading activities presented in the two course books:

<b>Reading</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Table completion (1p43, a p47, 3p74, 6p90, 2p108...)</li> <li>• Text/diagram completion (3p78, 4p103, 1p115...)</li> <li>• Questions/answers (7p42, p48, p52, 2p60, p106, 3p113, 4p120...)</li> <li>• Multiple choice questions (3p60, 2p115, 4p214, 1p243...)</li> <li>• Guessing/deducing/infering (1/3p38, 2p48, 2p89, p240, 6p241...)</li> <li>• True/false statements (2/3/4p43, 3p145, 4p238...)</li> <li>• Word-meaning, explanations, synonyms (5p43, 4p60, 5p61, 7p75, 7p90...)</li> <li>• Words/sentences/paragraphs matching (6p44, b p47, 5p75, 2p77, 3p80, 1p112...)</li> <li>• Information transfer (7p44, 3p48...)</li> <li>• Sentence order (1p156...)</li> <li>• Skimming (1p236, 2p236...)</li> <li>• Scanning (p242...)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• True/false statements (p21, 1p113...)</li> <li>• Questions/answers (p36, p53, p54, p65...)</li> <li>• Skimming (1p37, 3p39, 1p66, 1p98...)</li> <li>• Scanning (task p39, 2p66, 2p99...)</li> <li>• Words/sentences matching, meaning inferring (5p39, 1p68, 2p98, 3p113, task p158...)</li> <li>• Sentence order (3p68, 2p101...)</li> <li>• Diagram study (p97...)</li> <li>• Table completion (1p129, 1p159...)</li> <li>• Multiple choice questions (1p156...)</li> </ul>
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## Appendix n°11

### The comparison of the writing activities presented in the two manuals:

<p><b>Writing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing as a process with its different stages<sup>1</sup>:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Generating ideas,</li> <li>2. Planning and organizing the ideas,</li> <li>3. Writing the first draft,</li> <li>4. Sharing and responding (peer review),</li> <li>5. Revising and editing,</li> <li>6. Writing the final draft.</li> </ol> <p>These stages are followed by the learners each time to produce a single piece of writing. This means that they are not separate (p66, p76, p102, p180...).</p> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing as a process with its different steps:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Information gathering,</li> <li>2. Detailing the selected ideas,</li> <li>3. Organizing the ideas,</li> <li>4. Writing a first draft,</li> <li>5. Sharing with classmates- working in pairs or groups,</li> <li>6. Correcting the mistakes,</li> <li>7. Writing a final draft,</li> <li>8. Giving it to the teacher for correction.</li> </ol> <p>All these steps take place in producing one piece of writing. (p29, p34, p40/41, p58...)</p> </li> </ul>
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<sup>1</sup> Cited in : teacher's book-*Skills for Life*, p.9

## Appendix n°12

### The socio-cultural activities offered in the two textbooks:

	<i>Skills for Life</i>	<i>New Prospects</i>
<b>The socio-cultural activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading (p56, p71...)</li> <li>• Writing (p39, p220...)</li> <li>• Listening (p56, p71...)</li> <li>• Gap filling (1p59...)</li> <li>• Picture study (2p209...)</li> <li>• Diagram/table completion (2p105, 2p111...)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research work (p.30, p.31...)</li> <li>• Reading (p.36...)</li> <li>• Writing p29, p34/5, p40, 2p60, 2p122...)</li> <li>• Proverbs and sayings (p56...)</li> <li>• Blank filing (p150...)</li> <li>• Matching (1p181, ½p182...)</li> <li>• Discussion (p183...)</li> </ul>

## Appendix n°13

### The comparison of the technological and computing activities related to the two textbooks:

	<i>Skills for Life</i>	<i>New Prospects</i>
<b>The ICT tasks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WebQuest research-Google/yahoo research (p39, p123, p138/9, p155...)</li> <li>• Project works research (p67...)</li> <li>• Writing E-mails (p66...)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research on websites given to gather information for project works and “research and report” section (p31, p60, p92, p122, p151, p182)</li> </ul>

**The comparison of the activities related to grammar in both textbooks:**

	<i>Skills for Life</i>	<i>New Prospects</i>
<b>Grammar activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions/answers (p.38, p.117, a p.139, 2p.140...)</li> <li>• Reading selections for tenses teaching (p.40, 2p.45...)</li> <li>• Dialogue/text completion (p.57, p.158, 3p.226...)</li> <li>• Using grammar in writing (p.71, 2 and 3p.72...)</li> <li>• Sentence combination (p.81...)</li> <li>• Multiple choice questions (1p.84, 4p.217, 5p.217...)</li> <li>• Re-expressing sentences (2p.95, p.127, 2p.165, 2p.208...)</li> <li>• Gap filling (1p.109, 3p.109...)</li> <li>• Sentence order (4p.114...)</li> <li>• Table completion (4p.121...)</li> <li>• Sentence/word matching (3p.216...)</li> <li>• True/false statements (2p.229...)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blank filling (p. 17, 3p.24, k p.79...)</li> <li>• Questions/answers (p.17/18, 2p.25, p.47, p.49...)</li> <li>• Table completion (p.23/24, 1p.25, task II p.48...)</li> <li>• Sentence combination (3p.25, task I p.48)</li> <li>• Using grammar in writing (1 and 2 p.77, task p.108, task p.109...)</li> <li>• Sentence order (1p.49...)</li> <li>• Reading selections for tense study (1p.111, Grammar Explorer p.115, 1p.116, 1p.145)</li> <li>• Listening for grammar structures recognition (1p.138...)</li> <li>• Sentence/word matching (1p.138...)</li> <li>• Conversations for points practice (task p.147, 2p.168...)</li> </ul>

## Appendix n°15

### The comparison of the activities related to vocabulary in the two manuals:

	<i>Skills for Life</i>	<i>New Prospects</i>
<b>Vocabulary activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crosswords (p.72)</li> <li>• Word-meaning/definition (4p.60, 2p.74, 4p.75, 7p.90...)</li> <li>• Word-matching (5p.75, 3p.80, 1p.93, 3p.97, 7p.108...)</li> <li>• Table completion (2p.84, 1p.113, 3p.114, p.117...)</li> <li>• Gap filling (2p.98, 4p.147, 2p.149, 2p.151...)</li> <li>• Word-association (2p.109, 1p.194...)</li> <li>• Word-family (1p.120...)</li> <li>• Synonyms (2p.120, 1p.149, 3p.152, 2p.233...)</li> <li>• Dictionary research (4p.137, 1p.235)</li> <li>• Multiple choice questions (2p.165)</li> <li>• Opposites (2p.207)</li> <li>• Word-formation (1p.44, 2p.91).</li> <li>• Idioms and Proverbs (1 p 41, 2 p 41).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Table completion (1p.26, 1p.139, 1p.169...)</li> <li>• Blank filling (2p.26, 5p.27, 2p.18, 2p.50, 4p.57...)</li> <li>• Word-formation (3p.27, 2 and 3p.57, 1p.111, 2p.148...)</li> <li>• Dictionary work (1p.18)</li> <li>• Word-association (1p.50, 1p.57, 2p.79, 2p.169...)</li> <li>• Synonyms/equivalents (1p.79...)</li> <li>• Word-family (4p.80, 1p.87, 1p.118...)</li> <li>• Word-classification (2p.88, task p.178...)</li> <li>• Word-definition/word-matching (2p.139, 1p.147...)</li> <li>• Guessing meaning (1p.178...)</li> <li>• Crosswords (p.91)</li> </ul>

## Appendix n°16

### The comparison of the activities related to pronunciation:

	<i>Skills for Life</i>	<i>New Prospects</i>
<b>Pronunciation activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound recognition/identification (1p.46, 2p.58, 1p.99...)</li> <li>• Word stress (2p.46, 2p.117...)</li> <li>• Sound classification (1p.57, p.62, p.66, 1p.150...)</li> <li>• Stress recognition (p.73, 1p.166, p.230, p.239...)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak forms (1p.20...)</li> <li>• Sound classification (2/3 p.28, 1p.88, 1p.171...)</li> <li>• Sound recognition (4p.28, task p.81, 3p.112, 3p.171...)</li> <li>• Spelling forms of sounds (p.51, 4p.89...)</li> <li>• Stress recognition (p.57, 2p.88, 1p.111; 1p.119...)</li> <li>• Transcription and stress (1p.140)</li> <li>• Letter classification (2p.148)</li> </ul>



## Résumé

Le présent travail a pour but d'analyser et de comparer deux manuels scolaires destinés aux élèves de la dernière année du cycle secondaire et les programmes sur lesquels ils sont élaborés et basés. Les manuels scolaires en questions sont utilisés en Tunisie « *Skills for Life* » et en Algérie « *New Prospects* ». Ce projet vise à analyser et comparer tous les aspects et dimensions de la langue Anglaise proposés dans les deux manuels, d'un côté entre eux en tant que manuels scolaires du même niveau et de la même langue et d'un autre l'élaboration selon l'approche par les compétences qu'ils ont adoptée. La problématique de notre analyse a été formulée comme suit : Est-ce que les deux manuels reflètent les principes de l'approche par les compétences ? Est-ce que les programmes Tunisien et Algérien sont basés sur l'approche par les compétences et proposent des outils et stratégies d'apprentissage relatifs à cette approche ? Existe-t-il des similitudes concernant le contenu des et les procédures suivies dans les deux manuels ? Existe-t-il des similitudes concernant l'élaboration, le contenu du et le type de programmes adoptés dans les deux pays ? Existe-t-il des similitudes dans l'organisation du contenu des deux manuels puisque l'approche adoptée est similaire ? Est-ce que la Tunisie et l'Algérie visent le même profil de sortie à la fin du niveau d'études concerné et le cycle secondaire en général ? L'analyse et la comparaison des manuels et des programmes scolaires nous ont conduits aux conclusions suivantes : Le contenu des deux manuels est similaire et conforme aux principes de l'approche par les compétences adoptée par les deux pays. Les habiletés langagières sont accentuées d'une manière importante dans les deux manuels pour permettre à l'apprenant une maîtrise de l'oral ainsi que de l'écrit (savoir écouter et comprendre, savoir parler et communiquer, savoir lire et comprendre et savoir écrire et produire dans des contextes différents) avec une présentation et organisation différentes. L'aspect culturel de la langue n'est pas accentué comme il devrait l'être dans les deux manuels car les deux programmes ont donné à cet aspect de la langue une place primordiale. L'approche choisie pour l'enseignement de la culture Anglophone n'est pas la mieux adaptée au contexte de l'approche par les compétences puisque il n'y a aucune étude contrastive de la culture nationale et la culture étrangère qui permet une meilleure compréhension, acceptation et ouverture au monde, ce qui est considéré comme étant la démarche la mieux appropriée à l'approche par les compétences et ses recommandations. . L'écrit est l'habileté la plus avantagée dans les deux programmes, et comme dans les deux manuels en vue de l'examen final du niveau secondaire qui est principalement un examen basé sur l'écrit (*baccalauréat*). Les deux programmes sont basés sur des situations d'intégration qui sont la base de l'approche par les compétences. Le programme Algérien à la différence du Tunisien est basé sur des projets (l'un des principes de l'approche par les compétences). Les finalités de l'enseignement de l'anglais dans le cycle secondaire présentent de très proches similitudes entre les deux pays. Les deux programmes sont basés sur des objectifs linguistiques et de communication, méthodologiques et technologiques et socioculturels similaires. Les deux programmes procurent des stratégies et des procédures propres à chaque aspect pour permettre une acquisition facile, rapide, et riche. En général, on peut dire que les deux programmes et manuels sont similaires en considérant les principes de l'approche d'enseignement adoptée et les différences sociales et culturelles qui existent entre les deux pays. Cette étude implique qu'une recherche plus approfondie sur les manuels et programmes scolaires d'Anglais entre les pays en voie de développement pourrait guider ces pays sur des aspects essentiels de l'éducation.

## ملخص

من خلال هذه الرسالة قمنا بتحليل ومقارنة محتوى الكتابين المدرسين للغة الانجليزية والمنهجين المدرسين اللذان يمثلان أساس وقاعدة هذين الكتابين في كلا من الدولة الجزائرية والتونسية.

الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو إظهار واستكشاف الخصائص المتعلقة بتساوي الكتابين وتطبيقهما على أساس أهداف الطريقة المنهجية والتعليمية المسماة بالمقاربة بالكفاءات CBA التي اتخذها البلدين عند تغيير المناهج والكتب المدرسية من أجل تتبع تطورات العالم والإنسان. لقد حاولنا من خلال هذه الدراسة التحليلية الإجابة على التساؤلات التالية: هل الكتابين التونسي والجزائري يتابعان ويرضيان أسس الطريقة المنهجية والتعليمية CBA؟ هل المناهجيين المدرسين (التونسي والجزائري) يطبقان ويظهران أسس الطريقة المنهجية التعليمية المختارة؟ هل يوجد تشابه بين محتويات وطرق التعليم بين الكتابين التونسي والجزائري؟ هل يوجد تشابه بين محتوى نوع أو أنواع المنهجيين المستعملين؟ هل مكونات الكتابين تقدم محتويات (دروس وتطبيقات) بطريقة متشابهة؟ وهل البلدان يتشابهان فيما يخص نوع الهدف المنتظر للسنّة النهائي و للدراسة الثانوية؟ تحليل ومقارنة النتائج أدت بنا إلى الخلاصة التالية: محتويات الكتابين متركزة على أساس CBA. القدرات اللغوية عن الاستماع والفهم، تحدث وتبادل المعلومات، معرفة القراءة وفهمها ومعرفة الكتابة والقدرات على الإنتاج هي أساس الكتابين كما هي أساس المقاربة بالكفاءات (CBA) لكن بتنظيمات مختلفة. الثقافة لم تقدم بالطريقة الملائمة في الكتابين التي هي مقارنة الثقافة الوطنية والأجنبية حيث أن هذه الطريقة تعتبر من بين أحسن الطرقات. لم تعطى للثقافة المكانة التي تستحقها في الكتابين حتى لو اعتبرت كأساس لتعليم اللغة في المنهجين المدرسين. لكتابة هي أهم مكونات اللغة الموجودة في الكتابين والمنهجين باعتبار أن الامتحان النهائي في الدراسة الثانوية أساس يُرد إليه أساسا بالكتابة. لمنهجان مؤسسان على تطبيقات و تمارين التي هي من اسس المقاربة بالكفاءات. انجاز مشاريع هو من اسس الكتاب الجزائري. اما الكتاب التونسي فلم يعتمد على هذا النوع من طرق التعليم. أهداف تعليم اللغة الانجليزية في البلدين تتجه في طريق متوازي. الاثنان يقدمان مختلف أنواع الأهداف التي تؤمن تطوير القدرات العقلية. المنهجين يقدمان طرق عديدة ومكونات اللغة لكي يتعلم التلميذ في محيط غني ومزود بالمعرفة. بشكل عام، يمكن أن نقول أن الكتابين متشابهين على حسب إنشائهما تحت سيطرة المقاربة بالكفاءات CBA والخلافات التي توجد بين المجتمع الجزائري و التونسي.