

**An Evaluation of English as a Foreign Language Textbooks
for Secondary Schools in Angola**

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Prologue

1. *"The More Educated a Person Is, the More Sensitive He/She is"*

Dr. Suzanne Rice, School of Education, KU

Fall 2003

2. *"Wherever there is a difficult situation, there is always an easy way out"*

(A passage from the **Quran**)

3. *"A man who doesn't bring about changes in society is old. I don't care how young he is; he's old;" and "A man who stands for nothing, falls for anything"*

Malcolm X

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the present study was to analyze, evaluate, and critique the content of the currently used Angola Secondary Schools EFL textbooks on the basis of current theories of foreign language curriculum, and to determine how well these textbooks enable teachers to effectively teach English in their classrooms. This evaluation and analysis were conducted by performing a content analysis of the format and the content of the textbooks (reading passages, comprehension questions, exercises for vocabulary learning, and points of grammar).

The Angola Secondary Schools employ two textbooks: One for Grade 7 and another one for Grade 8. Both textbooks were designed by the Ministry of Education of Angola under the National Institute for the Development of Education's supervision, and printed in its latest edition by Norprint Artes Graficas, in Portugal in 1996.

For the data collection, a checklist was applied to the two Angolan EFL textbooks. The checklist was adapted from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

A focus group, composed of six doctoral students in the field of English Language Teaching, used the checklist for evaluating the two textbooks and therein, obtaining the results. On this basis, the author analyzed, and subsequently, discussed the results.

Among the limitations of this study are that it cannot be generalized to all the Angolan educational institutions since a number of private institutions use their own

textbooks. In addition, the ACTFL's Standards used in the content analysis of this study were not created within a cross-cultural perspectives, and so it maybe difficult to say weather the ACTFL's Standards capture all the necessary components of such an analysis, especially when comes to issues of cultural awareness .

Based on the results of this study, and on the current theories of curriculum, the two Angolan EFL textbooks were considered to be inappropriate for achieving the goals set forth by the Angolan Institute for the Development of Education. The two textbooks failed to comply with most criteria contained in the checklist.

It is suggested that these two textbooks be replaced to accommodate the teachers' current practice in the classrooms. To this end, it is recommended that the Angolan authorities, in creating new EFL textbooks, follow the guidelines described from this study.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Angola is a Nation located on the southwestern Atlantic coast of Africa. The official language in Angola is Portuguese, a language inherited from the Portuguese colonization. Angola shares borders with African English-speaking countries such as Namibia and Zambia. Angola is influenced by other African countries where English is an official language, such as Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, South Africa and Zimbabwe, members of the *Commonwealths* (evolving from the former British Commonwealth). Namibia and Zambia are also member countries of the Commonwealth. All these countries, including Angola, make a community called SADC (Southern African Development Community). It is easy then to realize that, English literacy has become a big priority in Angola. Commerce with other African countries, where English is the official language, and the opening to the outside world, as in the case of cooperation with the United States of America, makes English literacy one of the government's top priority issues. The American Embassy in Luanda, the capital city, created an organization called "Center for Cultural Affairs," with the objective of teaching the English language and exchanging the cultural concerns between Angola and the United States of America.

The goal of this study was to evaluate, analyze, and critique the Angolan secondary schools “English as a Foreign Language” textbook content by comparing it against the background of current theories of second and foreign language learning. Another goal of this study was to determine how well these textbooks enable teachers to effectively operate in their classrooms.

Angolan schools employ two textbooks for teaching the English language: “English Reader for Grade 7” and “English Reader for Grade 8.” Those instruments are published by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Angola. The last time they were revised and printed was in 1996. The two English Readers textbooks have been designed using a dialogue format, following the tenets of the *Audiolingual Method*. The Audio-lingual Method is a behavioral approach in which a foreign language is put into patterned dialogues and drills. The objective of this approach is to develop the second language (L2) through repetitious training. Correct answers are reinforced by the teacher (Brown 2000). Learners do not get opportunities to be active and they are not involved in the topics of the lessons. According to Gower (1983), Taylor et al, (2000) the English textbook should be designed in such a way that learners can use the language creatively, and also the learners can be involved in the lessons. The English textbook for Grade 7 contains one hundred twenty four pages of dialogues, except for the first sixteen pages that contain pictures for students’ oral activities. The English Reader for Grade 8 has ninety-eight pages in which only seven pages are actual reading passages. Of these seven reading passages, only one passage in unit 1 contains comprehension questions, vocabulary exploration,

and grammatical exercises. These textbooks are predominantly embedded with grammar within dialogues.

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in its program “British Council Teaching English” in March 2007 makes comparison between the traditional approach and the more holistic communicative approach. This Corporation affirms that although the traditional approach aims to have students produce formally correct sentences, it focuses on the form of expressions (dialogues or pre-arranged pieces of language) rather than in content, and tends to be teacher-centered, (a characteristic common in the Angolan system that is reflected in the EFL textbook, as well). A better approach more commonly accepted in today’s L2 classrooms is the Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLTA), which is student-centered. The CLTA focuses on the natural language learning process by concentrating on the content rather than form, focuses on communication, selects on the basis of whatever language items the learner needs to know, and then, most importantly, resembles the natural language learning process by concentrating on the content/meaning of the expression rather than the form.

The main points to be considered for the evaluation and analysis of the two Angolan EFL textbooks were the textbooks content and formats. Format is the general arrangement in a constant form that a textbook has; for instance, in one chapter the reader can see a reading passage, comprehension questions, grammar, and vocabulary. In the following chapter these same elements might be found in the same sequence, and sometimes followed by their recycled knowledge or revisions.

A focus group was set up with the objective of evaluating the two Angolan EFL textbooks. The focus group proceeded with the evaluation, using as a unique tool, a checklist. The focus group read the lessons to get the general idea and afterward checked the contents according to the criteria from the checklist. The focus group was requested to evaluate the two Angolan textbooks without any further details about the textbooks' features. This procedure was observed as a way of avoiding any bias. The researcher's impartiality towards focus group's members was very important to insure an unbiased view in this study.

The format followed in this study is that of content analysis. Some of the objectives of content analysis are to analyze information, or content, which may be any document, written or oral, according to Neuman (1994). On the other hand, Krippendorff (1980) states that when applying content analysis, a researcher can make inference and identify specific characteristic of messages. Content analysis can be directed to reading passages, grammar points, vocabulary, and also the semantic aspects of a text.

The conditions for teaching EFL have always been a factor that influences teachers' dependence on textbooks in the target language to provide learners with organized content and as a resource for studying the grammar. But the emphasis in teaching a foreign language includes also the oral aspects of the language including pronunciation and production of syntactically correct sentences (Francis, 1995).

In Angola, the EFL curriculum for secondary level is represented by the students' covering and assimilation of the two English textbooks content (grade 7 and

grade 8 English Readers) and their ability to communicate, according to the goals set up by the National Institute for the Development of Education (INDE) at the Ministry of Education. These goals are national and apply to all secondary schools.

When the students leave the basic level, they are expected to have attained a functional level of English before they go to the next stages (Medium Level Schools, which is the equivalent to High Schools in the United States, and Professional schools). Once they are at these stages, they are expected to communicate in English, and be able to use the language for academic purposes.

Muhigirwa (2005) states that, “The high objective of English textbooks in the African reality, with special regard to Congo, once Zaire, is to get students to be able to communicate through interaction.” French is the official language in Congo, thus English is a foreign language. The same situation pertains for the Angolan reality. Angolan reality in this sense is reflected in the need of the students to learn English language and be able to communicate.

Textbooks are the main resource for teachers to deliver their teaching to the students. Some teachers use supplementary material, such as tape-recorder, flash-cards, and realia. It is expected that by the end of the program students will be able to speak, read, write, and overall, to communicate with these minimal resources.

Francis (1995) states that,

Textbooks developed for EFL are organized based on historical principles that provide support for the method. The method implies the use of techniques and instructional

methods designed to facilitate language learning. The methods provide the learner and teacher with materials and techniques that will secure a successful language learning outcome. Within the context of foreign language education, an instructional method typically provides a textbook, a teacher's manual, student's book, and sometimes a student's workbook (p. 8).

Francis further notes that EFL textbooks are organized following a general pattern: a typical chapter would include the following components: Chapter opener (possibly a reading passage), vocabulary and structural exercises, and comprehension questions based upon the reading passage. Other aspects of the chapter may often include cultural explanations and additional isolated language drills.

Analyzing the content of English textbooks for the Angolan situation is important because teachers rely on textbooks to operate in classroom settings. The textbook is a tool for teachers to deliver their teaching, and, on the other hand, is a tool for students to follow the teacher's activity in the classrooms. Herlihy (1992) points out that, "The evidence is clear and overwhelming that textbooks and other print materials are a major part of the teaching-learning situation. For a number of reasons, students are provided with this basic tool in all of their classes" (p. 11).

For EFL contexts, in general, textbooks are the main and reliable instrument for the teachers' and the learners' activities. For the African situation in particular, as found in Angola, textbooks represent the ultimate resource for schools.

Yi (1999) says that, “When one looks at textbooks, one expects to find units, length of units, presentation, practice, objective of the unit, and skills” (p.23). A unit may be defined as the instructional content from a book to be provided by a teacher to the students. The four skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) must be put together in order to nurture the learner with integral learning.

Yi (1999) adds that textbooks should follow a format in the following way: in each chapter, students may see a reading passage, reading comprehension, exercises (matching words, game for vocabulary acquisition, gap-filling exercises), together with methodological guidance. Additionally, at the beginning of each chapter, there is the title and the aim of the lesson so that students will get the first impression of or information on what they can expect to learn. This also enables teachers to focus on their activities.

Textbooks containing, for example, reading passages, comprehension exercises, and drills, would be more convenient for engaging learners in the activities, according to Francis (1995). Teachers should also have the option to apply a *variety* of effective teaching methods.

Often, some discrepancies are discovered between the curriculum and the students’ expectations; frequently, the curriculum does not approach either the students’ needs or the community.

Easton (2002) states that,

Several aspects of culturally embedded curriculum arise
from those ideas about culture, community, and learning

or enquire community. First, the culture must be articulated. Second, curriculum derives from culture. Third, the curriculum must be manageable for it to be effective within the culture. Forth, the culture itself is part of the curriculum and must be taught (p.44).

The need for a strong commitment to the development of cultural understanding within the language program is clear, particularly in the light of recent developments both nationally and internationally (Hadley, 2001). The valuing of cultural diversity is a continuing priority in education because students learn to live in an increasingly interdependent world. Also according to Hadley, the integration of culture and language teaching can contribute significantly to humanistic knowledge. The era of globalization entails three main facets: economic, political, and cultural (Sifakis N. & Sourgari, 2003).

Muhigirwa (2005) points out that, “The historical development of the teaching of EFL in Congo reveals that over the years much emphasis has been put in the acquisition of language skills through the grammar translation approach and an audio-lingual approach (ALM)” (p. 3). While the former provides and elaborates on grammar and tends to promote the use of the mother tongue to facilitate the learning, the latter fosters imitation of the native speaker through the use of repetitive drills and audio-visual materials.

The case that is described by Muhigirwa is similar to that found in Angola where some teachers use these traditional ways of language teaching. Grammar

translation (GT) is the translation of the English language rules into mother tongue so as to help students to better understand the way the English language functions.

Hurley (2000) notes that students who are taught through the GT method know the rule of a language but cannot produce it. The use of GT does not promote communication. McLaughlin (1998), based on Krashen's "Five Hypotheses about Second Language Acquisition," with particular reference to the Monitor Hypothesis, contends that optimal users typically are able to use grammar rules in writing, but often may not use them in speaking. To this end, the learner gets theoretical, technical accuracy to the detriment of real communication, in actual, practical usage.

The format of this study is as follows: Chapter One presents the introduction, wherein the main objective is addressed. Relevant information about the Nation of Angola is also introduced. Additionally, this chapter addresses the reasons for conducting the proposed research, as well as its contribution for improved education in Angola. Two research questions are stated that this study answered. Finally, potential limitations of this study are frankly presented and discussed.

Chapter Two addresses theories, views and perspectives of curriculum design. Ideas that this chapter addresses are when the curriculum is designed, the students' needs should be taken into consideration. The curriculum should be learner-centered rather than teacher-centered. This chapter also devotes some lines to theories of second/foreign language learning and teaching. Basic principles for language course design constitute another point worthy to consider. Finally textbook theories are also addressed.

Chapter Three is concerned with investigative methodology. This study is qualitative, using textbooks for evaluation (textbooks content and structure). The textbook description is presented, followed by the design of the data collection instrument. Then the data is presented in details for further analysis and discussions. Finally the content analysis is also defined.

Chapter Four presents the focus group results in detail. All results are interpreted and discussed in chapter five including conclusion and recommendations.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate, analyze, and critique the Angolan EFL textbooks for secondary schools on the basis of current theories of foreign language curriculum, and to determine how well these textbooks enable teachers to effectively operate in their classrooms.

A checklist was employed as the tool for gathering data in this study and a focus group was created with the objective of evaluating the two Angolan EFL textbooks using this checklist.

The checklist was adapted from those designed by Dougill (1987), Van Els et al (1984), Shrum & Glisan (2005), Mieckley (2005) following the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Standards. ACTFL is the only national organization dedicated to the improvement of the teaching and learning of all languages at all levels of instruction. It is an organization with more than nine

thousand foreign languages educators and administrators from elementary through graduate education as well as in government and industry.

One of the ACTFL's objectives is to define content standards i.e., what students should know and be able to accomplish in their foreign language experience. ACTFL has a visionary document that has been used by teachers, administrators, and curriculum developers at both and local levels to begin to improve foreign language education in schools.

The five standards from which the checklist used in this study draws its content are:

Communication

Standard 1. Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions. Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics. Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

Cultures

Standard 2. Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practice and perspectives of the culture studied. Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.

Connections

Standard 3. Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language. Students acquire information and recognize viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures

Comparisons

Standard 4. Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own. Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

Communities

Standard 5. Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting. Students show evidence of being life-long learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

Contribution of the Study

Having visited the ideas and theories of other researchers and scholars, this study addresses longtime due changes and improvement in the textbooks policy in Angola. The researcher hopes this study will be a vehicle for bringing innovation to Angola by contributing to the Angolan English education system. It is fully hoped that, from the recommendations emanated from this study, the Ministry of Education of Angola will embrace changes in the EFL curriculum.

Research Questions

In the course of his study, the researcher will set out to address the following research questions:

1. To what extent do the two Angolan “English as a Foreign Language” textbooks meet the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages’ Standards?
2. How well does the evaluation instrument used in this study -- Standards-based checklist -- help evaluate the areas of strengths or weaknesses in the two Angolan EFL textbooks?

Limitations of the study

1. This study cannot be generalized to all Angolan educational institutions as it is recognized that a number of private institutions employ their own materials.
2. This study is only applied to public secondary schools EFL textbooks.
3. The ACTFL’s Standards have not been field-tested with a variety of EFL textbooks.
4. The ACTFL’ Standards employed in the content analysis of this study were not created with the Angolan reality into consideration.

Summary

Angola is a Nation located in the Southwestern part of Africa on the Atlantic coast. Angola is an affiliate of the SADC (Southern Africa Development Community) composed mainly of African English-speaking countries; therefore, English language

has become a significant priority for those members of the community that are not English-speaking, mainly Angola and Congo (Portuguese and French speaking respectively).

Chapter Two will review the current literature concerning curriculum, trends, perspectives, and theories of foreign/second language learning and teaching. Additionally, principles of language course design will be addressed, and finally, theory of textbooks and principles of foreign language textbook selection will also be addressed.

CHAPTER TWO

THE LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will address trends, views, and perspectives of curriculum. With regard to curriculum, it will present definitions, theories, and general ideas. In addition, this chapter will present theories about second language learning and teaching, and basic ideas about language course work design. Finally, theories about textbooks will also be presented.

Curriculum Trends, Views, and Perspectives

According to the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (1978), the word “curriculum” means all the course of study offered by an educational institution and a particular course of study, often in a special field. The word curriculum comes from the Latin word *currere*, which means “to run.”

Nowadays the term “curriculum” is viewed somewhat in more technical ways, reflecting different tendencies and interpretations, according to cultures, perspectives and views. Some scholars consider curriculum as the content of instructional program considered therefore as prescriptive approaches to be followed by those responsible for the instruction. Walker (2003) defines curriculum as “A particular way of ordering content and purposes for teaching and learning in schools. Content is what teachers and students pay attention to when they are teaching and learning” (p. 5).

For Tyler (1949), content can be described as a list of school subjects, subdivided in topics, themes, concepts, or works to be covered. Purposes on the other hand, are the reasons for doing something; in this case the reason for teaching certain content. Tyler (1949) says that a particular school may have broad and general reasons, for example:

1. The objective of our school is to transmit the culture, social and technical experiences, so that students will be endowed with knowledge which will help them to be able to improve and intervene in the society.
2. The objective of our school is to foster in students the notion of good citizenry, prepared to face a democratic society.

As far as school and classroom practices are concerned, the purposes are transformed into objectives or plans as the teacher's guidance in the classrooms. At this point, objectives are more specific and confined to specific areas, which teachers expect students to learn.

Walker (2003) points out that,

Such curriculum documents coordinate teaching and learning in vital ways. They help the teachers keep in mind the big picture of what should be taught and learned over months and years and keep in track of where they are in relation to planned programs at any given time (p. 8).

In addition to curriculum being a prescriptive line as is customary, it is also a series of teachers' and schools' guides. Curriculum is to some extent a teacher's

personal document through which he/she orients the classroom task. Schools as such, take curriculum as the guidance and system of control to be exercised over teachers and students as evaluated by means of outcomes.

Any adoption of a new policy, or a new methodology, is the result of social constraint. According to Armstrong (1989), there are two factors that make curriculum specialists operate: social and cultural environment. These two factors impose certain constraints or influences. For curriculum specialists, the influence may be direct and indirect. The first influence comes from the authorities and the second is the influence which comes from the social and cultural environment that pushes curriculum specialists to embrace some decisions and to disavow others.

School is the center of the attention for curriculum work. So when the curriculum is designed, the community's culture and the students' tendencies should be considered, otherwise, the content will not meet expectations of the learners and of the community.

Easton (2003) expresses the idea as follows,

The culture of a school through, somewhat abstract and intangible influences everything else about it, including curriculum. At its best, culture is a focus, a true compass pointing North, that helps everything else in the school make sense. Even a school that cannot articulate its culture has one, but that unarticulated but operative culture affects everything else about that school (p. 40).

Culture is the reflection of life and learning experiences that schools turn into instructional programs and transmit to students. It should be in the schools that the community's values are emphasized and the students' tendencies treated. It is worthy to consider, therefore, that if the school should represent the community, then curriculum should emanate from the culture, because the culture comes alongside with the community itself.

Easton (2002) still contends that, "Customizing curriculum to the culture of the school does not mean that an outside curriculum (imposed by a district, a state, or the federal government) must be rejected." If the curriculum represents the community and derives from- and promotes- the schools culture, then it must be manageable by everyone within the learning community: students, parents, teachers, school and district administrators, and all needs to be understood; it needs to make sense.

Educating incorporates the faithful transference of social values, as well as technical skills, according to the current social trends or social standards. In this way schools represent transforming forces aimed at molding students according to the social requirements. Dewey (1919) considers school as a "microcosm of the society." Society means people living together, working towards common lines, in a common spirit, and with reference to common prospects. It is, therefore, common that from the family educational settings, students attain limited knowledge, a knowledge which tends to be parochial. Seen from another perspective, schools are more devoted to reaching across a wide range of concerns, teaching all sorts of important skills that

the family does not in its limited perspective. For example, providing students with technical abilities, fostering the notion of problem-solving capacity, and teaching them how to behave in ways that embody the best values of society. A democratic society requires that students learn how to embrace diversity, anticipate positive social improvements and learn wholesome social values.

Hlebowitsh (2005) states that, “Democracy begins in school. All teachers, irrespective of their academic domain or discipline, make some contribution to the overall democratizing effect in the school” (p. 44).

Some theorists have already expressed concerns in relation to the students and the democratic society. They had the idea that the school should be linked to the community, teaching practical situations so that students could be prepared for the future. For example, Dewey, Froebel, Maslow, and others were already interested in studying the relationship between students, society, and democracy. Dewey once said that he wanted schools to teach students to think. The world’s evolution is unstoppable; therefore, there is the need to step ahead in order to meet its requirements, such as technical, social, economical, and scientific.

Ornstein & Hunkins (1998) indicate,

We are at the threshold in our curricular thinking. We are realizing that our programs must be designed so that students not only transmit that which is good in society and world culture, but also can transform themselves and their cultures (p. 394).

The new curriculum design derives from the dynamics of reality for humans in action. Transforming cultures does not mean that one has to relegate his own culture to accommodate himself into a new trend; rather, one has to admit that coexistence involves sharing the same or even different principles, respecting differences and accepting them. What one does in society will ultimately affect others and what others do will, in turn, affect still others in a great chain of learning and progress.

This is a dynamic, a time-honored process that is invisibly related to the expansion of knowledge. In like manner, Apple (1990) avers that, “I have argued that schools do not merely ‘process’ people but they ‘process’ knowledge as well.” (p. 36)

Schools should lead in transforming people into good citizenship, so that they can meet and improve the current social trends. Schools, in turn, should transform knowledge to meet students’ trends for improvement. These become indispensable factors for a positive functioning of any educational enterprise.

Armstrong (1989) contends that when curriculum is highly centralized, it removes decision-making from the hands of individuals who, ultimately, will have to use the new programs and materials. The individuals in this case are teachers, the elements who are directly involved in classroom activities. The case of highly centralized curriculum has generated difficulties among teachers in dealing with the curriculum. One of the points that generate difficulties among teachers is the mismatch between the new curriculum and the students’ current level of knowledge as well as the teachers’ perspectives.

It is universal that curriculum emanates from the governments. It is these governments that set the guidelines for the schools. In many countries, the curriculum is centralized, thus determining the way a given society is projected.

In order to avoid discrepancies between curriculum and the students' expectations, according to Walker & Soltis (1997), Tyler (1949), Ornsteins & Hunkins (1998), it is always recommended to identify the instructional goals, identify the objectives, plan instructional activities, develop assessment tools, and implement instruction. Goal statements may be used as the entry point for the planning processes. Goal statement is crucial to the teaching and learning process. Goals are extremely important in the sense that they determine what teachers are supposed to teach, and what students are expected to learn. Instructional goals for schools are established in many different ways. Some are mandated through legislation. Others are established by accrediting agencies. Most of these insist that students be demonstrably able to perform a particular set of skills. The local boards will often affirm the goals established by the legislators as well as the accrediting agencies and then additionally press their own special emphasis upon goals they feel are of greatest importance to the local school district.

Theories of Foreign Language Learning and Teaching

Learning and teaching are two terms strictly associated. One cannot teach if someone has not understood what is being taught. Newport (1989), Selinker (2000), Brown (2000), and others have been studying the process of learning and teaching a

foreign language. This section discusses the theories of foreign language learning and teaching.

League (1973) notes that, “Second Language Acquisition” has also been referred to by a number of researchers as the *Total Immersion Method* of learning a language. This means that the environment in which a learner is emerged plays an important role for a second language acquisition. Additionally, Total Immersion Method means that a learner, besides being immersed in the environment (place) and acquiring a second language, he/she also learns the culture of that place.

Selinker (2000) makes distinction between FLL (Foreign Language Learning) and SLA (Second Language Acquisition). He phrases it in the following way:

Foreign Language Learning is generally differentiated from second language acquisition in that the former refers to the learning of a nonnative language in the environment of one’s native language, for example, French speakers learning English in France or Spanish speakers learning French in Spain. This is most commonly done within the context of a classroom situation.

Second Language Acquisition, on the other hand, generally refers to the learning of a nonnative language in the environment in which that language is spoken, for example, German speakers learning Japanese in Japan. This may or may not take place in classroom settings (p.5).

Learning and teaching a foreign language are interrelated. The first language plays an important role in learning a foreign or a second language. For a learner to acquire a second language, the environment is a determining factor because language is learning within social context.

Selinker further notes that for the process of learning a FL to be understood, one should know the *cognitive perspective*, a factor that helps teachers determine the way a FL should be taught and learned. In cognitive theory, learning is seen as an active, constructive process in which learners select and organize informational input, relate to prior knowledge, and use the information appropriately. The acquisition of a FL should be more successful when learners are actively involved in directing their own learning in both classroom and non-classroom settings.

Foreign Language Learning

The way a language is taught must be taken into any consideration of how languages are learned. Tyler (1949) states that when a content to be delivered to students is designed, two factors should be taken into account: the first is the way students learn, which determines the philosophy of learning, and the second is the way the content is designed, which determines the philosophy of teaching. In a similar way, Brown (2000) underlines that learning a language will determine one's philosophy of teaching. Moreover, there are a number of theories about how a second language is learned. Some researchers present views different from each other.

Lenneberg (1967), as presented by Flege (1987) concluded that language readiness begins around age two and declines with cerebral maturation in the early teens. He speculates that inevitably adults speak foreign language with an accent if L2 learning begins after childhood, because the ability to learn new forms of pronunciation is inhibited as the result of the firm structuring of neural processes through cerebral lateralization.

Johnson & Newport (1989) have argued that there is a strong age-related decline in proficiency for language prior to puberty (defined arbitrarily as 15 years of age), and that there is random variation in achievement among those who are exposed to a second language later in life.

The first language plays an important role for second language learning. Through the process of transfer, learners are able to produce utterances though with errors. Hurley (2000) argues that this phenomenon happens because the learner suffers interference from the old habits of his first language. Hurley still contends that learners engage in a rule-finding process as they acquire the second language.

Krashen (1981) contends that there is a distinction between learning and acquiring a language. He says that learning is a natural process which occurs in an unconscious way; as when we acquire our first language, for example. Acquiring a language means that we internalize the rule of the language (grammar) and this process occurs in a conscious way. On the other hand, learning a language in a classroom setting is the point where we are made aware of the rules to be applied in a conscious way and that is learning, not *acquiring* a language.

While Krashen refers to language acquisition as the process of getting a language in a natural setting, Schutz (2002), based on Vygotsky's theories, calls the same process (acquisition) "Internalization of Language." Schutz states that all fundamental cognitive activities occur in a series of social history and form the product of sociohistorical development. In the process of cognitive development, language is a crucial tool for determining how a child will learn and think. Further, Schutz affirms that an essential feature of learning is that it awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when a child is in interaction with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers.

Referring to Krashen's input hypothesis, Schutz emphasizes that language acquisition takes place during human interaction in a foreign language environment. Thus beyond a learner current stage, a maximum acquisition takes place when he is exposed to "comprehensible input."

According to McLaughlin (1988), for a second language to be attained, memory plays a crucial role. The memory has two sides: Short Term Memory (STM) and Long Term Memory (LTM). Still according to McLaughlin's explanation, the information comes to a learner's brain, is selected, and in the form of a mental image or representation is "recorded" and stored in STM designed to store immediate information. Concerning the second phase, the LTM is related to the conscious way of learning a second language. At this point, students need the ability and capacity to organize, "compile," and retain words. The LTM is that part of the memory

responsible for storing information for a long period of time. In this process, the learner relies on his mental ability and special techniques to better retain words.

In his view, Brown (2000), referring to competence and performance, contends that competence is one's underlying knowledge of the system of a language- its rules of grammar, its vocabulary, i.e., all the pieces of a language and how those pieces fit together. Performance is actually production (speaking, writing) or the comprehension (listening, reading) of linguistic events. Production and comprehension coincide with receptive and productive processes of a second language. In the receptive process the learner receives and interprets the comprehensive input, and in the productive process the learner uses the language-meaningful output. Gass and Selinker (2000) point out that, "Crucial to the success of any conversation is the ability to understand and to be understood."

Spolsky (1989) notes that language is primarily a social mechanism, languages are learned in social contexts. Even in the case of a first language where the biological basis is important, there is strong influence from social factors concerned with the special relations of child and caretaker. Spolsky further adds that the process of first language can be better understood if the social dimension is included. Social factors have even more importance in the case of second language learning because of the greater complexity of the second language learner's social context and resulting increase in its ability to cause variability.

In the case of Angola, a foreign language is learned within an academic setting. The environment outside the classroom has less influence on the process of

foreign language learning. The process of learning a foreign language occurs in schools. However, learning a second language, such as a local language, in Angola, is a different process compared to learning a foreign language, such as English, which is not used in the environment.

Foreign Language Teaching

Globalization is one of the major defining characteristics of modern society. The effect of globalization upon English Language Teaching deserves high consideration. Because the English language is becoming more and more universal, therein, its teaching should become more specialized, making it more accessible to the users or speakers.

Brown (2000) defines teaching style as showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instructions, guiding in the study of something, providing with knowledge, causing to know or understand. Additionally, Brown states that teaching cannot be defined apart from learning. Teaching is guiding and facilitating learning, enabling learners to learn, setting the conditions for learning. The understanding of how the learner learns will determine the philosophy of education, as well as the teaching style, the approach, the methods, and classroom techniques.

In the past, the teaching of language was more concerned with the acquisition of the arbitrary rules of grammar. Learners were limited to the digestion of language rules rather than with the communication features. Nowadays the teaching of a

language is primarily concerned with communication itself: Getting students to produce and interpret language creatively. Brown (2000) affirms that, “Today language teaching is not easily categorized into methods and trends. Instead, each teacher is called on to develop a sound overall approach to various language classrooms” (p. 14).

Teachers use different approaches to teach language as they find unique talents in their students who differ from each other, as well. Teachers can use particular designs and techniques for teaching a foreign language in a particular context. Every teacher is unique. The teacher’s task is to understand the properties of those relationships.

Brown mentions the “Strategies-based Instruction” (SBI). The goal of this approach is to emphasize the application of both learning and communication strategies to classroom learning. The point here is to make the language classroom an effective milieu for learning.

Concerning teaching a foreign language, Brown introduces the following concept:

Teachers help students to become aware of their own style preferences and the strategies that are derived from these styles. Through checklists, tests, and interviews, teachers can become aware of students’ tendencies and then offer advice on beneficial in- class and extra-class strategies. Teachers can embed strategies awareness and practice into their pedagogy. As they utilize such techniques as a communicative

game, rapid reading, fluency exercises, and error analysis, teachers can help students both consciously and subconsciously to practice successful strategies.

Ur (1996) introduces her view about language teaching. She contends that practice is the key for the students' effective learning. Practice is related to exercises and activities. The pre-learning phase is the phase in which learners should have a good preliminary grasp of the language they are required to practice. Students are required to do a practice activity based on something they have not yet begun to learn. All the above theories have been making their way into the classroom.

Hardley (2001), when referring to Omaggio (1983), presented some of the insights generated recently in the field of language teaching. She states that, when teaching a foreign language, a teacher should consider that opportunity must be provided for the students to practice using language in a range of contexts likely to be encountered in the target culture. Also, opportunity must be provided for active communicative interaction among students. The teacher should encourage students to practice carrying out a range of functions likely to be necessary in dealing with others in the target culture. As learners produce language, various forms of instruction and evaluation feedback can be useful in facilitating the progression of their skills towards more precise and coherent language use.

However, in other places, as in the case of Angola, students learn and practice writing through copying sentences which contain grammatical points, and write vocabulary as part of the students' rote learning. Another common practice for writing skills consists of gap-filling exercises and the writing of compositions. In the

case of Angola this activity is called “Free-writing-activity.” In this way, students are free to show how well they are able to organize ideas and express themselves. Compositions are well-regarded methods for writing in Angola. Concerning other skills, as the case of speaking, listening, and reading, students are too often limited to the teacher’s performance as the reliable resource in the classroom. For example, students follow directions emanating from the teacher as the listening activity. Sometimes the teacher brings a tape-recorder to the classroom. For reading skills, students read dialogues, sentences, and texts from a textbook. For speaking skills, students perform “role-play” from the dialogues in the textbooks. These practices are readily identified as pertaining to the Audiolingual method, which, according to Brown (2000) is the rote-learning (memorization of dialogue patterns, as well as vocabulary words, grammar structures, and sentences written for the students to copy. A glance back in history reveals few if any research-based language teaching methods were common prior to twentieth century.

Morgan & Neil (2001) argue that the audiolingual method that emerged during the 1960’s and, with the development of technological aids, the audiovisual method that complements it, were largely based on behaviorist learning theory. These view the language prevalent in the 1950’s and early 1960’s primarily as a process of habit formation, in which the rule of the linguistic environment or “input” was all important. Language acquisition was said to result from imitation wherein the learner imitated structures modeled by the teacher.

The main criticism of these methods was theoretical, concerned itself with the very nature of language per se. It was thought that language was more than imitation and habit formation and that the learners should have a creative role in the process. Another criticism was that drill taught only structured-language chunks and that learners who performed well in the language laboratory were incapable of flexible linguistic usage when placed in a real-life situation.

ALM has been replaced by communicative approach which makes the language teaching more effective. However, the ALM is still the predominant method used in Angola, mainly by those teachers without any specialization in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT).

Principles of Language Course Design

Language course design is an ongoing process involving teachers' activities, students' perspectives, and the community at large. Language course design is not a process that can be easily quantified, codified or replicated. Eisner (1985) says that, "Teaching is an art in a sense that the teacher may be able to deal with unpredictable situations that occur in the classroom." Thus language course design in addition to being an ongoing process is also challenging and dynamic responsibility.

According to Wulf & Schave (1984), Graves (1996), & Woodward (2000), there are six principles of language course design: (1) Conceptualizing the Content, (2) assessing needs, (3) formulating goals and objectives, (4) developing materials, (5) designing an assessment plan and (6) organizing the course.

Conceptualizing the Content

Conceptualizing the content means to think about what you want your students to learn in the course, given who they are, their needs, and the purpose of the course. The product of conceptualization of content is a kind of syllabus in that it *delineates* precisely what you will teach. Usually what one teaches exists in the form of textbook which is a complex, elaborated product. Even when using a textbook, it is still important to go through the process of conceptualizing the content so that on the one hand one can understand how the syllabus is constructed, and alternatively, become aware of one's own priorities with respect to its usage with students.

Wulf & Schave (1984) states that,

Content is the basis by which learning activities are linked to each other, to goals, and to theoretical rationale. Meaningful selection of content will involve variation from one learning situation to another because realistically content must be taken into account the strength and weaknesses of the teachers and of the learners (p. 24).

Woodward (2001) points out that the main source of information about a class will be derived from the students themselves. Before doing any initial planning, one can extract the information. Thereafter, to determine what one wants the students to learn is to know them (to know who they are, their needs, and therefore, the kind of course that will be appropriate for them).

Assessing needs

Graves (1996), has further stated that assessing needs consists of giving students choice on what they desire from a given content. Sometimes students might be overwhelmed by all the information from the content. However, once the needs are understandingly discussed and caringly negotiated with the students, the teacher can thereafter shape the appropriately curriculum.

Graves adds that, “Needs assessment is the systematic and ongoing process of gathering information about students’ needs and preferences, interpreting the information, and then making course decisions based on the interpretation in order to meet the needs.”

Graves further states that for assessing students’ needs, there are three time frames for gathering information: (1) Pre-course, (2) initial, and (3) ongoing:

(1) Pre-course needs assessment takes place prior to the start of the course and can inform decision about the content, goals, objectives, activities, and choice of the materials. Generally, assessment activities that determine placement are done at the program level so that students may be placed in the right course at the right level.

(2) Initial needs assessment takes place during the initial stage of a course, the first week or weeks, and it depends on the time-frame of the course. The kinds of information gathered prior to teaching a course can also be gathered during the first few class sessions.

(3) Ongoing needs assessment takes place throughout the course. One advantage of ongoing needs assessment is that it is grounded in shared experiences

and it may actually involve changing the nature of the course as it progresses. It helps to determine what is being taught, how it is being taught, how it is being evaluated, as well as whether these methods have been truly effective for the students.

Formulating goals and objectives

Hall & Hewings (2001) ask themselves the question: “What are the purposes and the intended outcomes of the course? What will my students need to do or learn to achieve these goals?” According to them, goals are general statements of the overall, long-term purposes of the course. Objectives express the specific way in which the goals will be achieved. The goals of a course represent the destination; the objectives, and the various points that chart the course toward its destination.

Graves (1996) contends that the first step in formulating goals is to list all the possible goals you could have for your particular course, based on your conceptualization of content, your beliefs, and/or your assessments of students’ needs. For the objective to be useful, it should contain three components: performance, condition, and criterion. (1) Performance describes what the learners will be able to do. (2) Condition describes the circumstances in which the learners are able to do something, and (3) criterion, the degree to which they are able to do something worthwhile and effective.

Developing materials

Graves (1996) defines materials development as the planning process by which a teacher creates units and lessons within those units to carry out the goals and objectives of the course. Material development takes place on a continuum of

decision-making and creativity, ranging from being given a textbook and a timetable in which to “cover it” and decision-making to developing all the materials the teacher will use in class.

However, just because a teacher does not have responsibility to choose materials, does not mean that he/she cannot exercise creativity in using them, still, according to Graves: Teachers can be involved in material development from the moment they pick up a textbook and teach from it. Once a teacher is the mediator between course content and the students, inevitably he/she will have to deal with the course material, and therefore, he/she will use his/her skills to get students gain interest and learn.

Designing an assessment plan

Assessment plays three interrelated and overlapping roles in course design. The first is the assessing needs, the second is assessing students’ learning, and the third is evaluating the course itself (Graves 2001:207). Broadly speaking, need assessment can help to answer the question *What (and how) do students need to learn with respect to ___?* Course evaluation answers the question *How effective is/was the course in helping them learn ___?* An assessment of course should take into account these three different types of assessment, still according to Graves.

In a general view, Graves says that assessment is directed to the students and to the course, as well. The course is assessed by the teacher and by the students. In summative evaluation, in addition to the teacher and students, the institution may have official means of evaluating the effectiveness of a course. Each aspect of a

course design including the textbook can be assessed and evaluated. The main purpose for assessing the course is to help make decisions on both an ongoing and final basis about the course.

Organizing the course

Thinking about organizing a course is to make decisions about what to teach, how to teach it, and in what order. Graves (1996) explains the concept of organizing a course in the following terms:

Organizing a course is deciding what the underlying systems will pull together the content and material in accordance with the goals and objectives and that give the course a shape and structure. Organizing a course occurs on different levels: the level of the course as whole; the level of subset of the whole; units, modules; or strands within the course; and the individual lessons (p. 125).

For a course organization to be feasible, the organizing principles should be determined, the units, modules, or strands based on the organizing principles should be identified. Another point to consider is the sequence of the units, the determination of the language and skills content of the units, and finally, organizing the content within each unit.

Based on Tyler's (1949) rationale, Walker & Soltis (1997) present a similar idea. They contend that a school should attain, first of all, educational purposes, aims and objectives, and should also be aware of what educational experiences i.e., subject

matter need to be provided. Once the objectives are developed, it becomes possible to determine what learning experiences might lead to their attainment. Thereafter, the learning experiences must be organized so that experiences in one class or subject are in harmony with the experiences in other classes.

The analysis and evaluation of a textbook should be done following predetermined aspects, for instance, its visual presentation (drawings, colors, figures, and illustrations), sentences, grammatical points, and text contents in general. These aspects are related to content analysis.

Content Analysis

Neuman (1994) defines *content analysis* as the technique for gathering and analyzing the content of a text. The text is anything written, visual, or spoken that serves as a medium for communication. The content refers to words, illustrations, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes, or any message that can be communicated.

Additionally, Fraenkel & Wallen (2000) define content analysis as a technique that enables researchers to study human behavior in an indirect way through an analysis of their communications. It is just as its name implies: the analysis of usually, but not necessarily, written content of communication. Textbooks, essays, newspapers, novels, magazine articles, songs, political speeches, advertisements, pictures- in fact, the content of virtually any type of communication may be analyzed.

A person or group's conscious and unconscious beliefs, attitudes, values, and ideas often are revealed in their communications.

Fraenkel & Wallen (2000) add that the analysis of such communications can tell us a great deal about how human beings live. To analyze these messages, a researcher needs to organize a huge amount of material by developing appropriate categories, ratings, or scores that the researcher can use for subsequent comparison in order to illuminate what he or she is investigating.

With content analysis it is possible to compare content across many texts and analyze it. Francis (1995) also defines content analysis in a general view as any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specific characteristic of messages.

According to Krippendorff (1980), content analysis may be conducted either for qualitative data or for quantitative data and can be replicable. In addition to the design, the execution is another important activity in content analysis. It includes sampling, classifying, and analyzing.

Textbooks can be the objects of content analysis to determine how their organization relates to the course design (goals, objectives, content, and their structures). A textbook whose organization complies with the learners' needs results in suitable materials.

Textbooks Theory

Textbooks are the curriculum end-product. From the development phase, through design, to evaluation and then implementation, finally, the curriculum is approved and turned into marketable products- textbooks. Textbooks are a major part of the teaching-learning situation. Students are provided with this material while teachers have it as a way of following guidelines, often determined by the local or central authorities.

Textbooks provide guidance for teachers and students. They present an attempt to distill and interpret the knowledge and scholarship of a given discipline. Additionally, textbooks give students information so that they may begin to understand individual concepts and general ideas. According to Britton, Woodward, & Binkley (1993), textbooks represent what is known about a discipline, modifying according to the needs, knowledge, and maturity of the anticipated audience.

Britton, Woodward and Binkley still state that, “Textbooks, then, are a standard resource, reference, and instructional tool, and so, it is no surprising that it is from those institutional materials that teachers teach and students learn” (p. 115).

Keith (1986) states that,

The impact of textbooks on the quality of educational outcomes cannot be underestimated. Frequently, the classroom text is the only resource on a given subject to which students will be exposed in their entire educational

careers. Moreover, textbooks shape and direct the content and methods of presentation used by many teachers (p. 24).

Textbooks are the primary resource for learners and for teachers as well. Textbooks may be represented in two facets: ideological and pedagogical. They represent, on the other hand, the community and reflect its beliefs. Textbooks are pedagogical as they serve as guidance for teachers in their role. Textbooks represent the primary source for students as well as for teachers. The power of the textbook is particularly evident when we realize that nearly 75% of the students' total classroom time is spent while engaged with instructional materials, (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998).

Herlihy (1992) also considers that the recipients of all of these decisions are the students as they are the ultimate consumers of textbooks. Britton, Woodward & Binkley (1993) emphasize that "Textbooks are the result of a complex marketplace that includes numerous consumers, including those who seek to influence what is consumed, and a small group of publishers who attempt to respond to market demands" (p. 116).

Some textbooks, nevertheless, fail to cope with school or community needs. As a result, some schools are compelled to supplement the teaching-learning activities with their own supplementary materials. Britton, Woodward, & Binkley (1993) further contend that, "Unfortunately, there is little research on student "feelings" about textbooks." Finally, Nitsche (1992) points out that, "If textbooks are properly designed they will fill the needs of the curricula, the teacher, and the student."

Senior (2006) states that,

They (textbooks) have clear organizational structure and contain careful balanced and graded grammar, vocabulary, skills work and task. Topics and themes are selected with attention to what is likely to be of interest to the presumed users of the book. The accompanying teacher's book, written on the assumption that teachers will go through the book in a sequential manner, gives clear instructions as to how it should be used (p. 144).

With this idea in mind, one can conclude that the current textbooks should be easy to use for the teachers as well as for the students. A good textbook for students should be well designed, clear, and attractive. Concerning teachers, the teachers' manual should contain methodological guidance that will help the teachers operate effectively in the classroom. All coursebooks for the teachers should provide a sense of direction, coherence and continuity to enhance their language programs.

Principles of English as a Foreign Language Textbook Selection

When an EFL textbook is selected, there are certain criteria that must be taken into consideration, for example, the characteristics of the audience, the culture of the community, and the goal of the programs. Some EFL textbooks written in English-speaking countries do not fit the students' cultural sensitivities. Some teachers are forced to make changes to accommodate learners according to their environment.

Geringer (2002) states that, “Prior to selecting a textbook, educators should thoroughly examine the program curriculum. If the goals and curriculum of the program are clear and well defined, the parallel with certain textbooks may become obvious.”

Educators must prioritize the factors most crucial to their situations. Using individual textbooks for certain teaching situations will allow for more precise matching with course objectives and a greater variety in design and content. In order to find out more about the criteria for textbook selection, Garenger further poses two questions, as follows:

- Does the text focus on the skills it claims to focus on?
- Does it actually teach these skills or does it merely provide practice in the skills students already have?

It is important to ensure, for example, that a textbook claiming to teach reading skills focuses on engaging students in critical analyses of different types of texts, rather than focusing primarily on listening or writing skills. An example of a situation posed by the second question would be a listening textbook that provides students ample information on how to develop actual listening skills, such as how to listen to main ideas versus details, to recognize organizational pattern, to take more valuable notes, and so forth.

Daoud A. & Celce-Murcia M. (1979) apply the term “Preliminary information” when referring to textbooks selection and evaluation, and they set up the following criteria:

1. Background information on the students:

- a) Age range,
- b) Proficiency level in English,
- c) Level of general education,
- d) Background language(s) homogeneous, heterogeneous, and
- e) Reasons for studying English.

2. Course syllabus:

- a) Relative emphasis given to each skill (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).
- b) Those tasks each skill is needed for most (e.g., reading technical literature in physics);
- c) Relative emphasis given to each language area (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation);
- d) The use to which the language material will be put (e.g., how much of the vocabulary will be used for recognition or for both recognition and production purposes?);
- e) Relative attention given to mechanics (penmanship, spelling, pronunciation).

3. Institutional data

- a) Typical class size;
- b) Time: years and/or hours per week allocated to the study of English;
- c) Type of physical environment/support (e.g., classroom size, flexibility of the seating arrangement, etc).

Sheldon (1988) contends that coursebooks are perceived by many to be the route map of any English Language Teaching program. Coursebooks determine the structure, shape, and the destination of the English language Teaching program. Sheldon also adds that when textbooks do not fit into students' levels, teachers try to create their own material as a way to revamp any insufficiency; however, these materials are never validated because official textbooks are always on the top of the educational area worldwide. But these frustrations can be assuaged, at least potentially, when local textbooks are developed in order to accommodate the on-the-spot needs of the learners as well as the preferences of the teachers.

Some researchers have previously used evaluation tools in the form of checklist. Van Els et al. (1984) consider that the checklist should be clear and categorical and should allow differentiation. Dougill (1987) says that a checklist should contain framework, length of unit(s), subject matter, form, and course component. Shrum & Glisan (1994, 2005) recommend the use of a checklist based on ACTFL's Foreign Language Standards to evaluate foreign language textbooks. Yi (1999) says that the checklist should be divided at clearly delineated and identifiable places in the textbook. Finally, Mieckley (2005) constructed a checklist taking into consideration teachers, students, and the curriculum.

Summary

Nowadays curriculum reflects different tendencies, perspectives, and views. Some scholars consider curriculum as the content of instructional programs

prescriptive lines to be followed. Walker defines curriculum as a particular way of ordering content and purposes for teaching and learning in schools. Learning and teaching a second language are interrelated issues.

Theories about learning a foreign language are very controversial. Johnson & Newport (1989, 1991) have argued that there is a strong age-related decline in performance for language prior to puberty; while Carol (1962) states that language learning aptitude and motor skills generally increase through late adolescent. Lenneberg also states that L2 learning starts at early age and decline at teens.

A basic principle for language course design is another section that this chapter addressed. For designing a course language, one needs first of all, to conceptualize the content, assess needs, formulate goals and objectives, develop material, design assessment plan, and organize the course.

Another point that this chapter addressed was theories about textbooks. Textbooks are guidance for teachers and students. Textbooks are the primary sources for learners and for teachers. Finally, principles of English Language textbook selection are another point that this chapter addressed.

Chapter Three will address the methodology that is employed in this study. The components of this chapter are: study design, content analysis, textbooks description, framework of evaluation, and data collection procedures.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the study design and the two textbooks which were the object of this study. The two Angolan textbooks are the *English Reader* Grade 7 and the *English Reader* Grade 8. Analysis, evaluation, and critique are the points addressed in this chapter. Subsequently, this chapter addresses the framework of evaluation, which is the description of the instrument used in this research, data collection, face validity, how the instrument for this study was validated and focus group proceedings. Finally, a piloting study is presented.

Study Design

This study utilized a qualitative design. Two textbooks were evaluated, analyzed, and critiqued. The evaluating tool for this research was adapted from ACTFL including some of the ideas of other scholars who have evaluated textbooks using instruments based on this organization's standards. Some of these scholars include Van Els et al (1984), Dougill (1987), Shrum & Glisan (1994, 2005), Yi (1999), and Mieckley (2005). The checklist was applied for evaluating the *English Reader* Grade 7 and *English Reader* Grade 8.

Research Questions

The analysis and evaluation of the two Textbooks aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent do the two Angolan EFL textbooks meet the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages' Standards?
2. How well does the evaluation instrument used in this study -- Standards-based checklist -- help evaluate the areas of strengths or weaknesses in the two Angolan EFL textbooks?

The Textbooks Description

This study considered two textbooks from Angola's Secondary Schools, *English Reader* for Grade 7 and *English Reader* for Grade 8, elaborated by the "Ministerio da Educacao de Angola," and edited in Portugal by Santo Tirso, Norprint Artes Graficas, S.A. (1996)

An important point worthy to mention is that the two textbooks (English Reader for Grade 7 and Grade 8) are mostly used by the learners. There is no separate textbook edition for the teacher that could be used as a methodological guide or so-called "teacher's edition." Teachers must employ precisely the same textbooks by contriving their own additional methods for operating in classrooms.

The textbooks used for this study are described below:

English Reader for Grade 7

This is the first of the two textbooks. It is designed for beginners at the secondary level. The textbook contains one hundred twenty four pages. The table of contents at the end of the textbook numbers three pages, which added make a total of one hundred twenty seven pages. The first seventeen pages are presented in the form of illustrations for the learners' oral activities. This book has twenty-nine units. The units' objectives are related to grammatical points, plus few vocabulary, and language functions. For example, unit 1 is related to introducing oneself. In terms of vocabulary, unit four describes the various divisions of a house. The units in this textbook contain more grammar than exercises for vocabulary learning, or questions for checking reading comprehension. Grammar is introduced in the form of dialogues throughout the textbook.

The English Reader for Grade 7 was first published in 1977, two years after the Nation's independence in 1975. In 1996 the textbook was reprinted without any significant change. The only change is in the cover design, which is now grayish-blue instead of the red, yellow, and black which represented the Angolan national flag colors.

See appendix A for English Reader Grade 7 textbook sample.

English reader for Grade 8

English reader for Grade 8 is composed of ninety-eight pages plus five pages of table of contents. Altogether there are one hundred three pages. This textbook

represents the secondary level and is the continuation of the first textbook (Grade 7). The ninety -eight pages comprise sixteen units. Of these ninety-eight pages, seven are concerned with reading passages of which only three, in the first unit, contain exercises and grammatical points. The pages are in dialogues format, as is in Grade 7. At this level, learners are expected to be able to communicate. This second textbook was also published in 1977. In 1996, as in Grade 7 reader, the textbook was reprinted with no significant changes made. In terms of content, the newer edition remains the same, although some few pages were omitted. The content consists of additional grammar and language functions. For example, on page eleven, unit eleven, there is a reading passage with comprehension exercises and questions for checking students' comprehension. There are also language exercises. Concerning grammar, this unit introduces learners to nouns with irregular plurals. The seven reading passages have been designed for learners to practice reading skills. Some chapters provide learners with language functions, while other chapters introduce vocabulary. See appendix B for the English Reader Grade 8 textbook sample.

Framework of Evaluation

The purpose of this study was to analyze, evaluate, and critique the content of the two Angolan textbooks which make part of the secondary schools program of EFL. The evaluation, analysis, and critique of the textbooks were conducted by employing one checklist adapted from the ACTFL's Standards and validated by three ESL/EFL professionals of at the University of Kansas, School of Education. This

checklist was designed to gather holistic information about the two Angolan EFL textbooks. The two textbooks were thoroughly evaluated by the focus group formed by six individuals.

The procedures for analyzing the two Angolan EFL textbooks are as follows:

The focus group read the entire set of lessons from chapters of each textbook to get the general understanding of the content. By looking at the checklist, the group went through the criteria, and checked whether a certain aspect of the lesson complied or not with the objective of the criterion and categorically decided (yes or no). Each lesson was verified with all the criteria until the entire textbook was evaluated. “Yes” meant that the aspect complied with the criterion and “No” meant that the aspect did not comply with the criterion. In some cases, a particular aspect of the textbook content was not applicable. For this, the focus group decided: “N. Ap.” (Not applicable); this meant that the aspect to be analyzed did not apply according to the objective of the analysis, and comments followed.

Sometimes, however, there was a particular aspect that did not comply with “Yes”, “No”, or “N. Ap.” In these cases, the focus group skipped and went straight to the comments and described the aspect. Going to the next lesson, the procedure was the same until the entire textbook was covered. For this procedure, however, the focus group had to read the lesson first in order to have a general view of the content. In every case, the nature of the criterion determined which aspect was to be analyzed.

For a better understanding of the evaluation procedures, a few examples of evaluative entries are included here:

Grade 7 textbook

Lesson: “An Arithmetic Lesson” (Unit 5, page 42)

Focus Area 1. Textbook Overview

Criterion 1. Is the objective expressed in each lesson or unit? - No. There is only the title and dialogues with the personages’ drawings.

Criterion 10. Are the illustrations clear, simple, and free of unnecessary details that may confuse the learners? –Yes. The drawings in this lesson are explicit and close enough to the sentences which would make students understand just by looking at them. For instance: If fifty-eight plus forty-two is one hundred, and after students have studied more numbers and operations from the previous lessons, this will help them understand the symbols (operations).

Grade 8 textbook

Lesson: “The Accident” (Page 37, unit 6)

Focus Area 2. Desired Outcomes

Criterion 1. Is the new knowledge connected to the previous lessons? – No. This lesson simply introduces grammar incorporated into dialogues: Past Tense of “can”- “could”, and its negative form, and the Simple Past continuous- Was/were + the main verb ending in -ing, for example, “*Ngunga and Tony were walking.*”

Criterion 3. Does the lesson engage students to use the target language to acquire new information on topics of interest? – No. There is no way that this lesson can engage students to use the target language.

Rationale for the Checklist Design

This section presents the ideas of previous scholars who based the design of their content checklists on the ACTFL's Standards. In addition, this section presents theories of ACTFL regarding the preferred content. The design of the checklist in use in this study came from these typologies recommended in previous research.

Mieckley (2005) in his study about "ESL textbook Evaluation Checklist" states that,

"While this checklist is effective, educators should add additional questions when appropriate. Also, remember that each content will require you to adapt the checklist. For example, vocabulary may be a more important criterion for an ESL teacher whose students will be taking state proficiency tests. If you are evaluating readers for instruction for an international language school where teachers do not have much experience in the TESL/TEFL field, questions pertaining to the teacher's manual should be weighed more heavily."

Mieckley constructed a checklist taking into consideration teachers, students, and the curriculum, all of which are important as educators seek to use material and methods appropriate to their particular context. His textbook checklist evaluation is designed considering two aspects. For the first aspect, which is the textbook, the checklist is aimed to evaluate the content, vocabulary and grammar, exercises and

activities, as well as attractiveness of the text and physical make-up. For the second aspect, which is the teacher's manual, the evaluation is addressed to the general features, background information, methodological guidance, supplementary exercises and materials, and content. The checklist contains ratings from "excellent" to "poor" and from "totally lacking" to "not applicable."

Alternatively, Dougill (1987) suggests the following criteria for the checklist design:

- Framework. Framework is related to: a) syllabus, b) progression, c) revision and d) recycling, e) skills and f) cohesion. This means that the checklist should evaluate the way the content is articulated, and connected with the content from one point to the other. Revisions of the content should follow. Recycling is also another important aspect to consider in the framework. Recycling is related to the previous knowledge that reappears in the next stage of a unit, however, this time the knowledge is presented in different contexts; for example, if learners studied the verb "to be" in the third person of singular using personal nouns (Peter, John, Lucia), in the next stage they will learn still using the same verb in simple present tense, but now by employing objects or animals (Orange, table, or dog). The skills and cohesion are also part of the framework. "Skills" is related to the channels and modes for using and understanding the language. They are sometimes called *macro* skills of language (Speaking, Listening,

Reading, and Writing). Cohesion is related to the consistency of the content, or the way that the content remains with a steady format throughout the textbook.

- Length of the unit(s) is another criterion that should also be considered. How it is presented, how the exercises and activities are presented are factors important to consider in the checklist design. The clarity of purpose, variety and the regularity that the unit displays are also very important to consider in the checklist design.
- Subject matter is another criterion. The subject matter should be interesting to the students, and should be cultural- and/or age- bound.
- Another criterion to consider is the form. Form addresses instances of illustration, visual appeal, motivation, tables, and lists.
- Course component is the last criterion to be considered in the checklist design. This criterion addresses the material that is important to be included when considering the design of a checklist; cassette, teacher's book, tests, drills, workbooks, and laboratories.

Van Els, et al. (1984) propose the following conditions to be met for the components of a thorough checklist:

The checklist should be unequivocal. This means that the checklist should be clear and categorical and should allow differentiation. Differentiation means that the checklist should be divided into sections, for instance, one section is related to the textbook overview, another section is related to the desired outcomes, and so forth.

Another point to consider is that the checklist should yield descriptions. The descriptions constitute the format and the style in which the criteria are uniformly stated.

According to Yi (1999), the descriptive nature is related to the intention that the researcher has to evaluate the content of the foreign language textbook. The checklist should be divided at clearly delineated and identifiable places in the textbook. This means that the checklist should be divided into sections. For example, in this instrument, the first part is related to the textbook overview, the second part is related to the desired outcomes, and the third part is related to the teaching procedures, and so forth.

In introducing the theories of checklist design, Shrum & Glisan (2005), addressed the following points: The checklist should focus on students' cultural contexts and students' interests. Another point concerns grammar; how it should be presented, the exercises and practice examples for the students. The checklist should address the ways wherein the students are free to use the target language. Finally the material; the material should contain parts related to assessment strategies, use of CD ROM, internet or e-mail.

Shrum & Glisan's (2005) checklist is an instrument which focuses on cultural context, or cultural activities in which students can be involved, as well as encouraging students to negotiate meaning with one another; it should also focus on grammar explanation, on visual methods of presenting vocabulary, on ways of providing students opportunities to select authentic texts to explore for enjoyment and

learning, on ways of assessing students' progress, and so forth. Shrum & Glisan (2005) designed a checklist following the ACTFL's principles which are known as the "Five Standards."

Because the checklist used in this study was adapted from the ACTFL's Standards and it has never been used as an evaluating tool, the researcher conducted a survey addressed to the focus group members to assess the present checklist's reliability. Reliability in this case referred to whether there was consistency or not when the focus group members actually evaluated the two Angolan textbooks. This survey examined the answers that different focus group members decided upon, determining whether they were different, similar, or consistent concerning the use of the present checklist. Some of these questions were, for example, how the members felt about the usefulness of the checklist, if the format (Yes/No, and N. Applicable) was constrictive, or if there were some aspects that needed revision or improvement. See appendix G for the survey.

The checklist Composition

The checklist is divided into several focus areas, namely: 1. Textbook Overview, 2. Desired Outcomes, 3. Teaching Procedures, 4. Meeting the Students' Needs, 5. Relevance, and 6. Types of Assessments. There are four columns on the checklist. One for positive aspects (Yes) of the lesson content, one for negative aspects, or aspects that do not appear in the lesson (No), one for aspects that do not apply (N. Ap.), with the final column for additional comments.

The purpose of the criteria is as follows:

- *Textbook Overview* was to evaluate the goals or objectives expressed in each lesson, the aim and the sequence of each section, grammar presentation procedures, vocabulary presentation procedures, and lessons' exercises, for example, exercises for checking comprehension, and the way the illustrations were shown in the textbook. As previously referred to by Mieckley (2005), for a checklist design educators should add additional questions to the main focus of the checklist. For this reason, the focus area "Textbook Overview" contains more criteria than any other area leading to a total of twelve criteria. The criteria that have been added are: 9. "Do the exercises develop meaningful communication by referring to realistic activities and situations?" and 10. "Are the illustrations clear, simple, and free of unnecessary details that may confuse the learners?" The reasons for adding two more criteria to this focus area were to make it more detailed. This decision came after a thorough evaluation by the focus group.
- *Desired Outcomes* was to evaluate whether the previous knowledge was connected to the new one, whether the lesson indicated what students should know. Concerning teaching procedures, its purpose was to check whether the lesson described the sequence of instructional activities and assessments.

- *Teaching Procedures* was to evaluate the features of the textbook which allow the teacher to use it in order to conduct the classroom teaching activities.
- *Meeting the students' needs* was to evaluate the grouping flexibility in response to the nature of the lesson, the instructions, and the explanations; and also to check upon whether the content met the students' current level of English competence. Relevance was related to learning opportunities, to determine whether they were real and rich in the sense that promoted students' engagement, and also to check whether students could apply their knowledge to everyday practical situations.
- *Relevance* was to evaluate the learning opportunities, whether they were real and rich in a way that promoted students' engagement and interest. Additionally, the purpose of this criterion was to evaluate whether the activities enable students to be creative.
- *Types of Assessment* was to determine whether there was a component for students' self-assessment, or tasks for the students to be engaged in while learning are appropriate. Textbooks should provide tasks and projects, usually at the end of units; so this section was intended to determine whether there were practical students' tasks or projects. See appendix C for the checklist.

Data Collection

This section discusses the criteria for the selection of the focus group's members and how the data was prepared for collection. These data derived from the two Angolan EFL textbooks analysis, evaluation, and critique and the results were provided by the focus group.

Van Elis, et. al., (1984) define the term “textbook evaluation” as the “collection and the description of data and the effects that the textbooks have on the users. Textbook evaluation is concerned with the user's guide and the adaptability of textbooks” (p. 298).

For the data collection, a focus group was created. Because content analysis has predetermined characteristics to be analyzed, and it can be applied to either qualitative data or to quantitative data as Krippendorff (1980) states, this study analyzed texts, grammatical points, language activities, illustrations, and exercises. This study used a qualitative method. Each unit and each page's content was analyzed following the objectives of the criteria from the checklist.

The focus group was composed of six doctoral students from the school of education at the University of Kansas, specializing in English as a Foreign Language Education. These students were PhD candidates in the field of EFL education, except two who have already defended their dissertations. Being a PhD student in the field of EFL was the main factor for selecting these evaluators for the study. The focus group members were composed of two doctoral students from Taiwan, one doctoral student

from China, two doctoral students from Saudi Arabia, and one former doctoral student from Tunisia.

One doctoral student from Taiwan had recently defended his dissertation and he has experience in conducting surveys and evaluating textbooks. Another doctoral student also from Taiwan has experience in conducting surveys, evaluating textbooks, and has taught EFL for three years in Taiwan at the college level. The doctoral student from China has three years experience in teaching EFL at High School level. The doctoral student from Saudi Arabia has three years of EFL teaching, and has taught EFL for three years in Saudi Arabia at the college level. Another doctoral student from Saudi Arabia has taught EFL for five years, first at secondary schools and later at the college level. Finally, another former doctoral student in the field of EFL (now a Doctor graduated in 2006) from Tunisia has two years experience in teaching EFL at the secondary level in Tunisia.

A consent form was provided to each participant to ensure their confidentiality in participating in this study, and also to inform them about the objective of this study. See appendix D for the consent form.

Face Validity

For this study, face validity was very important in the sense that it served to ensure the appropriateness and the usefulness of the present instrument. The instrument's validity was confirmed by three professors who are experts in the area of ESL/EFL at the University of Kansas, School of Education.

Based on the panel of these experts' recommendations, the focus group used the checklist based on the ACTFL's Standards. The experts recommended this checklist because it is the most comprehensive one presently available. It should adequately cover the materials in the textbooks.

The panel of experts from the School of Education at the University of Kansas was comprised of three professors with long experience in the field of EFL education. The main criterion for the panel of experts' selection was based on their academic field each professor has (related to the EFL/ESL) and to this area of research. The first professor has more than fifteen years dealing with EFL education and he has supervised sixty five Ph.D. students. This professor has also published thirty-one articles related to EFL research, and has addressed twelve international conferences with invited presentation.

The second professor has more than ten years in EFL research. She earned her PhD from the University of Kansas in 2003 in SLA. She has taught EFL in Sri Lanka for three years and has also served as Teaching Assistant at the University of Kansas, School of Education before receiving her Ph.D. in EFL education. Additionally, she has taught EFL in Junction City, Kansas at the High School level for four years.

The third professor has extensive experience working with students that are native-speakers of other languages. Her doctoral degree is in the area of literacy, biliteracy/ESL teacher education, and children's literacy. She has also worked at the University of Minnesota, where she earned her doctoral degree. She also worked at

the same University as an author and Evaluator from summer of 2000 and spring of 2004. She was also an elementary teacher and a member of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language.

A letter and two instruments (two checklists) were sent to those Professors asking for their opinions regarding the validity of the referred instruments. The first instrument derived from Shrum (1994) and it was not broad as the second instrument. The second instrument was an adaptation from the ACTFL's Standards and it covered more areas as an evaluating instrument. The instructions were essentially about the instruments, how they could now serve to evaluate the two EFL textbooks currently in use in Angola, and determine whether they were aligned with the currently accepted practices in the field of SL/FL education, especially with current national standards. The experts were asked to feel free to suggest any changes, including the elimination or addition of items that might contribute to increase the validity of this instrument. See appendix E for the letter addressed to the three Professors.

The first professor replied saying that the ACTFL adaptation was better than the first checklist and he agreed that this checklist could be valuably used for this study. The second professor also observed that the second checklist (ACTFL adaptation) was better and more appropriate for this study. The third professor also agreed more with the second checklist. She said that the checklist appears to cover most of the categories of teaching and learning that she would deem important in a consideration of a language text's merits. She also added that qualitative descriptions in the "comments" sections would be more useful in the analysis than a simple

YES/NO response to the questions. She suggested that instead, for example, of saying, “Is the sequence of the sections, units, or lessons outlined?” it would be stronger to ask “How are the sections, units, and lessons sequenced?” but the open-ended format would not comply with the NO/YES answers, as the acceptable instrument is designed. Additionally, the second instrument contains sections for comments and this provides space for explanations.

Based on the above opinions, the researcher communicated with the doctoral students who were part of the focus group in order to convey the ideas provided by the field’s experts. The focus group then considered the second checklist based on the ACTFL’s Standards. Since the ACTFL’s Standards had been employed in previous studies conducted by Van Els et al (1984), Dougill (1987), Shrum & Glisan (1994, 2005), Yi (1999), and Mieckley (2005), it was decided to use the checklist suggested by the field’s experts.

Piloting Study

The researcher conducted a pilot study, using this time the Grade 8A EFL textbook in use in the Sultanate of Oman, an Arab nation. Afterwards, another doctoral student in the field of ELT re-evaluated the same textbook using the same instrument. The results indicated that the checklist is easy to operate and it evaluates what is expected to evaluate. The objective of applying a pilot study using another textbook (a textbook from another nation), was to test the instrument’s reliability. See

appendix F for the Oman's Grade 8A textbook sample. Oman is a non-Western nation which might have similar characteristics with Angola in terms of their EFL context.

The piloting study results indicated that this instrument has reliability in the sense that it covers all the areas of a FL textbook in a consistent way. Looking into the criteria's results of the three textbooks (Oman's EFL textbook Grade 8A, and the two Angolan EFL textbooks), following the categories of the instrument, it is found that the comments contain the same patterns. For all criteria the answers were either Yes, No, or Not Applicable, and wherever possible the categories were described in details. The examination conducted of the three textbooks (the two Angolan textbooks and another one used in Oman) followed a systematic procedure, according to the instrument's design. Thus the categories contain equal explanations, which suggest that the instrument possesses a degree of consistency. For instance, in the Sultanate of Oman Grade 8A textbook, the first focus area, which is the "Textbook Overview," the twelve criteria were applied to the textbook's lessons and all the aspects that the textbook contains were viewed. Here are a few examples of some criteria:

Textbook Overview

For the first criterion of this focus area which is "*Is the objective expressed in each lesson or unit?*" the answer was that the objectives of the lessons are not explicitly defined, nevertheless the teacher can understand it through the title of the lesson, namely, *More Free Time*.

“Does the title of each page or lesson indicate the aim of the lesson?” The answer was YES. The title is very clear to indicate the aim of the lesson. Some lessons contain highly inductive titles that are sufficient to give the reader a good idea of the anticipated lesson’s content.

Desired Outcome

All the three criteria were applied to the textbook’s lessons and all the aspects that the textbook contains were viewed. The first criterion is *“Is the new knowledge connected to the previous lessons?”* The answer to this criterion was YES. The lessons in this textbook are interrelated; therefore, there is a connection between lessons as well as in the sequence of units. Another Criterion *“Does the lesson indicate what students should know and be able to do?”* The answer to this criterion was YES. On the top of the page in each lesson, there is a brief introduction which tells students what they are expected to learn.

Teaching Procedures

The three criteria were also viewed according to the lesson contents, and so forth. For a detailed view of the piloting study results, see appendix F for the Oman grade 8A textbook sample, and appendix H for the piloting study results.

Focus Group Proceedings

The researcher provided the textbooks to the focus group members followed by a “peer-class” to make them familiar with the checklist and to demonstrate how the checklist could be applied to the two Angolan EFL textbooks. For example, all members were told to read a particular lesson in the textbook and to analyze the overall aspects according to the checklist criterion. One example: “*Are the grammatical rules presented in a logical manner and in an increasing order of difficulty?*” Having looked at the lesson, the members indicated YES or NO, and commented on the response. In general, respondents were asked to read and analyze the content of a lesson first, and go back to the checklist and start checking the criteria, and so forth. In case of some difficulties that were experienced in interpreting the instructions, the researcher went back to the instructions and explained it once again providing more examples and practice. The researcher observed the way the members were performing; when it was clear, they started evaluating the textbooks. These procedures were observed with all members to ensure the consistency of the results.

The analysis was made by looking at each textbook lesson-by-lesson and at the units, so that the members could have a thorough view of the textbooks. While getting an overall analysis of the textbooks, the members checked the criteria and commented on them. The sub-group, always composed of two members, would meet with other members from other sub-groups for a panel discussion, exchanging their opinions and views while the moderator was taking notes. First the Grade 7 textbook

was evaluated. Afterwards the Grade 8 textbook was likewise evaluated. The focus group proceedings have occurred over three months in three different sessions.

In the first session, the sub-groups met separately in order to proceed with the preliminary analysis of the two textbooks. In the second session, the group met in three sub-groups of two elements each, for the purpose of textbooks' evaluation. The sub-groups met in the form of "Two-way" system, as part of the second session. A two-way system is one in which a first sub-group meets and presents its views while a second sub-group observes and takes notes for later discussion and sharing of insights. The two-way system was applied to all sub-groups. In the third session, the focus group met for final discussions. The conclusions were always reached by consensus, when all members agreed that certain criteria were clear and applicable. The findings from different sub-groups were taken to other sub-groups for discussion and attained common conclusions.

During the panel discussions (when all members met) more ideas came up and were taken into consideration for further discussions. Most of the time, due to various factors, such as time constraints that some members experienced in taking care of other personal business, the moderator met in separate sessions with the sub-groups and took the results to another sub-group for consultation and so on, so that every member finally had an idea of the results.

Transcripts of these sessions constituted the form of data collection. These data derived from conversations and discussions between focus group members while they were evaluating the textbooks. The transcripts and quotations were written by

the moderator. From the transcript and quotations, the report was thereby elaborated to facilitate its accessibility to the researcher.

The focus group provided the results to the researcher. The analysis and discussion is based on these results. Chapter IV will present the focus group's findings in details. (Appendix H presents the focus group findings sample).

The following table presents the features that describe the focus group proceedings:

Table 1

Focus Group Features	
* Format:	Group and Sub-Groups
*Size:	Six elements
*Duration:	Three months
*Number of sessions:	Three sessions
*Participants:	Selected by similar characteristics
*Source of data:	Conversation and discussions
*Method of data collection:	Transcripts
*Moderator:	Flexible (Observer and participant)
*Form of reporting:	Selected quotations and report

Summary

This chapter described the two textbooks that are the subject of our investigation. These textbooks are the two Angolan EFL textbooks for secondary schools. The chapter also described the chosen features of the checklist that was used as the main instrumentation to gather data for further analysis. Procedures for evaluating the two EFL textbooks were treated as a focus point addressed in the chapter.

Additionally, this chapter addressed the pilot study, the proceedings in which the face validity and the focus group came together. To ensure the validity of the instrument, a letter was sent to three Professors, experts in the area of EFL and all agreed that the instrument was appropriate for this study. The data for discussion derived from the focus group findings.

Chapter Four will present the results. These results are derived from the focus group. Another part of the results are derived from a survey which was introduced to the evaluators related to the checklist reliability. Based on these results, the researcher will interpret and discuss them, leading to conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The results were substantiated from the two research questions. The first research question was based on the ACTFL' Standards and asked, " To what extent do the two Angolan EFL textbooks meet the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages' Standards?"

The second research question asked, "How well does the evaluation instrument used in this study--Standards-based checklist--help evaluate the areas of strengths or weaknesses in the two Angolan EFL textbooks?" Both research questions were addressed by the focus group." The sections below report the findings.

Following is the focus group findings concerning the two Angolan EFL textbooks, Grade 7 and Grade 8. For a synthesis of the results, see appendix J.

Focus Group Findings (Research Question 1)

Grade 7 Findings:

1. Textbook Overview

1. Is the objective expressed in each lesson or unit?

No. The focus group unanimously agreed that the objective is not clearly expressed. The lessons start with the titles and they jump to the dialogues right away. The titles of the lessons rarely indicate any specific objective or content.

2. Does the title of each page or lesson indicate the aim of the lesson?

The titles of fifty-four lessons, distributed in twenty- nine units in the textbook do not suggest the aim of the lessons, according to focus group; for most lessons, even looking at the content, it does not comply with the titles. However, another part (ten units), do have titles that, in a way, suggest the aim of the lessons. The lessons that directly or indirectly suggest the aim of the lesson through their titles are: *“What is your name,” “Who are you,” “what are you?,” “How many pupils,” “An arithmetic lesson,” “Watches and clocks,” “What time is it?,” “John’s every day life,” Preparing a trip,” “The trip,” “The seasons in the tropics,” “The four seasons,” “Domestic animals,” “John must eat Angolan food,” “The breakfast,”* and the lesson *“A letter from John,”* respectively units 1, 2, 5, 14, 16, 17, 22, 23, 26, and 29. For example, the lessons *“Who are you,”* and *“What are you”* are related with introductions function. The lesson *“What time is it?”* is related to introducing the time of the day. The lesson *“The four seasons”* is about the seasons of the years, and so forth.

The lessons whose titles do not suggest the aim of the lessons are: *“A game,” “Is it small?” “What are they doing?” “They are working,” Ngunga’s friend,” Angola is our country,” England is John’s country,” “John’s parents,” The favourite lesson,” “The race,” “Lemba’s composition,” “Time for fun,” “Whose test is it?” “He is absent-minded,” “The school garden,” “Some flowers are useful,” “Can you draw?” “She’s going to be a nurse,” “The students’ camp,” “The school helps the workers,” “Father’s garage,” There were wild animals,” “John’s new friend,” “Soweto,” “It happened in Namibia,” “Children’s Day,” “A high building,”* and *“Family Day,”* respectively units 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 27, and 28.

The above lessons do not suggest the aim of the lessons even looking at their titles, for example the lessons, “*Is it small?*” in unit 3, or the lesson “*Time for fun.*” The lesson “*Is it small*” has as objective to introduce the shape of figures and locations of objects at the same time, but the title sounds odd according to the content of the lesson.

3. Does the lesson feature on organization based on interesting topics and cultural context?

The focus group observed that nineteen lessons distributed in fifteen units feature on organization based on interesting topics, such as units: 1, 2, 5, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, and 29. Unit 1 and 2 contain lessons referring to social introduction functions that are especially interesting to younger students at this level. Unit 5 contains one lesson referring to arithmetic operations; unit 14 contains two lessons referring to the notion of time. Unit 22 contains two lessons referring to the four seasons of the year, unit 23 contains one lesson referring to domestic animals, and unit 24 contains one lesson which celebrates the children’s day in Angola. Unit 26 contains two lessons which apply to cultural context when referring to Angolan food. Unit 27 contains two lessons referring to the New Year and Christmas, although these lessons are introducing Angolan food instead of referring to the festivities of this occasion, and unit 28 contains one lesson referring to clothes. The remaining 14 units do not have lessons with topics that might be interesting to the students at this level.

4. Is the sequence of the sections, units, or lessons outlined?

No. According to the focus group analysis, the sequence of the sections, units, or lessons is not outlined. From one lesson to another or from one unit to another there is not any introduction or transition to a new unit or lesson. The lessons or units suddenly begin from one content to another one without any logical or smooth flow of interest and appeal.

5. Are the grammatical rules presented in a logical manner and in an increasing order of difficulty?

In response to this criterion, the focus group decided "No". The entire textbook has no unit or section where exercises for grammar are introduced. The grammar is introduced in dialogues without grammar exercises or model of grammar structures (drills).

6. Are the new vocabulary words introduced in a variety of ways?

No. There is no part where exercises for vocabulary can be found. Words appear in dialogues only, according to focus group observation.

7. Are the new vocabulary words repeated in sequential lessons in order to facilitate the reinforcement of their meaning and use?

To this criterion, the focus group answered "No". There is no part concerning exercises in this entire textbook.

8. Are there, in the lesson, exercises that develop comprehension and test the student's knowledge of main ideas, details, and the sequence of ideas?

For this criterion, the focus group agreed "No". In this entire textbook there are no exercises at all.

9. *Do the exercises develop meaningful communication by referring to realistic activities and situations?*

To this criterion, the focus group responded “No”. There is no exercise that illustrates this point.

10. *Are the illustrations clear, simple, and free of unnecessary details that may confuse the learners?*

To this criterion, the focus group decided “No”. Neither the drawings nor the pictures illustrate what the sentences tell. Twenty-eight units do not contain drawings that can be clear and simple, except unit 5 where it can be seen in mathematical operations (numbers and signals - plus, minus, multiplication, and division); this could help students understand that the lesson is referring to arithmetic operations.

11. *Are the illustrations printed close enough to the text and directly related to the content to help the learners to understand the printed text?*

No. According to the focus group analysis, the illustrations are not printed close enough to the sentences (pieces of dialogue); furthermore, these do not show what the sentences are saying. This is somewhat confusing. Unit 5 is arguably a little easy to figure out because it is all about numbers.

12. *Does the lesson provide authentic printed texts (newspapers/ magazine articles, ads, poems, short stories) that have engaged content and tasks?*

To answer this criterion, the focus group decided “No”. These are all embedded in dialogues. And these drawings are presented in two colors (red and grey). There are, otherwise, no supplementary drawings.

2. Desired Outcomes

1. Is the new knowledge connected to the previous lessons?

According to the focus group analysis, in this textbook, twenty-seven units do not have a connection (at least from unit to unit), except the first two units (1 and 2) which are connected to introduction function. However, some lessons are slightly connected, as the case of the lessons “*Can you draw?*” and “*She’s going to be a nurse*” in unit 13. The connection is related to introducing the human body from the first lesson to the second one.

2. Does the lesson indicate what students should know and be able to do?

No. According to the focus group analysis, in the entire textbook (twenty nine units) there is no single lesson that indicates what the students should know and be able to do.

3. Does the lesson engage students to use the target language to acquire new information on topics of interest?

To this criterion, the focus group settled on “No”. There is no lesson in the textbook that gets students excited and engaged enough to seek to acquire new information.

3. Teaching Procedures

1. Does the lesson describe the sequence of instructional activities, and assessment?

No. According to the focus group analysis, there are no descriptions of this kind in the entire textbook; only dialogue.

2. *Are teachers given techniques for activating students' background knowledge, before reading the text?*

For this criterion, the focus group agreed "No". There is not guideline or methodologies for either teachers or students to follow in the course of their lessons.

3. *Does the lesson provide teachers with means for involving students to exercise, practice, test, and review vocabulary words, or grammar?*

No. The focus group decided that out of twenty nine units, there is no way that a teacher can involve students; there are not exercises or activities.

4. Meeting the Students' Needs

1. *Is the content appropriate for the students to learn?*

To this criterion, the focus group concluded "Yes". Seventeen units distributed in twenty-six lessons, have contents which are appropriate for the students to learn, and meet their achieved level of interest. The units are: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, and 29. For example, units 1 and 2 refer to the function of introduction. This is the first step for the beginners. Unit 3 is related to the describing of objects. Unit 4 refers to introducing the various division of a house as well as location of objects. However, for the remaining thirteen units, the respective lessons are *not* appropriate for the students to learn. For example, the lesson "*Time for fun*" is poor in terms of content. This lesson refers to a boy who pretends to be a soldier marching, and then to a gun. Another example comes from the lesson "*He is*

absent-minded” in unit 11. This lesson presents a mother asking a son where he was going to play, suddenly changes the topic to a piece of clothe (T-shirt).

2. Are the instructions and examples adequately explained and illustrated for the students?

For this criterion, the focus group agreed upon the answer of: “No”. There are no instructions or examples for the students. Furthermore, the illustrations (i.e. drawings) are not clear and are often confusing.

3. Is it possible to set up groupings varied in response to the nature of learning, i.e. small heterogeneous groups for interaction or cooperative learning, and homogeneous groups for working on achievement or interest?

To this criterion, the focus group reached “No”. The only thing a teacher can do is to set up role-play (students interacting with each other), as for example, introducing themselves. As for guidelines, the textbook does not explicitly provide such guidance.

5. Relevance

1. Are the learning opportunities real, and rich in ways that promote students’ engagement and interest?

As an answer to this criterion, the focus group decided “No”. The learning opportunities are not real and do not promote students’ engagement and interest. By the way the lessons are set up (in dialogues), the students’ engagement is weak. According to the topics, ten units (1, 2, 5, 14, 16, 19, 22, 23, 26, and 29) could

provide real learning opportunities to the students. For example, introducing themselves (students), talking about mathematics, or about animals, the climate, clothes, sports, food, or even writing a letter.

2. Do the activities enable students to apply their knowledge to practical real-world situations?

According to the focus group analysis, out of twenty-nine units, there is not even one single lesson that has an activity.

3. Do the activities enable students to be creative?

Similarly, for this criterion, the focus group observed that out of twenty-nine units, there is no single lesson that has an activity that could enable students to be creative.

6. Types of assessments

1. Do the lessons provide the opportunity for formal verification of acquired understanding, e.g., observations, oral questions, or discussions?

In answering this criterion, the focus group overwhelmingly decided “No”. From the entire twenty-nine units and fifty-four lessons that this textbook contains, no single unit contains exercises that a teacher may use to verify the students’ acquired understanding.

2. Is the lesson conducive to the students’ self-assessment?

To this criterion, the focus group decided “No”. None of the sixteen units contain lessons which are conducive for the students’ self-assessment.

3. Are the factors of performance, task and project accessible through the lesson?

To respond to this criterion, the focus group reached a consensus of “No”. The entire textbook has no factor of performance, task or project.

Grade 8 Findings:

1. Textbook Overview

1. Is the objective expressed in each lesson or unit?

To this criterion, the focus group decided “No”. None of the lessons or units has a clearly expressed objective. Titles of the lessons rarely indicate any specific objective or content.

2. Does the title of each page or lesson indicate the aim of the lesson?

According to the focus group analysis, this textbook contains 16 units distributed in thirty-three lessons. Thirteen units contain lessons whose titles indicate the aim of the lessons and three units (2, 4, and 5) contain lessons whose titles do not at all indicate the aim the lessons. Although in an indirect way, the titles of the lessons contained in these units (1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16) indicate the aim of the lessons. For example, unit 3, the lessons entitled “*Shopping*” and “*At the market*” in an indirect way indicate the aim of these lessons. Another example is in unit 6; the lessons entitled “*The accident*” and “*In the hospital,*” equally, in an indirect way indicate the aim of these lessons.

3. Does the lesson feature on organization based on interesting topics and cultural contexts?

According to the focus group analysis, fourteen units contain twenty-four lessons based on interesting topics but cultural context does not apply, except in unit 1 for the lesson entitled “*Traditional division of labour*.” The lesson “*Traditional division of labour*” refers to a Ugandan village lifestyle which is still very traditional among those people; therefore, cultural context does apply. The units that contain lessons with interesting topics are: 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16, and the lessons are respectively “*Traditional division of labour*,” “*Shopping*,” “*At the market*,” “*Keep healthy*,” “*The accident*,” “*In the hospital*,” “*Rainy weather*,” “*At the bus-stop*,” “*Preparing a tour town*,” “*At the hotel*,” “*Going to the country*,” “*Marriage is a different thing*,” “*On the field*,” “*By the riverside*,” “*At the airport*,” “*At the railway station*,” “*The harbour*,” “*Messages*,” “*The means of communication*,” “*Other countries*,” “*The English speaking countries*,” “*A garden party*,” “*A football match*,” “*At the seaside*,” and “*Going to the cinema*.” The remaining two units (2 and 4) do not contain lessons with interesting topics. The topics of these two lessons in unit 1 “*Workers have duties*” and “*Sticking up posters*” are not interesting to the students because, first of all, the titles do not indicate what the content is referring to, and neither the contents, nor the titles arise the students’ curiosity.

4. *Is the sequence of the sections, units, or lessons outlined?*

According to the focus group analysis, ten units in this textbook do not have the sequence outlined. The units that do not have the sequences outlined are: 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 15, and 16. The units that have sequences set out are: 3, 6, 11, 12, 13,

and 14. The sequences are only noticeable from lesson to lesson in the respective units, instead of being noticeable from unit to unit. For example, in unit 3, the lesson entitled “*Shopping*” refers to a person buying meat, milk, and bread (food in general). Another lesson entitled “*At the market*” still in the same unit, equally refers to a person buying vegetables, fish, and fruit.

5. Are the grammatical rules presented in a logical manner and in an increasing order of difficulty?

To this criterion, the focus group concluded a definite “No”. In fact no unit in this textbook has grammar presented neither in a logical manner nor in an increasing order of difficulty. On page 13 there are exercises related to grammar, but the particular point of grammar under discussion is presented without logical order and, furthermore, without the aid of drills for practice.

6. Are the new vocabulary words introduced in a variety of ways?

To this criterion, the focus group said “No”. The entire textbook does not have any units that introduce vocabulary words in a variety of choices and/or examples.

7. Are the new vocabulary words repeated in sequential lessons in order to facilitate the reinforcement of their meaning and use?

To this criterion, the focus group decided “No”. The entire textbook does not present any ways in which vocabulary words are offered in sequential lessons in order to reinforce their meaning and use. Words are introduced in dialogues.

8. Are there, in the lesson, exercises that develop comprehension and test the student’s knowledge of main ideas, details, and the sequence of ideas?

According to the focus group analysis, at least fifteen units do not have exercises that develop comprehension and test knowledge of the main idea, details, and the sequence of ideas. Only unit 1 on page 12 contains comprehension exercises I and II whose objectives are to test students' comprehension of the lesson.

9. Do the exercises develop meaningful communication by referring to realistic activities and situations?

According to the focus group analysis, fifteen units do not contain *any* exercises whatsoever. Unit 1 contains exercises that actually refer to realistic activities (page 12, and 13).

10. Are the illustrations clear, simple, and free of unnecessary details that may confuse the learners?

To this criterion, the focus group decided "No". In the entire textbook (16 units), the illustrations are not clear and they are shown monotonously in two colors, grey and blue throughout the book.

11. Are the illustrations printed close enough to the text and directly related to the content, to help the learner understand the printed text?

For this criterion, the focus group responded "No". In the entire textbook the illustrations are not printed close enough and most illustrations are not directly related the content.

12. Does the lesson provide authentic printed texts (newspapers/magazine articles, ads, poems, short stories, etc) that have engage content and tasks?

To this criterion, the focus group decided “No”. There is no other material in the entire textbook, but drawings followed by sentences or dialogues.

2. Desired Outcomes

1. Is the new knowledge connected to the previous lessons?

When analyzing this criterion, the focus group decided “No”, because the fourteen units do not have any immediate connection. However, two consecutive units (11 and 12) have a meaningful relationship. These units contain lessons which are consecutively referring to travelling topics, although there is no explicit connection, both units (11 and 12) are connected by the same overall idea, namely that of travelling.

2. Does the lesson indicate what students should know and be able to do?

To this criterion, the focus group decided “No”. Fifteen units do have any lessons with any indication referring to what students should know and be able to do, for example an aim, an introduction or an objective. Only one element, namely unit 1, contains exercises on pages 12 and 13 that indicate what students should do.

3. Does the lesson engage students to use the target language to acquire new information on topics of interest?

In the same way, the focus group decided “No” for this criterion. Fifteen units do not have any lesson in which students can be engaged to use the target language. This is due to lack of exercises and methodology for the students to follow. Only in unit 1, the lesson, which refers to traditional division of labor, contains exercises (on

pages twelve and thirteen), wherein students may be engaged either in short debates or in answering questions related to the lesson.

3. Teaching Procedures

1. Does the lesson describe the sequence of instructional activities, and assessment?

To this criterion, the focus group again decided “No”. None of the lessons or units in the textbook described the sequence of instructional activities and assessment, except for unit 1 which employs (on pages 12, 13, and 14) exercises that can be used as an assessment tool and to some degree, those exercises follow a certain order (grammar, comprehension exercises, and a short composition) related to the reading passage theme.

2. Are teachers given techniques for activating students’ background knowledge before reading the text?

To this criterion, the focus group decided “No”. The entire textbook describes no methodological guideline. The texts or reading passages, (which number seven) appear without any introduction, whatsoever.

3. Does the lesson provide teachers with means for involving students to exercise, practice, test, and review vocabulary words, or grammar?

In this criterion, the focus group decided “No”. Only one of the units contains lessons that provide teachers with means for involving students to exercise, practice, test, and review vocabulary words or grammar. Unit 1 contains exercises (on pages

12 and 13). By telling students to solve some exercises from the pages 12 and 13, teachers will be able to get students to perform activities.

4. Meeting the Students' Needs

1. Is the content appropriate for the students to learn?

According to focus group, half of the textbook (eight units) contains units with lessons that students may actually be interested to learn. However, the dialogues are a little vague for the students, and some reading passages are entirely void of any introduction or activities (except unit 1). Units that might be considered important for the students are: Units 1, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, and 16. Indeed in unit 1, the reading passage entitled, “*Traditional division of labour*” may be appropriate for the students to learn because the topic which involves African reality is truly interesting to the Angolan students. Another example appears in unit 8; wherein the lessons entitled, “*Preparing a tour about town*” and “*At the hotel*” are appropriate to engage the students to learn by exciting their curiosity.

The other eight units might not bring interesting points to the students, for example, in unit 2, the lesson, “*Workers have duties*”, the content is very poor; dialogues do not match with the title, and the main point of this lesson is the introduction of grammar through dialogues. Another example of a lesson that would not help students at all is in unit 5, the lesson entitled “*Betty was in trouble.*” This title does not match with the content that this lesson presents. The main objective of this lesson is to introduce grammar (Question-tag) through dialogues.

2. Are the instructions and examples adequately explained and illustrated for the students?

For this criterion, the focus group concluded “No”. None of the sixteen units in the textbook contains instructions and examples that very well explain and/or illustrate important principles for the students. There are instructions but with a slight mistake. For example, when it says on page 12.I “Refer to the passage and put an X in the right”, this is confusing; in the right (what)? Put an X in the right and put what in the wrong, are there two options (right and wrong)?

3. Is it possible to set up groupings varied in response to the nature of learning, i.e., small heterogeneous groups for interaction or cooperative learning, and homogenous groups for working on achievement or interest?

To this criterion, the focus group selected “No”. None of the sixteen units allow a teacher to set up groupings, for example, for interaction or cooperative learning because dialogues do not provide this flexibility. In addition, this also would depend on the level of the students’ proficiency in dealing with some topics.

5. Relevance

1. Are the learning opportunities real, and rich in ways that promote students’ engagement and interest?

According to the focus group, six units (1, 8, 9, 13, 14, and 16) may provide lessons with real learning opportunities for the students. For example, African reality is always welcome to the students. Also talking about travelling and touring represent

realistic cases. Talking about marriage or about leisure activities also intrigue the students. However, the ways these lessons are set up interfere somewhat with optimum learning opportunities. Mismatches between the topics and the contents of other lessons coupled with the dialogue format represent the main drawbacks in these examples.

2. Do the activities enable students to apply their knowledge to practical and real-world situations?

To answer this criterion, the focus group chose “No”. There is no single activity that may enable students to apply their knowledge to practical and real-world situations. The only lesson that contains exercises that could enable students to apply their knowledge is in unit 1, namely the reading passage entitled “*Traditional division of labour.*”

3. Do the activities enable students to be creative?

To this criterion, the focus group decided “No”. For example, in one section, unit 1, exercises are presented in a perfunctory “mechanical” style in which there are no variations that may encourage students to be creative. Other lessons from in these same units have no exercises provided at all.

6. Types of assessments

1. Do the lessons provide the opportunity for formal verification of acquired understanding, e.g., observations, oral questions, or discussions?

To this criterion, the focus group decided “No”. From the sixteen units that this textbook contains, only unit 1 provides a lesson having exercises (page 12) that a teacher may use to verify the students’ acquired understanding of the point under discussion.

2. Is the lesson conducive to the students’ self-assessment?

In responding to this criterion, the focus group concluded “No”. None of the sixteen units contain lessons which are conducive for the students’ self-assessment.

3. Are the factors of performance, task and project accessible through the lesson?

According to focus group analysis, from the sixteen units that this textbook contains, only page 14 offers a short project when students are asked to write a “short” composition on the title “*My family does the housework*”. All the other lessons from these units do not provide any workable factors of performance.

Survey Results (Research Question 2)

The survey was addressed to the six evaluators which comprised the focus group. The members were consistent in the way they responded to the survey. These findings are as follows:

1. How well did you feel the checklist helped you analyze the textbooks?

All agreed that the checklist is complete and definitely helped them to effectively evaluate the textbooks.

2. Was the format of the checklist specific enough?

All agreed that the checklist format was enough.

3. Was the YES/NO or Not Applicable format constrictive?

All agreed that the YES/NO or Not Applicable format was not constrictive.

4. Was there any item that was irrelevant for the task?

Of these six evaluators, five agreed that the items were relevant and to the point. One evaluator, however, suggested that the sixth criterion from the focus area “1. Overview Textbook” should be added to another focus area, for example, focus area “6. Types of Assessment.” Another example lies in the ninth criterion from the same focus area which, still according to the same evaluator, could be relocated to focus area “5.Relevance.”

5. Would you have added more or another item so that the evaluation would be more complete?

Of these six evaluators, four agreed that the items are suitable for this evaluation. Two evaluators suggested the following changes:

a) The focus areas “Desired Outcomes”, “Teaching Procedures”, “Meeting the Students’ Needs”, and “Types of Assessments” should contain more items.

b) The criteria should focus more on students’ needs and these should be further checked with more inquiry from the Angolan community.

Summary

The focus group employed two instruments. The first instrument was the questionnaire based on the ACTFL’s Standards, which was applied to the two

Angolan EFL textbooks. The second instrument was the survey designed for checking the checklist's effectiveness.

The focus group consisted of six evaluators. They were international doctoral students in the field of EFL education at the University of Kansas, except for two persons who have recently graduated. This focus group was divided into three sub-groups having two evaluators each. The focus group met in a one-way format and in group sessions for discussions and exchange of ideas. The sub-groups met in three different sessions.

The checklist was applied to the two Angolan EFL textbooks. All the contents were reviewed according to the focus areas and to their respective criteria. The two textbooks were evaluated by the focus group. These results were delivered to the researcher for interpretation. Additionally, a survey was delivered to the evaluators with the objective of certifying whether the checklist was suitable for evaluation of the two Angolan EFL textbooks, or if, alternatively, any change was necessary.

Chapter Five will address the interpretation and discussion of the results. Finally, conclusion and recommendations are elaborated and discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

This chapter consists of two main sections. The first section presents the interpretation and discussion of the results and the second section presents the conclusions drawn from the results.

As a way of ensuring precision in interpreting, discussing, and concluding the results, the researcher thoroughly studied the answers from the results on the basis of the two research questions, thereafter confirming with the textbooks' lessons. Each focus area and its respective criteria helped in the interpretation and discussion of the results. In addition, grammatical points, textbooks' features, and semantic aspects, were part of the interpretation and discussion of the results.

Interpretation and Discussion of the Results

Research Question 1

To what extent do the two Angolan EFL textbooks meet the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages' Standards?

Grade 7 and Grade 8

The first textbook on which the focus group began the evaluation was the Grade 7, followed by the Grade 8. The Grade 7 textbook is comprised of one hundred twenty seven pages, making up twenty-nine units with fifty-four lessons. The Grade 8

textbook is composed of ninety-eight pages plus an additional five pages for the table of contents, (altogether one hundred three pages.) According to the checklist's focus areas and the respective criteria, the analysis showed the following results:

1. Textbook Overview

Looking at the entire Grade 7 textbook, from page to page, and following the checklist's guidelines, it can be seen that, from these twenty-nine units distributed in fifty-four lessons, that no lesson contains an introduction or idea that suggests the objective of the lesson. Only on pages ninety-one and ninety-two, are there short introductions, but these do not indicate the objective of the lessons. In order to get an idea of the objective of this lesson, which introduces professions, one has to read the lesson and figure it out. In general, the objective should always be the first element to appear in a lesson because it suggests what steps students or even teachers are supposed to follow. Ornstein & Hunkins (1999) say that, "Educational objectives can be of two sorts: those that describe the school-wide outcomes and those that are more specific and describe behaviors to be attained in a particular unit, a subject course, or a particular grade-level program" (p. 274).

Though some lessons do not explicitly identify their aims, nevertheless these aims are indirectly expressed. The titles of thirty-six lessons, distributed in twenty units in the textbook, do not indicate the aim of the lessons. For most lessons, the content does not harmonize with the title. However, another part (consisting of nine units), does indeed have titles that, in a way, indicate the aim of the lessons. For

example, in unit 1 the lessons, “*What is your name?*” and “*Who are you?*” indicate in an indirect manner that the function here is that of introductions. In unit 2, the lesson “*What are you?*” also indicates the aim of the lesson, albeit in an indirect manner. In another example, the lesson “*Time for fun*” is about Tony who has a fake gun and is marching like a soldier; that is all. The idea that this title could provide is, “*time for fun*” could include games based on words, numbers, or other sorts of free activities, where students are let free to perform. Another lesson entitled “*Can you draw?*” points to Tony who is drawing some parts of the human body (head and limbs). So, the title is confusing. If the objective of this lesson is to introduce the human body, then this title is unsuitable for this case. If the title was “*The Human Body*,” or “*Some Parts of the Human Body*,” this would be more explicit and appropriate.

Aim is considered “*statement of intent*,” according to Ornstein & Hunkins (1999), which can be influenced by educators’ philosophical positions. This statement serves as guidance and one cannot teach without a sense of direction.

By the same token, the Grade 8 textbook presents similar shortcoming compared to the previous textbook. Out of the sixteen units and thirty-two lessons, thirteen units contain lessons whose titles indirectly indicate the aim of the lesson. The lessons that indirectly indicate the aim of the lesson are: “*Back home again*,” “*Shopping*,” “*At the market*,” “*The In the hospital*,” “*Rain weather*,” “*Going to the country*,” “*On the field*,” “*By the riverside*,” “*At the airport*,” “*At the railway station*,” “*The means of communication*,” “*The English speaking countries*,” “*A garden party*,” “*Football match*,” “*At the seaside*,” and “*Going to the cinema*” respectively units 1, 3,

6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16. Although in some lessons the content is somewhat different from what the titles suggest, however, one can get the basic idea about the lesson. For example, in the lesson entitled “*At the Market*” in unit 3, this title itself guides students to quickly understand that this particular topic is about buying things and will involve buyers and sellers making sales and purchases involving monetary transactions. The remaining units (2, 4, and 5) contain lessons whose titles drift astray from clearly indicating the aim of each respective lesson. Titles should convey a sense wherein students can immediately understand the main point of the lesson. For example, in unit 2 the lesson entitled “*Sticking up posters*” seems at odds to conveying the general idea of the content of this lesson.

Out of the twenty-nine units and fifty-four lessons that the Grade 7 textbook contains, only two consecutive lessons refer to cultural contexts when Angolan food is mentioned (units 26 and 27). However, the target culture (namely United States of America and United Kingdom) is absent. Though food is important to the cultural context in Angola, however this textbook mentions typical food in *only* two chapters. This is not enough to acclaim of substantial cultural context in this textbook. Nineteen lessons distributed in fifteen units focus upon organization based on topics likely to be interesting to the students. These units are: 1, 2, 3, 5, 16, 17, 19, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, and 29. For example, units 1 and 2 contain lessons referring to the “introductions function”; this is highly interesting to the students at this level.

Unit 5 contains one lesson referring to arithmetic operations. Unit 14 contains two lessons referring to the notion of time. Unit 22 contains two lessons referring to

the four seasons of the year, and unit 23 contains one lesson referring to domestic animals. This means that only half of the textbook contains units that are perceived by the panel (focus group evaluators) to be interesting for the students to learn, and which meet the students' level of development.

Another half, which corresponds to fourteen units, does not contain lessons that could be interesting for the students to learn. For example, in the lesson entitled “*Soweto*,” the content is not suitable for the students at this level.

Looking at Grade 8 textbooks' results, it was observed that some units contain interesting topics, such as in units 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16. Unit 1 features certain cultural contexts, for example, the lesson “*Traditional Division of Labour*” refers to the African realities of how people who live within a given community assign various duties to boys, girls, men, and women. Two units (2 and 4) contain lessons with uninteresting topics. Alternatively, for students to be motivated to learn, these lessons should be made interesting and well-selected throughout the textbook. Cultural contexts should be present throughout the entire textbook as part of the learning experiences. Easton (2002) suggests that, “Culture is the combination of the attitude toward life and learning that drive the school and the mechanisms that emanate from that attitude” (p.40).

Out of the twenty-nine units and fifty-four lessons that Grade 7 textbook contains, no units actually present the sequence that is outlined. Each unit is in a different part without any connection to most units of this textbook. In this regard, e.g. Armstrong (1989) states that, “In the part-to-whole approach, topics or units are

sequenced so that basic elements precede more complex elements. This arrangement is reflected in the design of many mathematical and foreign language's courses" (p. 79).

In the entire textbook, there is no single grammar exercise suggested nor any drills. As far as textbooks design is concerned, grammar should be incorporated into activities for the students to practice. The grammar which appears in this textbook is all incorporated in dialogues and thus requires teacher's own resources to teach it. Carter & Nunan (2001) suggest that to teach grammar, a teacher should focus on form or structure of the language and this works within a meaning-based or communicative approach. Additionally, grammar should be associated with the semantic aspects of the language and not just as a given, isolated pieces of language structure. This makes more sense to the overall process of teaching grammar.

As the grammar is presented in this textbook, vocabulary words are incorporated into dialogues without any exercises having variations for the students to practice. This form of introducing vocabulary words is somewhat ineffective because students do not have space for practice. Vocabulary words usually come in activities, for example, either as a game, or as gap-filling exercises. Folse (2004) emphasizes that, "It is also important to have several exercises for students to practice new vocabulary." Folse further adds that, "You want materials that have vocabulary presentation and vocabulary practice" (32).

The subject textbook does not offer activities where the new vocabulary words are recycled in sequential lessons. Vocabulary words should come in the

recycling stage of the lessons or should be incorporated in text (contexts) followed by exercises allowing reinforcement of their application and use. As previously referred to by Mieckley (2005), *recycling* is related to the previous knowledge that may reappear in the next stage of a unit. That way, the content is presented in various different contexts. Such reinforcement is what should happen with new vocabulary items throughout the entire textbook, but it does not.

Referring to the Grade 8 textbook, the results showed that the entire textbook contains no units whatsoever, in which grammar is presented in a logical manner and in an increasing order of difficulties. Most textbook introduces grammar through dialogues, except for unit1 which introduces grammar in a different way. “*Language exercises*” on page 13 introduces grammar, though in a limited form. Ur (1996) says that, “The aim of grammar practice is to get students to learn the structures so thoroughly that they will be able to produce them correctly on their own” (p. 83).

A textbook should maintain the same optimum format, consistently throughout. Every unit should combine texts, comprehension exercises, drills for grammatical practice, and activities for emphasizing the four skills. The new vocabulary words are not presented in a variety of ways, but simply incorporated into dialogues. The textbook’s writers have failed to use more effective ways of presentation: For example, they are neither presented in a variety of ways, nor repeated, nor are they presented sequentially.

Yet, in Grade 8, no single unit introduces vocabulary words in a variety of ways. Vocabulary words are introduced in dialogues without any additional method

of practice. Furthermore, vocabulary examples are not repeated in sequential lessons to reinforce their meaning. The textbook contains units which are neither related nor linked.

The entire textbook has no exercise that promotes the development of comprehension and that tests knowledge of the main idea because there is no text, other than dialogues. The ACTFL's criteria suggest that texts bring pieces of language for the students to practice, and at the same time they bring exercises for checking comprehension and testing knowledge. In Grade 8 textbook, there is only a single unit (unit 1) which contains exercises for developing comprehension and that one is based on the reading passage "*Traditional Division of Labour*." Reading passages or texts should be the best way to create good comprehension exercises and test knowledge.

Britton, Woodward, & Brinkley (1993) state, "Presumably, questions provide means for confirming and integrating what students have just read, as well as correcting or refining what they may have otherwise missed" (p. 55).

The two textbooks have no exercise that develops meaningful communication. Textbooks should bring activities that facilitate students and teachers interacting with each other so as to practice aspects of language that related to real-world situations, as in cases of activities either at the end of the unit and/or incorporated elsewhere in the text.

In these two textbooks the illustrations are not clear. The illustrations come only in grey, red, and white colors and do not indicate the content of the sentences. In

unit 5 of Grade 7 textbook, the lesson “*An arithmetic lesson*” (e.g.) contains a few illustrations that could possibly aid students in understanding the sentences. The illustrations are not printed close to the sentences and what they show does not agree with nor illustrate clearly what the sentences are stating.

Briton, Woodward, & Brinkley (1993) state,

“Text-accompanying illustrations have been posited to improve learning as a result of their making text information more:

- concentrated or focused, by bringing the most critical text information to the learner’s attention,
- compact/concise, by converting a “thousand words” into a more informationally efficient form” (p. 97/8).

Neither textbook contains an authentic outside printed material such as, newspaper cuttings, magazine articles, ads, poems, or short stories. Effective textbooks contain a number of factual pieces of language enabling students to relate their learning to the real-outside-world situations.

2. Desired Outcomes

Out of the twenty-nine units and fifty-four lessons that Grade 7 textbook contains, only two units have connection of meaning wherein one unit is related to the other. Units 1 and 2 relate to “introducing oneself.” While unit 1 is related to functions of introduction, the following unit is related to professions, hobbies, and

names, which are a continuation of the previous unit. Unit 14 also has a connection between the two lessons, “*Watches and clocks*” and “*What time is it?*” The focus of these two lessons is concerned with introducing students to aspects of telling the time of day.

Unit 22 contains two connected lessons, “*The seasons in the tropics*” and “*The four seasons*”. Unit 26 contains two consecutive, related lessons. These lessons are “*John must eat Angolan food*” and “*Breakfast time.*”

In Grade 8 textbook the connection is noticed in the following units of the textbook: 3, 6, 11, 12, 13, and 14, and this sequence is between lessons inside a single unit and not a sequence which starts from unit to another unit and from lessons within units to another lesson, and so forth. For example: if one unit refers to days of the week, time, and the division of the day (morning, afternoon, evening, and night or bedtime), the next unit should refer to months of the year, as well as the kinds of places where people usually go about their business and/or pleasurable activities. Ten units (1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 15, and 16) do not contain the sequence outlined. As an example of how the units are not connected, there is unit one and the two respective lessons “*Back home again*” and “*Lemba bakes a cake.*” In first lesson, the content is about two students who came from vacations and are organizing their home and their school articles, and suddenly in the next lesson the content is about another student who wants to make a cake.

Most units are connected in terms of grammar introduction. For example, in unit 2, students learn *Question-tag* using the verb “to be” in simple present tense. In

unit 3 students learn *Question-tag* using the verb “to do” in simple present tense. Another example may be seen between unit 4 and 5. In unit 4 students learn *Question-tag* using the verb “to be” in simple past tense, whereas in unit 5 students learn *Question-tag* using the verb “to do” in simple past tense. However, in terms of lessons’ contents, there is no connection from one part of the knowledge to the other. There is no indication as to what students should be able to do at that lesson. As soon as students look at the lessons, they see dialogues without any introduction.

However, connection should be seen in the entire textbook and not merely in some units. Ornstein & Hunkins (1998) state that, “Curricularists must, when considering design view it on several dimensions: scope, sequence, continuity, integration, articulation, and balance” (p. 238).

Scope is defined as the breadth and depth of the content. Sequence is defined as continuous and cumulative learning. Continuity is defined as the repetition of the curriculum components. Integration is defined as the linking of all types of knowledge and related experiences contained within the curriculum plan. Articulation is defined as the interrelatedness of various aspects of the curriculum, and finally, balance is defined as the weight that should be given to each aspect of the design so that distortions do not occur. None of these dimensions are observed in this textbook.

In the two textbooks there is no single lesson that clearly indicates what students are supposed to do. Every EFL textbook offers activities for the students to practice. These are offered by guidance or introductions. Examples are also followed so as to lead students to what they are supposed to do in a certain task.

These two textbooks do not contain lessons that allow students to practice the target language. Instead, all that exists are dialogues and these do not offer or teach students the skills necessary to use the target language creatively. In Grade 8 textbook, unit 1, there are reading passage, comprehension exercises, language exercises (Grammar application), and guidelines for student to write a composition. This would be helpful for the students to practice the target language to some extent.

3. Teaching Procedures

These two textbooks have no lessons that contain activities to be sequenced or a section related to the assessment. Language textbooks always include activities, project, revisions, or an assessment task at the end of the lesson or of the unit. The lessons do not describe sequence of instructional activities. Grade 8 textbook contains one unit (unit 1) providing activities where students may check comprehension and study grammar. Assessment activity is lacking in the entire textbook. In this unit (1) the teacher can involve students to *exercise* and *practice* the language. Testing and the reviewing of vocabulary words are not provided. Vocabulary and grammar are not recycled in this textbook.

In the two textbooks there is not a lesson, nor a simple example, nor explanation for the teacher or for the learners to use. Although teachers could possibly have a manual, at least a simple explanation could be present in the textbooks.

In the two textbooks, there are no lessons that guide a teacher to involve students, unless he or she independently devises techniques that could help in these tasks. Lack of activities in the textbook constitutes the main drawback for much needed students' involvement. As referred to earlier, unit 1 is somewhat complete in terms of classroom activities; a teacher is able to get students to practice reading, comprehension, and basic grammar.

4. Meeting the Students' Needs

Out of the twenty-nine units and fifty-four lessons that Grade 7 textbook contains, only seventeen units contain topics and contents that could be interesting to the students. Some topics are suitable but the content is often poor because these are not dealt with in-depth. For example, in units 1 and 2, refers to the introduction function and professions, unit 4 refers to objects' descriptions, unit 5 indirectly introduces students to numbers (arithmetic operations), and unit 14 teaches telling time and the difference between a wrist watch and a clock. Unit 16 refers to everyday life or routine, unit 17 alludes traveling trips, unit 22 deals with the four seasons. Unit 23 concerns domestic animals. Unit 24 refers to the children's day, unit 26 discusses Angolan food, unit 27 concerns some agricultural products, and unit 28 pertains to clothing. Furthermore, when students learn how to write a letter (unit 29) this could be motivating and involving for them. Angolan students need to know how to write letters and how to effectively express their ideas. Writing a letter is a comparatively free activity, often liberating students to expand and grow into more autonomy.

However, the remaining topics are not appropriate for the students to learn, for example, unit 10, the lesson entitled “*Time for fun*” has a content that does not match this title, and is even inadequate, as it is that of unit 11. The lesson entitled “*He is absent-minded*” does not have a content which may be considered suitable for the students to learn. This title also does not match the lesson content. Every topic should engage the students so that they become more motivated to learn the lessons. The content should be conceptualized in ways that clearly engage the students’ needs.

In Grade 8 textbook, it was noticed that, out of the sixteen units and thirty-two lessons that this textbook contains, the units that could meet the students’ needs are: Unit 1, the lesson “*Traditional Division of Labour*,” unit 8, the lessons “*Preparing a tour about town*” and “*At the hotel*,” unit 9, the lesson “*Going to the Country*,” unit 11, the lesson “*At the airport*,” unit 13, the lesson “*Means of communication*,” unit 14, the lessons “*Other countries*” and “*The English speaking countries*,” unit 15, the lesson “*Football match*,” and unit 16, the lessons “*At the seaside*,” “*Going to the cinema*,” and “*The Olympic games*.” These topics might be interesting and the students might be motivated to learn from these ideas. For example, the Angolan young students like to talk about parties, sports, music, clothing, the cinema and other topics. There are other lessons that could not help the students at all, for example, unit 5 the lesson entitled “*Betty was in trouble*.” This title does not match with the content that this lesson presents. The lesson entitled “*Rain weather*” has content which does not say anything which corresponds with the title. Other, similar examples apply.

To this end, Graves (2000) poses a number of questions that guide the conceptualization of content, as follows:

1. “What do I want my students to learn in this course, given who they are, their needs, and purpose of the course?
2. What are my options as to what they can learn?
3. What are the resources and constraints of my course that can help me narrow my options? “

The two textbooks have no instructions or examples to guide the students. Textbooks provide examples and instructions for students to follow when solving exercises or resolving activities. In addition, the textbooks do not have a single lesson that provides ways for a teacher to set up groupings either for interaction, cooperative learning, or even for heterogeneous group work. The textbook should also include exercises that enable teachers to engage students in the lessons.

5. Relevance

Grade 7 textbook contains only ten units that promote truly genuine learning opportunities. For instance, unit 1 is about introducing oneself. This is real because, at the first stage of learning a foreign language, introduction is an appropriate function to learn. Unit 2 is related to professions and this is also important for students to learn at the beginning level. Unit 5 is related to numbers or arithmetic and students need to learn how to count as well as how to make basic computing operations at this level.

Some units are designed in a way that students might learn different topics of interest, such as talking about daily routine, wild and domestic animals, Angolan food, and finally how to write a letter to a friend. All these topics students can find in units 14, 16, 19, 22, 23, 26, and 29 respectively. However, the selection of the content should be well researched so that students may benefit most.

Concerning Grade 8 textbook, the lessons' organizational formats do not motivate the students' enthusiastic engagement. Nevertheless, some lessons do indeed contain some real learning opportunities, as in the case of units 1, 8, 9, 13, 14, and 16. It is noted, however, that a textbook should be interesting *throughout* its entire content. When a textbook contains genuine learning opportunities, the learning becomes *real* and thereby motivates students and piques their interest in thoroughly learning contents so that these ultimately become incorporated into the students' everyday realities.

In the entire Grade 7 textbook there is no single unit that may enable students to apply knowledge to practical and real-world situations because the textbook has no such exercises. All the teacher can do is to use his/her imagination and contrive activities according to the content of a respective unit; for example, when a teacher is teaching unit 16, which highlights daily routines or activities, he/she can engage students to compare their own daily activities and have them discuss these issues in class; by comparing their activities. Thus, they are relating this to real situations; so a teacher would need to employ enough imagination to deliver effective lessons to the students. There is no single activity that could enable students to apply their

knowledge to practical and real-world situations. The dialogues format is too mechanical; therefore, students become bored and learning is limited.

For Grade 8 textbook, there are no activities that enable students to apply acquired knowledge to practical and real-world situations except unit 1 which contains exercises (activities) that the teacher may use with the students. When a textbook contains an ordinary format, constituting of texts, questions, oral activities with exercises, encouraging self-evaluation, students may learn better and be more engaged in widening their linguistic competency..

In view of the way the lessons are designed, there is little or no chance for the students to be creative. Dialogues are far too mechanical. They do not provide the much needed flexibility that otherwise should be temptingly within the reach of the growing minds of these students.

6. Types of assessments

Morgan & Neil (2001) consider that,

“Assessment is a crucial part of the teaching process. Assessing students’ work is part and parcel of lesson planning and is important for various reasons:

- It enables the teacher to gauge whether what has been taught has in fact been learned by the students.
- It provides information for the students on his/her progress in a subject.
- It provides information for parents.

- It is used for an outcome measure for further study or for leaving school” (107).

The entire Grade 7 textbook provides neither exercises for checking comprehension nor activities for oral questions. Texts followed by varied exercises are the basis for checking students’ reading comprehension. This is usually always followed by texts for reading interpretation. In terms of students’ self-assessment, this textbook does not provide the essential resources. Student’ self-assessment generally comes at the end of a unit, serving to assess the student’s progress. In terms of tasks or projects, the entire Grade 7 textbook does not provide. Typically the project comes at the end of a unit and it serves to help students to revise what has been delivered during a certain period of time.

In Grade 8 textbook, the sixteen units and thirty-two lessons, only unit 1 contains exercises for checking students’ understanding. Self-assessment is not made available throughout this textbook.

To sum up, it can be said that these two textbooks are entirely designed in dialogues. Grammar is indirectly introduced in the dialogues rather than in explanations followed by drills and structures for the students to practice. The topics are too rarely those of students’ interests. None of these topics demonstrate and reflect incidents from the Angolan students’ lives. Most titles do not indicate what the lessons’ contents refer to.

The illustrations do not indicate what the complementary sentences say, and they are depicted in drab color. Those images or illustrations are mostly about people

talking or doing things. Furthermore, on pages 114, 115, 116, and 117 of Grade 7 textbook, where food is discussed, another mistake was detected; the text mentions “mandioca.” Mandioca is Portuguese for “Cassava.”

The textbook designed for Grade 8 contains mistakes as well. On page 69 the conditional appear in the following form, “If I were a passenger, I shouldn’t bring a heavy suitcase,” instead of stating that “If I were a passenger, I would not bring a heavy suitcase.” Both textbooks attach the table of contents to the end instead of placing it at the beginning. As virtually, all acceptable textbooks present the table of contents at the beginning.

The topics are not of students’ interests, for example, referring to fashion, different types of sports, or varied music. The textbooks lack the more sophisticated cultural contexts that would truly enrich them. Most titles do not reflect the lessons’ contents, for example, in Grade 8 textbook, the titles “*Workers have duties*” or “*Ngunga wanted to paint the bedroom*” do not directly correspond to the subject matter. Additionally, in Grade 8 textbook on page 85 on the top, a compound word does not require a double hyphen, as it is here, “Addis- - Abeba,” (Ababa), but Addis-Ababa, and the correct form is “Ababa” and not “Abeba.” On page 88, on the second part of the dialogue set, the nationality of a person who is from Ghana is not Ghanese, but Ghanaian. Such loose proofreading in a finished textbook does not serve the students well.

Research Question 2

How well does the evaluation instrument used in this study -- Standards-based checklist -- help evaluate the areas of strengths or weaknesses in the two Angolan EFL textbooks?

In order to find out how the ACTFL's Standards helped evaluate EFL textbooks, a survey was addressed to the evaluators. All six members of the panel unanimously agreed on the answers of the second research question and the results showed that:

1. The checklist, which is based on the ACTFL's Standards, is a complete instrument and it covers the materials of an EFL textbook.
2. The format of the checklist is specific enough and it addresses all the criteria that should be met by EFL textbooks.
3. The format YES, NO, and Not Applicable is not constrictive. The "comments" component serves to add ideas in an explicit manner so that YES or NO answers do not become simple and without any explanation.
4. The instrument's criteria are not irrelevant; however, if one intends to make any change, it would be acceptable since according to Mieckley (2005), the addition or limitation of elements in a checklist is related to its purpose. For example, if the purpose of a checklist is to evaluate vocabulary, then the checklist should contain more criteria about vocabulary.
5. Once the checklist is complete, or covers the intended parts of the textbook, there is no need to add more items.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This section presents the conclusion and recommendations derived from the interpretation and discussions of the results. The two Angolan *English Readers* Grade 7 and Grade 8 were evaluated according to the ACTFL's Standards. The results showed that neither of these two textbooks comply with the specifications suggested by ACTFL. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that the Angolan Ministry of Education takes measures to update the EFL curriculum by adopting an improved textbook, updated to better achieve the goals set up by INDE, which is to facilitate the students' ability to communicate in English. The Angolan Ministry of education should consider including in the curriculum committee English language's coordinators and teachers of English as Foreign Language with long years of experience. Such coordinators and teachers of English should come from different schools in order to contribute diversification of their ideas when English language curricula are being designed, discussed, or considered for the future upgrading.

Curricula should be revised every three or four years. There are two forms of change: Long-term change and short-term change. Long-term change is the change which is done to the curriculum every three or four years, as mentioned above. Short-term change is the change which is done to the curriculum at any time when such assessment necessitates or dictates the incorporation of new elements into the curriculum in the unit, or into a section, a minor change. Other nations with cultural commonalities with Angola, like Brazil and Portugal, frequently make changes to the curricula based on these criteria.

The following recommendations are presented here to guide the next textbook selection by taking into consideration the specifications used to design the ACTFL questionnaire. These are:

1. A lesson or unit in a textbook may be helpful to the learner if it has an introductory section where the aim or objective is expressed; when this happens, the learner may have an idea of what each lesson or unit has as its goal. A textbook should have, at the beginning, the structural syllabus which serves as the “learners’ lifeline.” A structural syllabus is comprised of grammar, word pronunciation, and lexicon. This is presented in table format. The introductory section gives learners “firsthand” information. This helps them to grasp a basic idea about a lesson or unit. And the lesson’s title should be clear, i.e., briefly explicit, so as to convey the basic idea to the readers (teachers or learners) about the lesson or unit. For example, if a certain lesson has as a title “*The Importance of Water*,” learners will get an idea about the content of the lesson because the title is short, clear, and simple and refers specifically to the content of the lesson. Throughout the EFL textbook, topics should be interesting. These should reflect the learners’ needs, interests, as well as reflect their cultural orientation. For example, topics referring to food, sports, clothes, fashion, and leisure meet the Angolan students’ interest.

2. The sequence of the sections, units, or lessons should be clearly specified and obvious. For example, if one lesson or unit covers time and days of the week, the next lesson should talk about daily activities or someone’s routine where the days of the week and the time will be applied; the next lesson or unit will talk about the

months of the year, for example. This type of sequence provides logical and increasing orders of presenting the content. The same rule should be applied to the grammar. First of all, the grammar should be presented in logical contexts and within written texts. Secondly, grammar should be presented in drills following the explanation and a given structure with occurring variations so as not to make its presentation process mechanical or meaningless. It should be presented in an increasing order of difficulty. For example: if in the first lesson learners learned the verb “to be” in the simple present tense using personal pronouns (I, you, he, she, it, we....), then in the next lesson they will learn present continuous; for example, “*Sarah is walking.*” The structure employs a verb to be conjugated in the simple present tense followed by another verb ended in “-ing.” Here the verb *to be* is presented in simple present tense followed by another verb ended in *-ing*. At the next stage, learners will learn the present continuous forms together with adjectives and will thereafter use nouns instead of personal pronouns. For example, “*The sky is darkening.*”

3. Vocabulary should be introduced in contexts, in texts, and in a variety of ways so as not to make the learning too mechanical. Some exercises may be especially helpful for vocabulary learning, such as “gap-filling,” “matching columns,” “word categorizations,” or the use of “antonyms.” As referred to in chapter three, recycling is a process in which a word reappears in the next unit or lesson to reinforce its use and meaning, however, for several new exposures, in different contexts. These exercises should enhance comprehension and test the students’ deepening knowledge

of central concepts. Exercises should be related to real situations which will help the students learn to use words, ideas, or sentences in real-world situations, wherein the learners will increase their communicative competence.

4. The illustrations should be clear and simple. Illustrations that confuse learners should be avoided, for example, illustrations that do not comply with the sentences, or illustrations that show a different image from the content of the sentences. Illustrations should be part of the learner's information, and better explaining the content. Illustrations should be presented in different and vivid colors, placed close enough to the relevant text. Illustrations should be directly related to the content. Illustrations should also represent the target culture accurately, and in an unbiased manner, avoiding stereotypes. This will help learners understand the printed text. The texts should be authentic, reflecting real situations, as Graves (2005) terms it, "Life-situation Design." Life-situation Design means that the curriculum should be designed in a way that the content is real, authentic and directly related to the real-life situations discussed in the text.

5. Every lesson should contain exercises and activities that enable learners to apply their knowledge and thereby interact with each other. The new knowledge should be connected to the previous concept learned, while keeping the content sequential. The exercises should enhance the learners' critical thinking and analytical capacities. The lessons should describe sequences of instructional activities. These sequences of instructional activities facilitate the learners understanding the steps to follow in any particular lesson. Exercises presented in the lessons should follow

forms of testing and assessing knowledge that is being presently acquired, before proceeding to the next lesson.

6. The material should be available to the teachers as well as to the learners. To this end, the material should consist of textbook that can be used either by the teacher or by the learners, together with a teacher's manual which contains guidance or methodological orientations, with a key for exercises, a coursework book with language exercises and activities. A CD Rom aiding the learners to practice four skills including oral skills should also be available to all. Exercises or lessons in general should promote cooperative learning among students. Exercises should provide space for interaction between: (1) learner to learner, (2) learner to teacher, and finally, (3) teacher to learner.

7. Graves (2005) points out that when designing a textbook, the following points should be considered:

- a) The characteristics of the audience expected to use the material,
- b) The needs of the consumers (learners especially). And

c) We should know whether the content is appropriate for the consumers or not. If not, the content should be *conceptualized*. Conceptualizing the content means to adapt it to the consumers' needs. We can understand the consumers' needs by applying three basic principles of assessment:

1. *Pre-course needs assessment* which takes place prior to the start of the course. This should inform decisions about the content, goals and objectives, activities and choice of materials.

2. *Initial needs assessment* which takes place during the early stages of a course, during the first few sessions, or the first few weeks.

3. *Ongoing needs assessment* which takes place throughout the course. This helps to determine whether what is being taught, how it is being taught, how it is being evaluated, and whether it is effective for the learners.

The above principles are applicable to the Angolan educational context because students are diverse; therefore, they have different views of learning materials. In the case of a foreign language, as the case of English, instructors should be aware of the methods of selecting contents and should know how to deliver them to the students. Before that, knowing the characteristics of the students is very important, and assessing the content is also another important factor.

8. Another point to consider when designing a language textbook is that it should have a reliable constant format throughout. For example, the first part should consist of introduction. However, before the introduction, there is the table of contents with units and lessons outlined. The introduction should contain preliminary information about the book and structural syllabus. The second part should be texts (texts consist of both reading and listening passages), interpretation questions, writing activities and exercises, oral questions and discussions, as well as group activities, and vocabulary study. The third part should deal with students' self-assessment. At this stage, learners may perform a number of activities, solving exercises on their own, wherein the teacher will help them at the end with corrections and positive feedback. Finally the forth part should consist of projects and revisions. At this stage,

opportunities are given to the learners to review the language of a complete unit before proceeding to the next unit. The textbook format should be *sequential* and *systematic* throughout its entire length. For example, sections A, B, C, and D should have the same structural organization as mentioned earlier and the skills should be balanced. Sometimes a teacher may want to give special attention to a particular skill more than to others; this is easily achievable, however, in a flexible, well executed textbook.

9. The EFL textbook should contain, as the last part of a unit, students' self-assessment. Students' self-assessment may be part of the project and its revisions. Every piece of knowledge must be thoroughly reinforced before stepping to the next lesson or unit. EFL coursework should have the keys for exercises at the end, somewhere in the appendices. Such a key encourages students to check their answers even more thoroughly and it is known how important that is.

Based on the current theories of curriculum design and on the results derived from this study, the two Angolan EFL textbooks were shown inappropriate for the students. They need a complete change and it is hoped that the Angolan authorities will be willing to do that for the benefit of the whole nation.

In summary, based on the results of this study and on current theories of curriculum and textbook design referred to in this dissertation, the two Angolan EFL textbooks were shown inappropriate to achieve the communication goals set forth by the INDE. Therefore, it is suggested that these two textbooks be replaced following the recommendations provided in this dissertation. It is hoped that if these

suggestions and recommendations are followed, this dissertation will have contributed to the betterment of the Angolan education. Finally, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Angola employ the ACTFL's checklist for the future textbooks' analysis. Similarly, other textbooks analyses are recommended to use this checklist as a tool.

In addition to this checklist being proved to be efficient for a foreign language evaluation textbook (through face validity, piloting study, and being used in previous studies), its construction is based on the ACTFL's Standards. ACTFL is an organization internationally recognized for the foreign languages teaching. This is an organization dedicated to the improvement and expansion of the teaching of all languages at all levels of instructions. ACTFL is an individual organization of more than 9,000 foreign languages educators and administrators from elementary through graduate education, as well as government and industry. In this concern, it is highly recommended that the Angolan Ministry of Education employ this evaluation instrument in the future FL textbooks evaluation.

Nowadays teachers of foreign languages are more efficient and aware of the most practical teaching and learning practice. Thus any idea about changes emanated from teachers concerning the curriculum issues, should be welcome for considerations.

In order to make this instrument match the Angolan reality, it is therefore, recommended that it be tested through a focus group consisting of Angolan EFL

teachers and specialists. In this case, this instrument can become institutionalized by the Ministry of Education of Angola.

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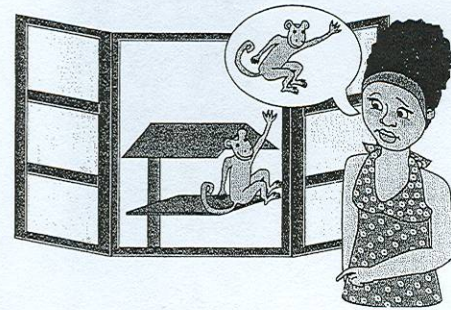
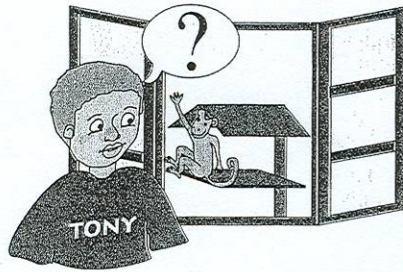
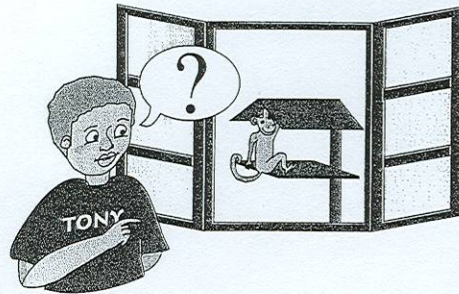
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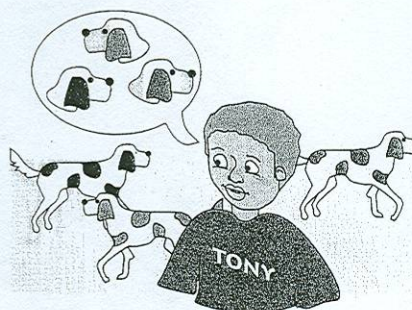
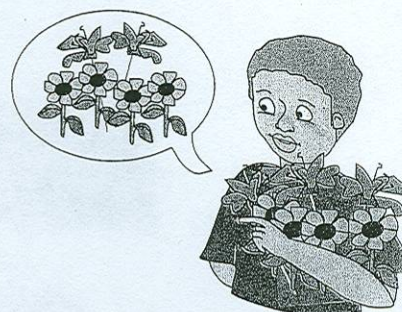
APPENDICES

Appendix A
English Readers Grade 7 Sample

A

4





Unit 2

24

What are you?

Teacher: Listen! What am I?

Class: You are a teacher.



Teacher: I am a teacher and I am a man.

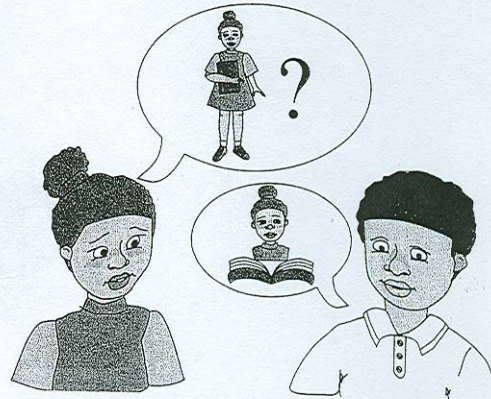


Lemba: Are you a boy, Ngunga?

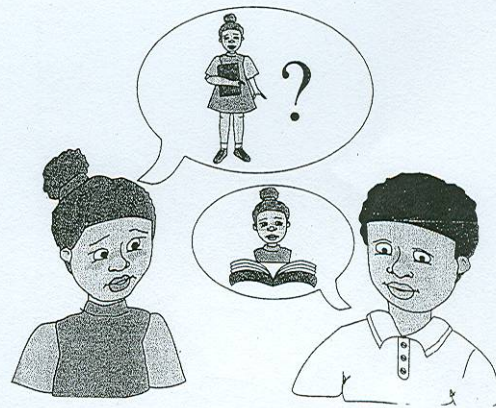
Ngunga: Yes, I am a boy.



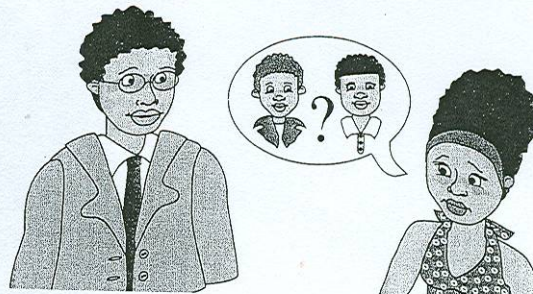
Betty: Am I a pupil?
Edgar: Yes, you're a pupil.



Teacher: What is she?
Edgar: She is a girl and a pupil, too.



Lemba: And what are Edgar and Ngunga?



Unit 5

An arithmetic lesson

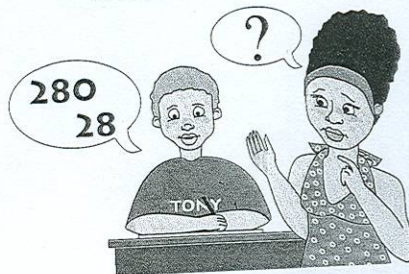


Lemba: Is this your arithmetic exercise-book, Tony?

Tony: No, it isn't.
This is my exercise-book.



Lemba: No, they aren't. Listen:
There are 58 boys and 42 girls in one school. How many pupils are there in that school?



Tony: There are 280 pencils for 28 pupils.

How many pencils are there for one pupil?

Lemba: Come on!
What's the solution?



Lemba: Look!

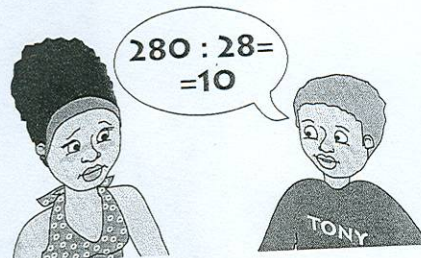
These problems are easy.

Tony: Aren't they right?



Tony: Fifty-eight plus forty-two is one hundred pupils.

Lemba: Good. Now the other problem.



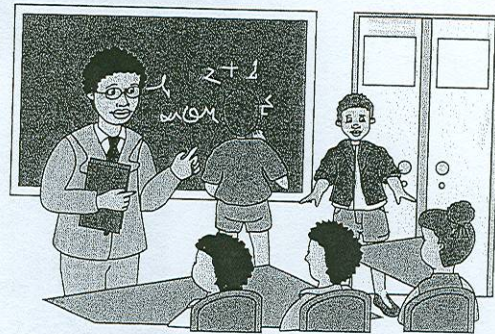
Tony: It's a division. Two hundred and eighty divided by twenty-eight is ten.

Lemba: Well, arithmetic isn't difficult.
Just do the problems every day!

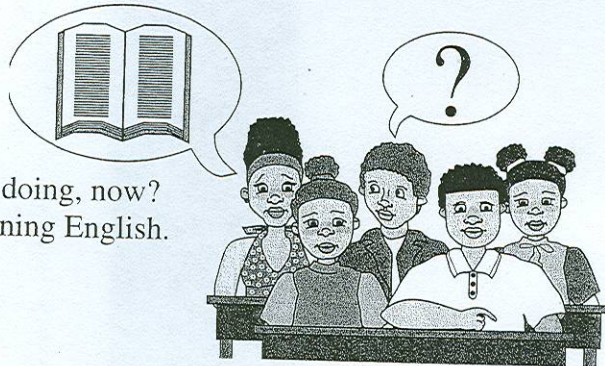
What are they doing?

The children are sitting at the desks. They are listening to the teacher. There are some satchels under the desks. A pupil is writing on the chalkboard. He is standing.

Teacher: Come in, Ngunga.
Sit down.



Ngunga: What are you doing, now?
Classmate: We are learning English.



Teacher: What are you doing, Ngunga?

Ngunga: I'm asking a question about the lesson.



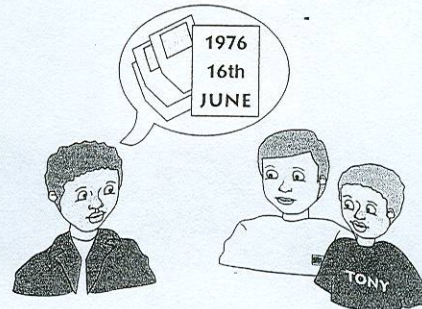
Unit 20

100

Soweto

The 16th of June 1976.

"The pupils of Soweto prepared a protest march. They wanted to speak English during their lessons, not Afrikaans".



Thousands and thousands of workers marched with them. There were different slogans — "Afrikaans is the oppressor's language", "Power to the people".



Then the policemen arrived. Nobody was afraid of them.



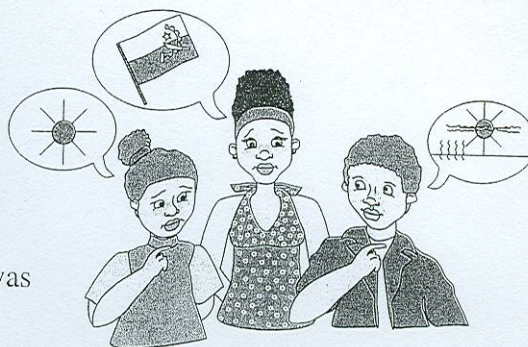
The seasons in the Tropics

Betty: It was a beautiful day, yesterday.

The sun was shining.

Lemba: Independence Day is always beautiful.

Ngunga: That's right. But it was very hot yesterday.



Teacher: By the way, how many seasons are there in the tropics?

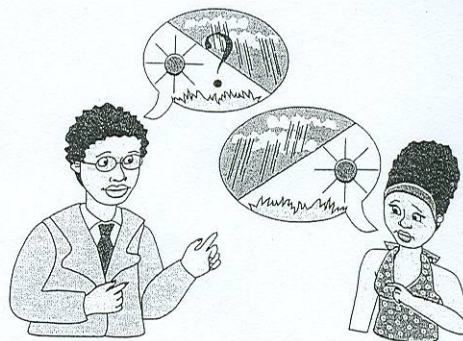
Betty: There are two seasons.

Lemba: The rainy season and the dry season.



Teacher: Is the dry season as long as the rainy season?

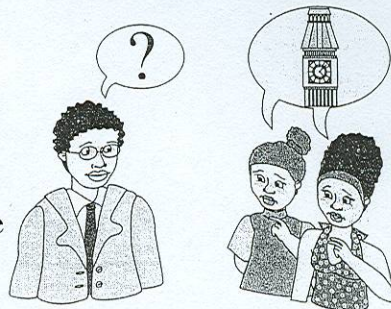
Lemba: No, it isn't. The dry season is shorter than the rainy season.



The four seasons

Teacher: What's up, girls?

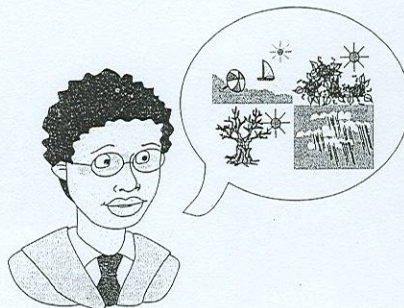
Betty: We're speaking about the seasons in England.



Lemba: Are there four seasons there?



Teacher: Yes, there are.
Spring, Summer,
Autumn and Winter.



Betty: Summer is more agreeable
than Spring.

Teacher: Not for farmers.



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Appendix B

English Readers Grade 8 Sample

Reading Passage

Traditional division of labour

Within each village in Acholi there is a division of labour between the father and the mother, or the husband and the wife. The father or husband is the head of the family and he decides every family matter.

The husband's work is the cutting of wood to build a house and he also builds the house.

The wife's work is to cut grass to cover the roof. The man also digs the field and sows the seed, but it is the work of a woman to weed the garden and to harvest the corn. Cooking is also the work of a woman.

All domestic work is a woman's duty.

It is a disgrace for a grown-up man or even a boy to go to the well and carry water.

Women must take care of babies and young children, too.

Adapted from Anna Apoko,
"Growing up in Acholi"

Language exercises

I

Ask questions on the underlined words or phrases.

1. The father decides every family matter.
2. Mother had to cook dinner yesterday.
3. Women weeded the gardens.
4. They were living in Acholi.
5. No, a grown-up man doesn't take care of babies.

II

Fill in the blanks:

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. One baby | two..... |
| 2. One woman | many..... |
| 3. One wife | some..... |
| 4. One roof | five..... |
| 5. One grown-up | all the..... |

III

Answer these questions beginning with "so....." or "neither.....".

1. Father works on the field. And mother?
2. Cooking is the work of a woman. And harvesting?
3. Men don't go to the well. And boys?

IV

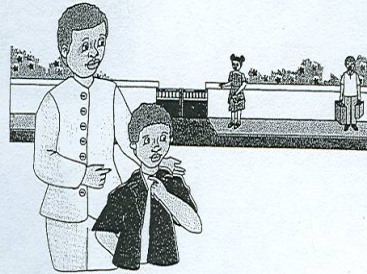
Write a short composition (about 50 words) on the following:
"My family does the housework"

You may use the following topics:

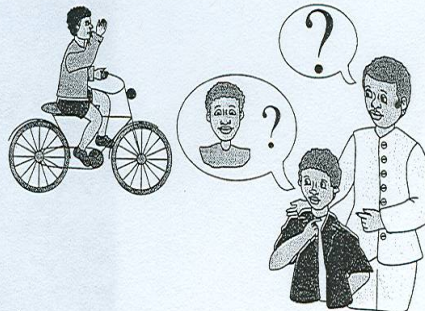
- What mother does.
- What father does.
- How you and your brothers and sisters help them.
- Your opinion about the division of the domestic work.

Workers have duties

Mr. Lutengala's garage is on the way to Ngunga's school. So they sometimes walk together in the morning.



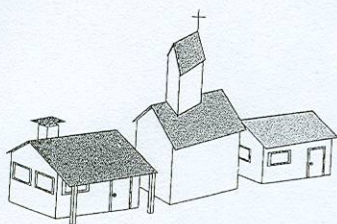
Ngunga: Who's that man?
Mr. Lutengala: Which man?



Ngunga: The man on the bicycle.
He waved to you.
Mr. Lutengala: (*waving back*): He is Mr. Sousa.



A rally



They reached a village in two hours' time. There would be a rally to introduce the new Commissar to the people. The main village square was crowded.



Driver: Would you like us to go to the rally?

Ngunga: Of course! Maybe Mr. Kobla won't have such an opportunity again.



Edgar: We don't want him to miss anything interesting, do we?

Ngunga: Look at those old men!

Reading Passage

Marriage is a different matter

"Have you written to your father about our engagement, Emeka?" asked Nene one afternoon.

"I'll go home next month and I'll tell him, then".

"But why? Why must you wait four weeks?"

Nnaemeka was quiet during some time, and then began very slowly:

"You have lived in Lagos all your life, and you know very little about people in distant parts of the country".

"Are they unhappy when their children want to marry?" asked Nene very surprised.

"Yes, sometimes they are.

They must choose their children's husband or wife. But there is another thing, the worst one for my father — you are not an Ibo".

Nene could not speak immediately. At last she said: "How can a person's tribe determine marriage? Aren't Ibos kind to other people?"

"So they are. But marriage is a different matter. You have no problems because your father died. He would also think so."

Adapted from Chinua Echebe

Unit 11

69

At the airport



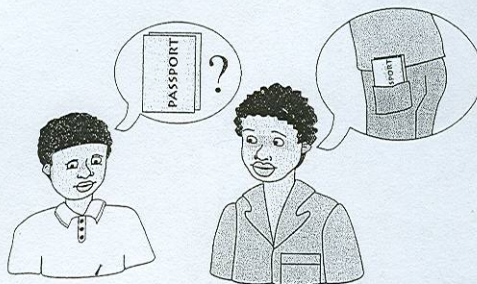
The day of Kobla's departure both Ngunga and Edgar went to the airport to see him off.

Edgar: If I were a passenger, I shouldn't bring a heavy suitcase.



Ngunga: Shall I help you with your luggage?

Kobla: Yes, please.



Edgar: Did you forget your passport?

Kobla: No, I'm sure I didn't. It's in my back pocket.

Reading Passage

Arriving in a big city

He sees great high buildings; there are red and green lights on them, almost as tall as the buildings.

He is silent, his head aches, he is afraid. He holds his bag tightly and goes carefully because he doesn't want to fall over everybody.

In the street the noise is immense. Cars and buses one behind the other more than he has ever imagined.

Lights change from green to red, and back again to green. He has heard that. When it is green you may go. But when he starts across the street, a big bus passes in front of him. He comes back again and finds himself a place against the wall. His heart beats fast, there is nothing to do or to think to stop it.

Suddenly he hears a voice.

—"Where do you want to go, old man?"

—"To Sophiatown, young man"

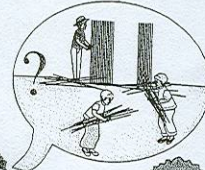
—"Come with me then and I shall show you."

Adapted from Alan Paton

"Cry beloved country»

Kobla: Who built it?

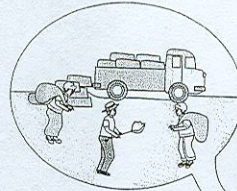
Driver: All the villagers did. They usually help one another.



Ngunga: They understand the advantages of collective work, don't they?

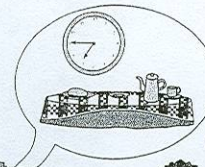
Edgar: That's it!

If you work in group, you won't have so many problems.



Driver: Well, it's getting late. If we leave now, we'll arrive before dinner.

Kobla: It's a pity we have to go back to town. There's so much to learn in the country.



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Appendix C

The Checklist for the Textbooks Evaluation

This checklist is designed to check determined areas of English as a Foreign Language textbook in use in Angolan Secondary Schools. The present checklist was adapted from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Standards (ACTFL).

Textbook _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Yes: Positive aspects of the lesson

No: Negative aspects of the lesson, or aspects that do not appear in lesson

N/Ap.: Not Applicable (some criteria may not apply to some lessons)

Page/Unit	Focus Areas	Criteria	Yes	No	N/Ap.	Comments
	1. Textbook Overview	1. Is the objective expressed in each lesson or unit?				
		2. Does the title of each page or lesson indicate the aim of the lesson?				
		3. Does the lesson feature on organization based on interesting topics and cultural contexts?				
		4. Is the sequence of the sections, units, or lessons outlined?				
		5. Are the grammatical rules presented in a logical manner and in an increasing order of difficulty?				
		6. Are the new vocabulary words introduced in a variety of ways?				

		7. Are the new vocabulary words repeated in sequential lessons in order to facilitate the reinforcement of their meaning and use?				
		8. Are there, in the lesson, exercises that develop comprehension and test the student's knowledge of main ideas, details, and the sequence of ideas?				
		9. Do the exercises develop meaningful communication by referring to realistic activities and situations?				
		10. Are the illustrations clear, simple, and free of unnecessary details that may confuse the learners?				
		11. Are the illustrations printed close enough to the text and directly related to the content to help the learner understand the printed text?				
		12. Does the lesson provide authentic printed texts (newspapers/magazine articles, ads, poems, short stories, etc) that have engaged content and tasks?				
	2. Desired Outcomes	1. Is the new knowledge connected to the previous lessons?				
		2. Does the lesson indicate what students should know and be able to do?				
		3. Does the lesson engage students to use the target language to acquire new information on topics of interest?				

	3. Teaching Procedures	1. Does the lesson describe the sequence of instructional activities, and assessment?				
		2. Are teachers given techniques for activating students' background knowledge, before reading the text?				
		3. Does the lesson provide teachers with means for involving students to exercise, practice, test, and review vocabulary words, or grammar?				
	4. Meeting the Students' Needs	1. Is the content appropriate for the students to learn?				
		2. Are the instructions and examples adequately explained and illustrated for the students?				
		3. Is it possible to set up groupings varied in response to the nature of learning, i.e., small heterogeneous groups for interaction or cooperative learning, and homogeneous groups for working on achievement or interest?				
	5. Relevance	1. Are the learning opportunities real, and rich in ways that promote students' engagement and interest?				
		2. Do the activities enable students to apply their knowledge to practical and real-world situations?				
		3. Do the activities enable students to be creative?				
	6. Types of Assessments	1. Do the lessons provide opportunity for informal verification of acquired understanding, e.g. , observations, oral questions, or discussions?				

		2. Is the lesson conducive to the students' self-assessment?				
		3. Are the factors of performance, task and project accessible through the lesson?				

Appendix D

The Consent Form

Approved by the Human Subjects Committee Lawrence Campus, University of Kansas.
Approval expires one year from 4/3/2008.

An Evaluation of English as a Foreign Language Textbook for Secondary Schools in Angola

You are being asked to participate in a dissertation research study designed to investigate the content of the Angola Secondary Schools EFL textbooks and find suggestions for the future production of updated textbooks. Participants will engage in one focus group sessions every two weeks for a total of three sessions. Anticipated time for the focus group is approximately 3 hours. Participants' will select the focus group time and date that best fits their schedule. Participation is voluntary. If you decide to discontinue participating in this project at any time, you may do so without question or penalty.

Participants' confidentiality will be rigorously maintained throughout the study. Hand written notes will be taken for the purposes of accurate transcription of the focus group data. Participants' names or institutions will not be identified and study data will be stored securely. There are no anticipated risks to participants. Although there may not be direct benefits to participants, we believe that the information obtained from this study will provide for better Angolan children's textbooks in the future.

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant, please feel free to call (785) 864-7429 or contact the Human Subjects Committee Lawrence Campus (HSCL), University of Kansas, 2385 Irving Hill, Lawrence Kansas 66045-7563, e-mail dhann@ku.edu.

I hope that you will agree to take part in this study. By signing your signature below, you will confer that you are at least 18 years old and have received a copy of this Consent and Authorization form.

Signature of Participant :

Date

By my signature I affirm that I have received a copy of this consent form.

Print Name of Participant: _____

If you have questions about the study, please contact the researchers noted below:

Simao Henriques
Principle Investigator
indicato@ku.edu
785.550.1845

Manuela Gonzalez-Bueno
Faculty Supervisor
mgbueno@ku.edu
864-9674

Appendix E
The Cover Letter requesting three School of Education's Professors (specialized in EFL) to serve as panel of experts to ensure the instrument's face validity

Wed. 11/28/2007 12:16 p.m.

To: Jorgensen, Karen; Peter, Lizette; Markham, Paul L.

Cc: Henriques, Simao; Friedman-Nimz, Riva C; Harrington, Robert G

Subject: **Validation**

Colleagues,

I know you are very busy this time of the year, but I am still going to ask you a favor as experts in second/foreign language education. Our doctoral student Simao Henriques is analyzing two EFL textbooks currently being used in Angola, his native country. To that end, he is going to use the two checklists based on previous work done by researchers in the field of SL/FL education.

After our latest committee meeting it was determined that these checklists had to be validated by experts such as yourselves (they were not intended as research instruments, so they haven't been validated as such). We are asking you to evaluate the two checklists in terms of their alignments with currently accepted practices in the field of SL/FL education, in particular with the national standards. Please feel free to suggest any changes (including the elimination or addition of items) that might contribute to increase the validity of the tools.

Manuela Gonzalez-Bueno

Associate Professor

Foreign Language Education

University of Kansas

School of Education

Appendix F
Oman Grade 8A Textbook Sample

Free time e-mails from the

ITC

Find the answers.

What's the
topic of the e-mails?

What is Najma's
new book about?

Who is Beth's best friend?
Which countries does
Ahmed mention?

Dear Maha,

Hi, I'm Beth. How are you? I've just upgraded to the ITC and want to tell you about the things I like doing. There are lots of different things I like doing in my free time. I enjoy sewing and am busy making a new dress for my little sister.

My best friend Sally has just introduced me to a new pastime. It's called chess. It's a board game which you play indoors with a friend. It's a difficult game to play and you have to think really hard to win. I really enjoy it! Sally and I are going to join a chess club, so we can play with other friends.

I also enjoy painting and taking photos. Some of my pictures are displayed at school and I recently won first prize for one of my photos. My teacher says I should think of becoming an artist when I grow up.

Write soon! Best wishes,

Beth

Dear Ashök,

I've just joined the ITC and thought it would be great if we could write to each other. I live in Oman. There's a lot to do in Oman during your free time. I really enjoy swimming and go to the beach every day. During the weekend, my family go to Wadi Bani Khalid. It's a beautiful place with lots of pools of cool, clear water to swim in but you have to be careful as it can be dangerous swimming in wadis.

Oman is a really hot country and it's good to have some indoor activities to do during the summer. I like writing and collecting postcards. I have a hundred postcards from my friends in different countries like Kuwait, Kenya, Korea and Canada. Maybe you can send me a postcard too!

I've just started playing chess – it's a great board game! I've already played in some competitions at school and think if I keep on practising I'll win one day. You should try it, it really makes you think!

I'm good at music and like playing the keyboard. I've just joined the music club at school and we're practising our National Anthem for National Day.

Best wishes,

Ahmed

Dear Alex,

It's the weekend here in Bangladesh. I've just come to the Internet café to send e-mails to my friends in the ITC. I hope you're OK and having a great weekend in Germany. What do you do in your free time?

I like using the computer but it's expensive at the Internet café, so on most days I like playing cricket with my friends. It's a wonderful outdoor game with two teams of players. You use a cricket bat to hit a ball and you have to run as fast as you can to win. My school team is the best in our region. Playing cricket gives me lots of exercise and keeps me fit.

I also enjoy watching satellite TV. The most popular programmes on TV here are Indian films and cricket matches. I have to be careful not to watch too much TV because it can make you lazy. Some of my friends forget to do their homework because they watch too much TV.

Sometimes, watching TV can be boring but playing a game like chess is really interesting. It really makes you think. I've won lots of games and my father says that I could become a great player but I'll have to work hard to improve my game.

Please write to me soon. Best wishes,

Abdul

Dear Maryam,

Hello, I'm from Jeddah. I think it's great that you've joined the ITC. It's a great club. You learn lots of new things, there's a lot to do and you can make new friends from around the world. When I first joined the ITC, I wasn't very good at using computers and writing e-mails. Now I use the computer every day for studying and in my free time.

I enjoy playing games on the computer like draughts, solitaire and chess. Sometimes I play games with my friends on the Internet and sometimes I play on my own with the computer. I sometimes win against my friends but I always lose against the computer!

I also really enjoy reading and have just bought a new book all about origami. It's a fantastic book that tells you how to make paper models. Origami is a quiet activity and a great way of making presents to give to family and friends.

Please write soon. I really want to hear what you do in your free time.

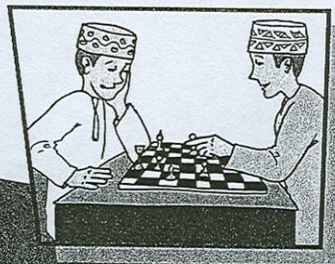
Najma

2 Read the story.

BUSY BASIM and LAZY LATIFA



One day, Basim and his sister Latifa returned from school. Latifa said, 'I'm too tired to do anything!' and sat down in front of the television to watch her favourite programme, *Cook with Khalid*. While she was watching the television, the doorbell rang and Basim answered it. It was his friends asking him to play football. Basim went to play football in the park with his friends. After an hour, Basim came home and made an origami model out of paper for his parents as a present but Latifa carried on watching the television. Then, Basim washed the car but Latifa carried on watching television. After washing the car, Basim rang Ahmed and asked him to come and play chess but Latifa carried on watching television. Latifa was so bored that she fell asleep in front of the television. After playing chess, Basim started cleaning his room. When Latifa woke up, Basim was sorting his collection of postcards. In the evening, after dinner, Basim and Latifa's parents asked, 'Have you done your homework?' 'Oh no!' said Basim and Latifa. 'We've forgotten to do it!' 'Basim, you've been too busy with your hobbies and friends,' said Basim's mother. 'Latifa, you've been very lazy watching TV and sleeping,' said Latifa's father. 'We think you should do your homework,' said their parents. 'Yes!' said Basim and Latifa and went to their rooms to do their homework.



learning strategy reading

To skim means to read quickly and get information for general understanding. Look at pictures, diagrams and headings to help you.

To scan is to read for specific information. Find key words or phrases. Then read the sentence around them carefully.

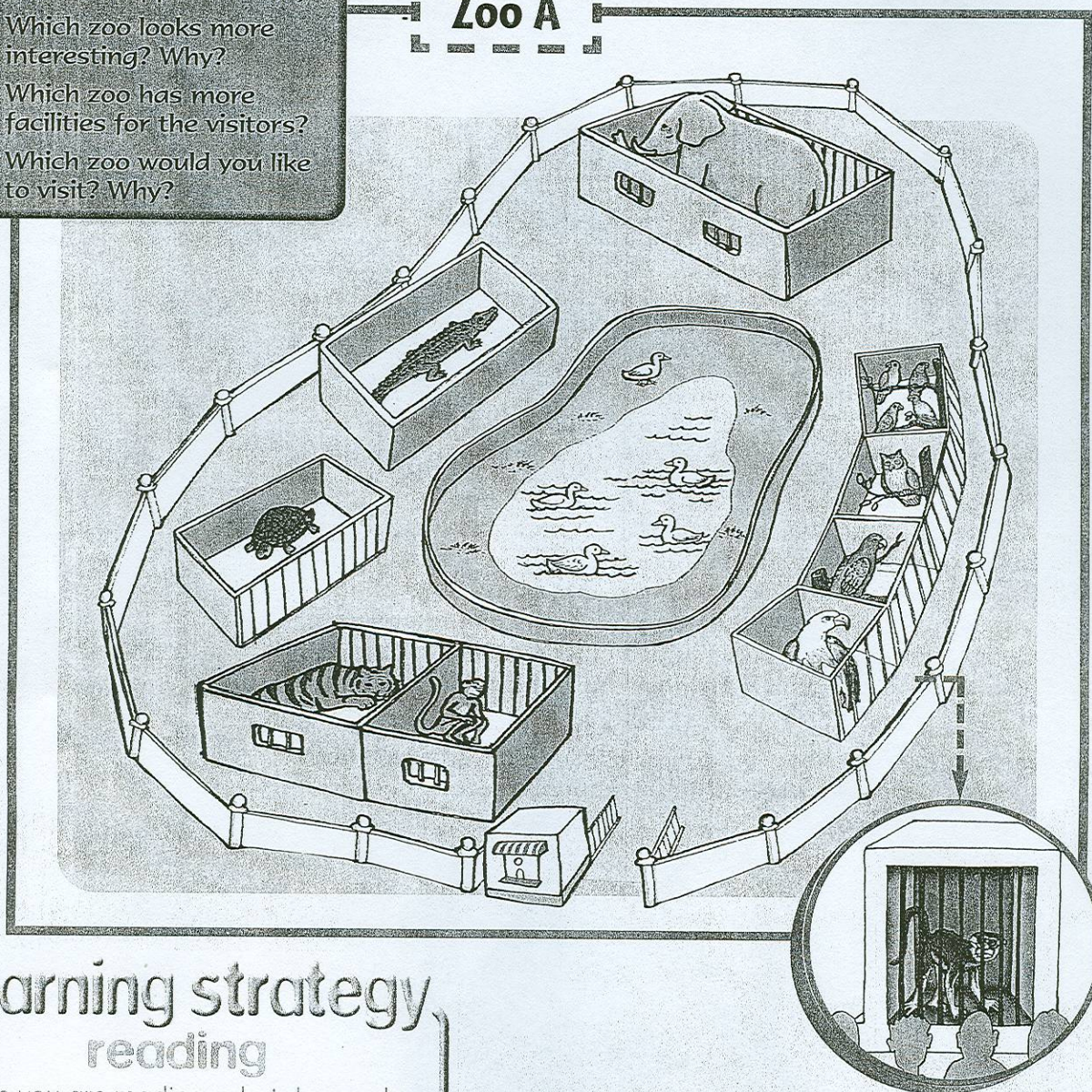
1 Look and think.

Think about these questions while you look at pictures of Zoo A and Zoo B.

- 1 Which zoo are the animals happier in? Why?
- 2 Which zoo looks more interesting? Why?
- 3 Which zoo has more facilities for the visitors?
- 4 Which zoo would you like to visit? Why?

Two Zoos to

Zoo A



learning strategy reading

When you are reading, what do you do when you don't know a word? Which of these things do you do?

- guess?
- read it again?
- keep reading?
- look at the letters in the word?
- ask a friend?
- use the word store or dictionary page?
- write the word down?
- decide if the word is a noun, verb or adjective?

1. The tigers are in a small cage but they look healthy.
2. The monkeys have lots of trees to climb but you can't always see them.
3. The tickets are really expensive but you can spend all day there.



Think About

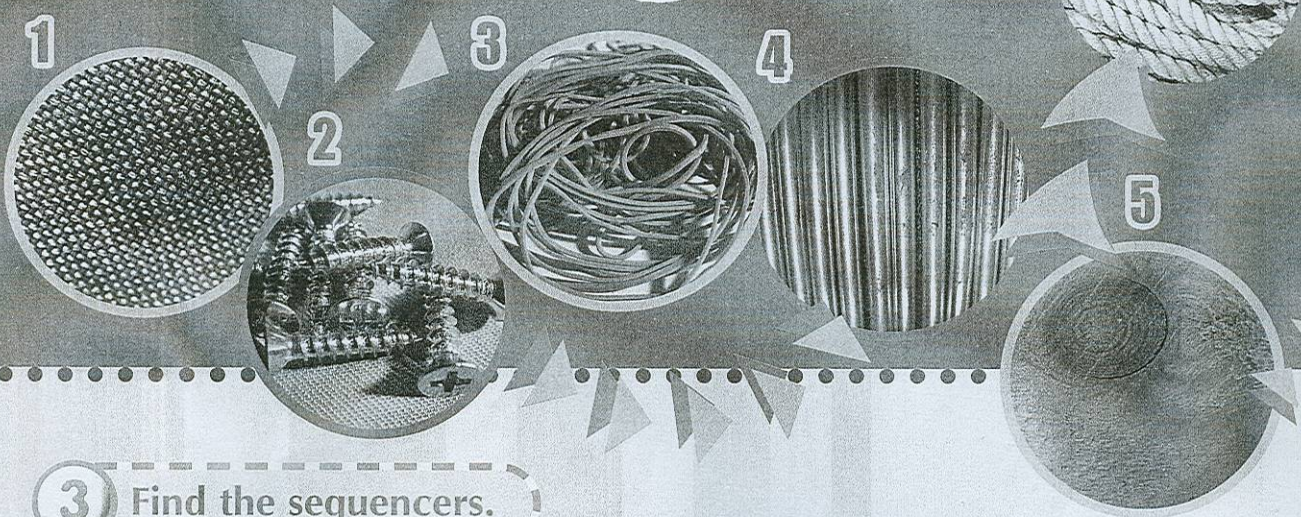


Children can play and climb trees in the playground.
You can eat breakfast, lunch or dinner at the restaurant.
The birds can fly around the enormous aviary.
The animals live in big enclosures with trees and lots of space.
Children can touch and feed farm animals in the children's zoo.
You can watch shows and displays in the amphitheatre.
The café sells ice-creams and sandwiches all day.
You can buy toys, t-shirts and postcards at the gift shop.
You can buy your tickets at the ticket office next to the entrance.

1 What is it?

Match the words with the photos of different materials and write them in your exercise books. Work with your friends.

wood fabric balloon
wire elastic bands
string cardboard screws



3 Find the sequencers.

An ITC member from Vietnam has sent in a letter telling other ITC members how to recycle materials to make things. Read Vinh Dan's letter and write the sequencers in activity 2 on page 24 of your Skills Book.

Computer Window

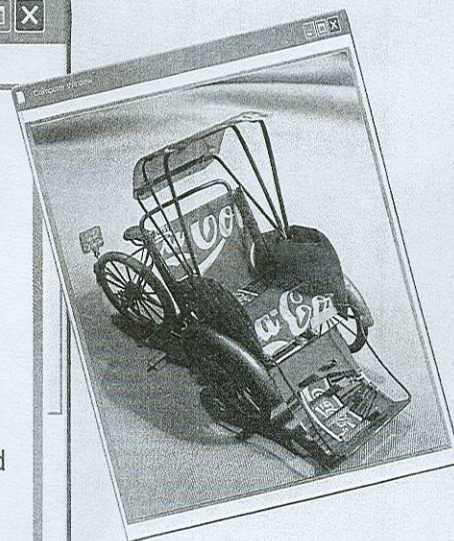
File Edit View Insert Format Tools Table Window Help

Dear ITC,

I live in Vietnam and I am writing to tell you about my hobby. I collect old aluminium drink cans and make them into models.

First, I collect the used and empty cans. I get them from restaurants, friends and family and take them home. Then, I wash them and leave them in the garden to dry in the sun. The next step is to look around for ideas. Hanoi is a very busy city and I get lots of ideas from the transport on the roads. There are colourful buses, cars, motorbikes, bikes and cyclos. After I've got an idea, I think about the shapes I will need to make my model and then I draw a plan. The design can be very difficult and usually I make several drawings before I start work on the model itself. Next, I go and choose three or four cans. Then, I use a strong pair of scissors to cut them open and then I make them flat. After that, I copy my plan on to the cans and cut out the shapes. Finally, I sell the models to the Ministry of Crafts in Hanoi, who distribute them to shops and tourist hotels. I have enclosed a photo of one of the cyclos I've made to give you an idea.

Best wishes,
Vinh Dan



learning strategy writing

We use sequencers in our writing to help readers understand the order of events.

This is useful when writing about processes, such as making paper.

8

7

2

Guess the invention.

Ask your friend questions to guess the name of the invention they are thinking of.

I'm thinking of an invention.

Is it brown?

Is it made of wood?

Is it bigger than an orange?

Is it in the kitchen?



4

Make a can engine or a balloon rocket.

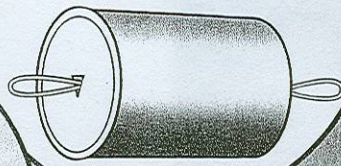
You are going to make things out of different materials. In your group, decide whether to make a can engine or a balloon rocket. Collect the materials you need and follow the instructions below.

YOU WILL NEED:

an empty can
an elastic band
a kebab stick
a piece of candle

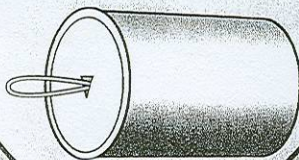
1

First, make a hole in the bottom of the can and thread the elastic band through the can.



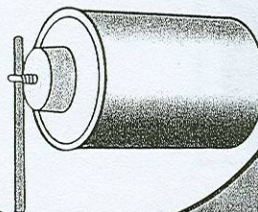
2

Next, put a small piece of the stick through the loop at one end.



3

Then, thread the other loop through the piece of candle and hold it tight with the rest of the stick.



Finally, wind up the longer piece of stick and watch it roll!

4

YOU WILL NEED:

some sellotape
a long balloon
some string
a straw

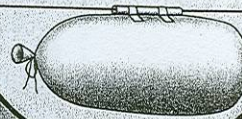
1

First, blow up the balloon and tie a knot in the end.



2

Next, thread the string through the straw and tie the end to a door handle.



3

Then, stick the straw to the balloon with the sellotape.



Finally, hold the string tight, cut the knot off the end of the balloon and watch it fly!



4

Appendix G

The Survey Addressed to the Focus group Concerning the Checklist Reliability

Answer the following questions about the checklist that you have used for the evaluation of the two Angolan EFL textbooks:

1. How well did you feel the checklist helped you analyze the textbooks?

2. Was the format of the checklist specific enough?

3. Was the YES/NO or Not Applicable format constrictive?

4. Was there any item that was irrelevant for the task?

5. Would you have added more or another item so that the evaluation would be more complete?

Thanks a lot for your time.

Appendix H

The Piloting Study Results

EFL- basic Education Grade 8A, Sultanate of Oman

Unit One

1. Textbook Overview

1. Is the objective expressed in each lesson or unit? In this unit, the objectives of the lessons are not openly defined, but the teacher can understand it through the title of the lessons (More Free Time).

2. Does the title of each page or lesson indicate the aim of the lesson? Yes, the title clearly indicates the aim of the lesson.

3. Does the lesson feature on organization based on interesting topics and cultural contexts? This unit contains interesting topics for the students, for example, writing e-mails to friends, learning how to talk about free-time. Concerning the cultural context, this unit only mentions Arabic names, for instance, Latifa, Aysha, Basim, and others. However, only these few relevant aspects about cultural contexts are mentioned here.

4. Is the sequence of the sections, units, or lessons outlined? Yes. In this unit, the lessons and sections are set up in sequential manner.

5. Are the grammatical rules presented in a logical manner and in an increasing order of difficulty? Yes. In this unit, according to chart in the first pages of the textbook, adjectives are presented in context so that students themselves will try to work on them and match them with the correct picture.
6. Are the new vocabulary words introduced in a variety of ways? Yes, there is a table on page six where students can exercise new words (adjectives) by using positive and negative forms. Charts, pictures, and small excerpts are good helpers for vocabulary learning in a variety of ways.
7. Are the new vocabulary words repeated in sequential lessons in order to facilitate the reinforcement of their meaning and use? Yes. Vocabulary is presented from page to page in a sequential way.
8. Are there, in the lesson, exercises that develop comprehension and test the student's knowledge of main ideas, details, and the sequence of ideas? Yes. There is a part related to exercises for developing comprehension and test knowledge of main ideas, details, and sequence of ideas. In this unit, students will have as activities to read and understand stories, to listen, to write e-mails, and free-time activities.
9. Do the exercises develop meaningful communication by referring to realistic activities and situations? Yes. The exercises develop meaningful communication by referring to realistic activities and situations.
10. Are the illustrations clear, simple, and free of unnecessary details that may confuse the learners? Yes. The illustrations are very clear for the students.

11. Are the illustrations printed close enough to the text and directly related to the content, to help the learner understand the printed text? Yes.

12. Does the lesson provide authentic printed texts (newspapers/magazine articles, ads, poems, short stories, etc) that have engaged content and tasks? Yes. There are real pictures of students, but there are no magazine articles or newspaper cutting.

2. Desired Outcomes

1. Is the new knowledge connected to the previous lessons? Yes, there is a connection.

2. Does the lesson indicate what students should know and be able to do? Yes, on the top page of each lesson there is a short sentence which tells what students are supposed to do.

3. Does the lesson engage students to use the target language to acquire new information on topics of interest? Yes. When writing e-mail, for instance, students will be engaged in using the target language.

3. Teaching Procedures

1. Does the lesson describe the sequence of instructional activities, and assessment? Yes, the lesson describes the sequence of instructional activities, and assessment, for example, when students are asked to guess adjectives on page 6.

2. Are teachers given techniques for activating students' background knowledge, before reading the text? Yes, on page seven, on the top.

3. Does the lesson provide teachers with means for involving students to exercise, practice, and review vocabulary words, or grammar? Yes.

4. Meeting the Needs of All students

1. Is the content appropriate for the students to learn? Yes. Students can exchange ideas by sharing e-mails. In this way, interaction can be played.

2. Are the instructions and examples adequately explained and illustrated for the students? Yes, the instructions and examples are short and concise so that students understand them.

3. Is it possible to set up groupings varied in response to the nature of learning, i.e., small heterogeneous groups for interaction or cooperative learning, and homogeneous groups for working on achievement or interest? Yes. The objective of learning how to write e-mails is to get students to express themselves in a way which will meet the students' needs and level. This will enable them to use English in future.

5. Relevance

1. Are the learning opportunities real, and rich in ways that promote students' engagement and interest? Yes. The learning opportunities are real.

2. Do the activities enable students to apply their Knowledge to practical and real-world situations? Yes.

3. Do the activities enable students to be creative? Yes. Again, writing e-mails is an example.

6. Types of Assessments

1. Do the lessons provide the opportunity for informal verification of acquired understanding, e.g., observations, oral questions, or discussion? Yes. There are activities for adjectives learning, and charts.
2. Is the lesson conducive to the students' self-assessment? Yes. The same activities seen on question 1 can be used for the students' self-assessment.
3. Are the factors of performance, task and projects accessible through the lesson? Yes, there is a project for the students to perform (grammar).

Unit Two

1. Textbook Overview

1. Is the objective expressed in each lesson or unit? In this unit the objectives of the lessons are not explicitly defined, but the teacher can understand it through the title of the lessons (Two Zoos To Think About).
2. Does the title of each page or lesson indicate the aim of the lesson? Yes.
3. Does the lesson feature on organization based on interesting topics and cultural contexts? Cultural contexts do not apply here. But interesting topics are evident in this unit.
4. Is the sequence of the sections, units, or lessons outlined? Yes. The sequence is outlined.
5. Are the grammatical rules presented in a logical manner and in an increasing order of difficulty? Yes.

6. Are the new vocabulary words introduced in a variety of ways? Yes. The new vocabulary words are presented in contexts in the texts.
7. Are the new vocabulary words repeated in sequential lessons in order to facilitate the reinforcement of their meaning and use? Yes.
8. Are there, in the lesson, exercises that develop comprehension and test the student's knowledge of main ideas, details, and the sequence of ideas? Yes. Reading and understanding letters, e-mails, listening and writing letters. And there is sequence of ideas in a sense that students learn words about zoos, and relate these words to other situations, for example, Olympic Games.
9. Do the exercises develop meaningful communication by referring to realistic activities and situations? Yes. By studying animals, students will be able to relate this to real situations.
10. Are the illustrations clear, simple, and free of unnecessary details that may confuse the learners? Yes. The illustrations are clear.
11. Are the illustrations printed close enough to the text and directly related to the content, to help the learner understand the printed text? Yes.
12. Does the lesson provide authentic printed texts (newspapers/magazine articles, ads, poems, short stories, etc) that have engaged content and tasks? Yes.

2. Desired Outcome

1. Is the new knowledge connected to the previous lessons? Yes. On the page 14 and 15 students learn about zoos (animals), and in the next pages, they connect zoo with “Animal Olympics” (pages 18 and 19).
2. Does the lesson indicate what students should know and be able to do? Yes. On the top of the lessons there are short sentences which say what students are supposed to learn from that.
3. Does the lesson engage students to use the target language to acquire new information on topics of interest? Yes. By talking about Olympic Games, students will be able to use the target language to acquire new information. For instance, on the page 12 students will learn to talk about the food web.

3. Teaching Procedures

1. Does the lesson describe the sequence of instructional activities, and assessment? Yes. On page 14, on top, there are instructional activities for the students to follow. Also, on page 16 more instructional activities can be found. Concerning the assessment, on page 19 (Plan Your Argument), there is a group project that a teacher can use as an assessment.
2. Are teachers given techniques for activating students’ background knowledge, before reading the text? Yes. There are sentences that indicate how teachers can lead students to activate knowledge before reading a text.

3. Does the lesson provide teachers with means for involving students to exercise, practice, and review vocabulary words, or grammar? Yes. Teachers can lead students to practice, test, and review vocabulary words or grammar.

4. Meeting the Students' Needs

1. Is the content appropriate for the students to learn? Yes, to some extent, for example, on page 19 bottom, there is a group activity. At this point the teacher can organize students in groups and have them work on the project.

2. Are the instructions and examples adequately explained and illustrated for the students? Yes. The instructions and examples are clear.

3. Is it possible to set up groupings varied in response to the nature of learning, i.e., small heterogeneous groups for interaction or cooperative learning, and homogeneous groups for working on achievement or interest? Yes. By talking about animals, or the Olympic Games, for example, students will be able to learn more about different animals, variety of games, and food web.

5. Relevance

1. Are the learning opportunities real, and rich in ways that promote students' engagement and interest? Yes. The learning opportunities are real and rich in ways that promote students' engagement and interest.

2. Do the activities enable students to apply their knowledge to practical and real-world situations? Yes. The same: talking about Olympic Games and animals, students will be able to relate this to the real-world situation.
3. Do the activities enable students to be creative? Yes. Students can be creative when they are engaged in group activities.

6. Types of Assessment

1. Do the lessons provide the opportunity for informal verification of acquired understanding, e.g., observations, oral questions, or discussions? Yes. On page 14 (Look and Think).
2. Are the lessons conducive to the students' self-assessment? No. Maybe the group project. As for the self-assessment as such, there is none in this unit.
3. Are the factors of performance, task and projects accessible through the lessons? Yes. There is performance and project, page 19 bottom, a group project.

Unit 4

1. Textbook Overview

1. Is the objective expressed in each lesson or unit? Yes. There are activities where group work is the main focus.

2. Does the title of each page or lesson indicate the aim of the lesson? Yes. The quiz indicates that the students will work by themselves and in group activities solving different problems.
3. Does the lesson feature on organization based on interesting topics and cultural contexts? Yes. The topic is well selected concerning the cultural issues, this unit talks about Makkah, the creation of Islam, and more. This is compatible with the way of living for this people.
4. Is the sequence of the sections, units, or lessons outlined? Yes.
5. Are the grammatical rules presented in a logical manner and in an increasing order of difficulty? Yes. The good thing here is that the grammar point for study is left to the students' responsibility and promotes autonomy.
6. Are the new vocabulary words presented in a variety of ways? Yes.
7. Are the new vocabulary words repeated in sequential lessons in order to facilitate the reinforcement of their meaning and use? Yes. There is sequence in terms of words' grade or level.
8. Are there, in the lesson, exercises that develop comprehension and test the student's knowledge of main ideas, details, and the sequence of ideas? Yes, the activities here in this unit are flexible that the students are free to learn by themselves.
9. Do the exercises develop meaningful communication by referring to realistic activities and situations? Yes.
10. Are the illustrations clear, simple, and free of unnecessary details that may confuse the learners? Yes. The illustrations are clear and simple.

11. Are the illustrations printed close enough to the text and directly related to the content to help the learner understand the printed text? Yes.

12. Does the lesson provide authentic printed texts (newspapers/magazine articles, ads, poems, short stories, etc) that have engaged content and tasks? Yes, excellent.

2. Desired Outcome

1. Is the new knowledge connected to the previous lessons? Yes.

2. Does the lesson indicate what students should know and be able to do? Yes. It is very clear and understandable.

3. Does the lesson engage students to use the target language to acquire new information on topics of interest? Yes, very much.

3. Teaching procedures.

1. Does the lesson describe the sequence of instructional activities, and assessment? Yes. The lessons are very sequential and graded.

2. Are teachers given techniques for activating students' background knowledge before reading the text? Yes.

3. Does the lesson provide teachers with means for involving students to exercise, practice, and review vocabulary words, or grammar? Yes, there are a lot of activities for the students; to this point, the teacher can be able to monitor students' activities.

4. Meeting the students' needs

1. Is the content appropriate for the students to learn? Yes. The activities that this lessons present make possible students be in group; be more interacted.
2. Are the instructions and examples adequately explained and illustrated for the students? Yes, they are.
3. Is it possible to set up groupings varied in response to the nature of learning, i.e., small heterogeneous groups for interaction or cooperative learning, and homogeneous groups for working on achievement or interest? Yes. There is a neat match between the content and what students are able to do.

5. Relevance

1. Are the learning opportunities real, and rich in ways that promote students' engagement and interest? Yes. The leaning opportunities are real in a sense that the texts are real and the illustrations are real as well.
2. Do the activities enable students to apply their knowledge to practical and real-world situations? Yes.
3. Do the activities enable students to be creative? Yes.

6. Types of assessment

1. Do the lessons provide the opportunity for informal verification of acquired understanding, e.g., observations, oral questions, or discussions? Yes. There are many activities that enable students to do this.
2. Is the lesson conducive to the students' self-assessment? Yes. Through games, quizzes, or puzzles, students can get self-assessed.
3. Are the factors of performance, task and projects accessible through the lesson? Yes. The last page (50) contains group project.

Appendix I

The Focus Group Findings (Grade7 and Grade 8) Samples

Grade 7

The Checklist for the Textbooks Evaluation

This checklist is designed to check determined areas of English as a Foreign Language textbook in use in Angolan Secondary Schools. The present checklist was adapted from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Standards (ACTFL).

Textbook: **English Readers** Grade 7 Date _____

Yes: Positive aspects of the lesson

No: Negative aspects of the lesson, or aspects that do not appear in lesson

N/Ap.: Not Applicable (some criteria may not apply to some lessons)

Page/Unit	Focus Areas	Criteria	Yes	No	N/Ap	Comments
The general textbook		1. Is the objective expressed in each lesson or unit?		X		There is no objective in each lesson
		2. Does the title of each page or lesson indicate the aim of the lesson?		X		The title is apparently different from what the entire lesson refers to
		3. Does the lesson feature on organization based on interesting topics and cultural contexts?	X			To some extent cultural aspect are expressed in these lessons when referring to some names.

	1. Textbook Overview	4. Is the sequence of the sections, units, or lessons outlined?		X		No. This is not noticeable in these lessons.
		5. Are the grammatical rules presented in a logical manner and in an increasing order of difficulty?		X		The grammar comes into dialogues and not in contexts that students could be involved.
		6. Are the new vocabulary words introduced in a variety of ways?		X		The vocabulary words are not presented in variety of ways, but into dialogues with drills or exercises.
		7. Are the new vocabulary words repeated in sequential lessons in order to facilitate the reinforcement of their meaning and use?		X		Again, vocabulary words are into dialogues only with any exercises.
		8. Are there, in the lesson, exercises that develop comprehension and test the student's knowledge of main ideas, details, and the sequence of ideas?		X		There are no exercises at all.
		9. Do the exercises develop meaningful communication by referring to realistic activities and situations?		X		There are no exercises.
		10. Are the illustrations clear, simple, and free of unnecessary details that may confuse the learners?		X		The illustrations are confusing. What is drawn does not depict what a sentence is saying.
		11. Are the illustrations printed close enough to the text and directly related to the content, to help the learner understand the printed text?	X			Yes. But the idea of the sentences do not relate to what the illustrations/drawings show.

		12. Does the lesson provide authentic printed texts (newspapers/magazine articles, ads, poems, short stories, etc) that have engaged content and tasks?		X		No. There are no printing materials, but drawings followed by sentences/dialogues.
	2. Desired Outcomes	1. Is the new knowledge connected to the previous lessons?		X		There is no cut-clear connection among these lessons.
		2. Does the lesson indicate what students should know and be able to do?		X		No. There is no introduction for students to be familiar or to know what they are going to do during the lessons.
		3. Does the lesson engage students to use the target language to acquire new information on topics of interest?		X		There are no exercises or activities that would engage students to use the target language.
	3. Teaching Procedures	1. Does the lesson describe the sequence of instructional activities, and assessment?		X		
		2. Are teachers given techniques for activating students' background knowledge, before reading the text?		X		There is no methodology or guidance for the teacher.
		3. Does the lesson provide teachers with means for involving students to exercise, practice, test and review vocabulary words, or grammar?		X		There are no exercises or any activity that could help a teacher to lead students to be involved, unless a teacher uses her imagination.
	4. Meeting the Students'	1. Is the content appropriate for the students to learn?	X			To some extent the grammar, for example is good for the students at this lesson. But the lessons should contain texts with exercises. And better

	Needs					selected.
		2. Are the instructions and examples adequately explained and illustrated for the students?		X		NO, there are no instructions at all.
		3. Is it possible to set up groupings varied in response to the nature of learning, i.e., small heterogeneous groups for interaction or cooperative learning, and homogeneous groups for working on achievement or interest?		X		From this outlay is hard for a teacher to do that.
	5. Relevance	1. Are the learning opportunities real, and rich in ways that promote students' engagement and interest?		X		This format does not help students.
		2. Do the activities enable students to apply their knowledge to practical and real-world situations?		X		There are no activities.
		3. Do the activities enable students to be creative?		X		There are no activities.
	6. Types of Assessments	1. Do the lessons provide the opportunity for informal verification of acquired understanding, e.g., observation, oral questions, or discussions?		X		Completely lacking.
		2. Is the lesson conducive to the students' self-assessment?		X		Completely lacking.
		3. Are the factors of performance, task and project accessible through the lesson?		X		Completely lacking.

Excerpts from the focus group direct quotations:

This book really suffers many things and contains lots of problems. Starting with the objectives, there is no object in any lessons. We went through the entire book and no objective was found. Some titles “*The favourite lesson*,” “The race,” and “*Lemba’s composition*” although containing a one-on-one dialogue, the titles are still vague and open to many ideas that maybe we use them as references. Even with the units, the titles of all the lessons make a poor correlation between one another, if any.

Another point that has been noticed in this book is the lack of grammatical rules and on gradual increasing of difficulties. For most of the book, dialogues always come in the form of questions “wh.” Some grammatical points are, for example, negation with has and have, the possessive ‘s, and the possessive pronouns. If the main goal of this book is to increase vocabulary, then it might be better to stick to simple direction till the students master that.

The pictures are too confusing and monotonous. One picture has more than one item; this may confuse the students. At least the book should contain texts followed by pictures but all the pictures in this book come in grey, white, black, and red which becomes boring.

The new vocabulary is not repeated, is not highlighted, and is not put into different contexts to help students learn the word and how to use it. Additionally, this book suffers lack of exercises. The whole book, as it has been seen, has no single exercise and not a single introduction that might guide the students when they are

studying by their own. The book has no authentic English text. All the lessons come in the form of two people asking one another questions.

When it comes to the desired outcome, the book does not connect the previous knowledge to the new ones. There is no recycling of the new vocabulary from previous units. The goals of each unit are no mentioned. This book does no create a chance for the learners to use what they have already learned. The book shows no rehearsal, exercise, drill, or interactive ways of learning, so this will create much trouble for the teachers to find ways to assess and evaluate learners.

The content of the book is to some extent relevant to the students' needs. But the way things are presented or given to the students is so hard and far away from being creative; this will make the content appear that it has nothing to do with the students. The real learning opportunities are absent because of the poor quality of the book.

Grade 8

Checklist for the Textbooks Evaluation

This checklist is designed to check determined areas of English as a Foreign Language textbook in use in Angolan Secondary Schools. The present checklist was adapted from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Standards (ACTFL).

Textbook: **English Reader** _____ Grade **8** _____ Date _____

Yes: Positive aspects of the lesson

No: Negative aspects of the lesson, or aspects that do not appear in lesson

N/Ap.: Not Applicable (some criteria may not apply to some lessons)

Page/Unit	Focus Areas	Criteria	Yes	No	N/Ap	Comments
The general textbook		1. Is the objective expressed in each lesson or unit?		X		There is no object expressed
		2. Does the title of each page or lesson indicate the aim of the lesson?		X		But some lessons the title indirectly shows the aim. For example, “At the market” page 23 or “Marriage is a different thing” page 59.
		3. Does the lesson feature on organization based on interesting topics and cultural contexts?		X		Some lessons are interesting to the students. In terms of cultural context, the lesson “Marriage is a different thing” is the visible case that cultural context can

	1. Textbook Overview					be discussed.
		4. Is the sequence of the sections, units, or lessons outlined?		X		There is sequence. Each lesson has a separate idea.
		5. Are the grammatical rules presented in a logical manner and in an increasing order of difficulty?		X		There are no grammar rules. Grammar are into dialogues. Page 13 contains grammar but not in rules or drills.
		6. Are the new vocabulary words introduced in a variety of ways?		X		Vocabulary words are in dialogues without any exercises.
		7. Are the new vocabulary words repeated in sequential lessons in order to facilitate the reinforcement of their meaning and use?		X		
		8. Are there, in the lesson, exercises that develop comprehension and test the student's knowledge of main ideas, details, and the sequence of ideas?		X		Not much. But on page 11 "Traditional division of labour" contains comprehension exercises, grammar, but the entire book has no exercises, except this lesson only.
		9. Do the exercises develop meaningful communication by referring to realistic activities and situations?		X		There are no activities in this textbook.
		10. Are the illustrations clear, simple, and free of unnecessary details that may confuse the learners?		X		Sometimes these pictures do not relate to the idea that a sentence is showing.
		11. Are the illustrations printed close enough to the text and directly related to the content, to help the learner understand the printed text?		X		No. The Illustrations do not indicate what a sentence tries to say.

		12. Does the lesson provide authentic printed texts (newspapers/magazine articles, ads, poems, short stories, etc) that have engaged content and tasks?		X		No printing material is provided in this textbook.
	2. Desired Outcomes	1. Is the new knowledge connected to the previous lessons?		X		In some lessons there is a connection to the previous lessons, for example, page 37 “The accident” and page 40 “In the hospital”. These lessons are related – introducing the human body. But most lessons are not related. But overall, there is no connection among lessons.
		2. Does the lesson indicate what students should know and be able to do?		X		
		3. Does the lesson engage students to use the target language to acquire new information on topics of interest?		X		Dialogues are mechanical ways.
	3. Teaching Procedures	1. Does the lesson describe sequence of instructional activities, and assessment?		X		
		2. Are teachers given techniques for activating students’ background knowledge before reading the text?		X		There is no guide for a teacher or for the students to study by their own.
		3. Does the lesson provide teacher with means for involving students to exercise, practice, test, and review vocabulary words, or grammar?		X		This textbook does not provide methodology guide for the teacher.

	4. Meeting the Students' Needs	1. Is the content appropriate for the students to learn?	X			Some contents are appropriate for the students at this level. But most content in this textbook is not because they do not connect to a certain degree of reality, for example, "Betty was in trouble" page 31.
		2. Are the instructions and examples adequately explained and illustrated for the students?		X		There are no instructions in this entire textbook.
		3. Is it possible to set up groupings varied in response to the nature of learning, i.e., small heterogeneous groups for interaction or cooperative learning, and homogeneous groups for working on achievement or interest?		X		
	5. Relevance	1. Are the learning opportunities real, and rich in ways that promote students' engagement and interest?		X		
		2. Do the activities enable students to apply their knowledge to practical and real-world situations?		X		There are no activities for the students.
		3. Do the activities enable students to be creative?		X		There are no activities at all.
	6. Types of Assessments	1. Do the lessons provide the opportunity for informal verification of acquired understanding, e.g., observation, oral questions, or discussions?		X		Only on page 11 for this entire textbook.
		2. Is the lesson conducive to the students' self-assessment?		X		
		3. Are the factors of performance, task and project		X		Totally lacking

		accessible through the lesson?				
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Excerpts from the focus group direct quotations:

Concerning the “Grade 8” textbook, we have seen almost the same problems. Having had a general view of this textbook, what we have seen is that from these ninety-eight pages, this textbook has only seven reading passages and all the remaining lessons are in dialogues. From these seven reading passages, only one has exercises (grammar) and comprehension exercises on pages 13 and 14. Other reading passages are short texts with any exercises, introductions, or activities.

The objectives are not seen in this textbook. Some of the contents are not related to the titles. The topics are not connected to each other. The ideas are separated in parts. Some vocabulary words are introduced into dialogues. At the back of this book there is a timetable for the whole book. Under the title of each unit there are some outlines of what each unit is supposed to teach/introduce. In unit 15 the goal is to teach adverbs. By going back to the actual chapter to see how the book teaches, I did not find any adverb in the whole unit. The pictures are still suffering from the same problems the previous book suffers from. Pictures are monotonous, repeated, and on top of that they are unclear and confusing. Assessment is totally lacking. There is no assessment component for the students. Exercises, activities, or drills for grammar are lacking.

Appendix J

The Results Synthesis (Table 2 and Table 3)

Table 2: Results Synthesis

English Reader Grade 7

U- Unit, Y- Yes, N- No, NA- Not applicable and vertical numbers- Criteria (Crt.)

Crt	U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	U6	U7	U8	U9	U10	U11	U12	U13	U14	U15	U16
1. Textbook Overview																
1	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
2	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	Y
3	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y
4	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
5	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
6	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
7	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
8	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
9	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
10	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
11	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
12	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
2. Desired Outcomes																
1	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
2	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3. Teaching Procedures																
1	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
2	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
4. Meeting the Students' Needs																
1	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y
2	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
5. Relevance																
1	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y
2	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
6. Types of Assessments																
1	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
2	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

***Grade 7 Table: Continuation (Unit 17 through unit 29)**

English Reader Grade 7

U- Unit, Y- Yes, N- No, NA- Not applicable and vertical numbers- Criteria (Crt.)

Crt	U17	U18	U19	U20	U21	U22	U23	U24	U25	U26	U27	U28	U29
1. Textbook Overview													
1	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
2	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	Y
3	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y/A	Y/A	Y	Y
4	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
5	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
6	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
7	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
8	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
9	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
10	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
11	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
12	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
2. Desired Outcomes													
1	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
2	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3. Teaching Procedures													
1	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
2	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
4. Meeting the Students' Needs													
1	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
2	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
5. Relevance													
1	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
2	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
6. Types of Assessments													
1	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
2	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

Y/A- The criterion is positive and cultural context applies

1. Textbook Overview, criterion 3. **Y**- The criterion is positive, but there is not cultural context to consider

Table 3: Results Synthesis

English Reader Grade 8

U- Unit, **Y**- Yes, **N**- No, **NA**- Not applicable and vertical numbers- Criteria (Crt.)

Cr t	U 1	U 2	U3	U 4	U5	U6	U7	U8	U9	U1 0	U1 1	U1 2	U1 3	U1 4	U1 5	U1 6
1. Textbook Overview																
1	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
2	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
3	Y/ A	N	Y/N a	N	Y/N a	Y/N a	Y/N a	Y/N a	Y/N a	Y/N a	Y/N a	Y/N a	Y/N a	Y/N a	Y/N a	Y/N a
4	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
5	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
6	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
7	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
8	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
9	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
10	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
11	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
12	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
2. Desired Outcomes																
1	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
2	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3. Teaching Procedures																
1	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
2	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
4. Meeting the Students'																
1	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
2	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
5. Relevance																
1	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y
2	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
6. Types of Assessments																

1	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
2	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
3	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

Y/A- The criterion is positive and cultural context applies

Y/Na- The criterion is positive, but cultural context does not apply