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The Effectiveness of The Third Year Secondary School Coursebook Texts in The Learning of English Vocabulary

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DIDICATIONS

To my parents

The dearest persons to my heart for their love, affection, and encouragement .

To my sisters and brothers

The roses of my life for their love, support and understanding

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ABSTRACT

This study attempts to examine the effectiveness of the texts introduced in third year secondary school coursebook 'New Prospects' that is used in Algeria in the learning of English vocabulary. It aims at finding out whether these texts meet the teachers' expectations and the learners' interests or not. To achieve this aim, we relied on two questionnaires which have been submitted to teachers and learners to gather the necessary data about their views towards the coursebook texts. The results obtained reveal that the coursebook texts help students to learn English vocabulary, but they neither meet the teachers' expectations nor the learners' interests because they are too long, complicated and unattractive. They do not suit the learners' levels and do not fit actual situations in Algeria. It is revealed also that the texts topics do not attract learners who prefer topics about sports, culture, and short stories and do not enjoy those topics about politics. It is preferred also by both teachers and learners to follow texts with the explanation of the new words since it facilitates teaching and learning for both teachers and learners.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

L1: First language

L2: Second language

N: Number

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1. Statement of the Problem

In the third year secondary school coursebook 'New Prospects' a number of texts are introduced to help learners develop their different abilities in order to master the English language easily and to have a large number of vocabulary. However, what is observed is that learners suffer from a lack of vocabulary. They fail in finding the appropriate words which express their ideas when they come to write or speak. One possible explanation for this problem is the non-effectiveness of texts introduced in the coursebooks in learning English vocabulary.

2. Aim of the Research

My personal experience in addition to that of my colleagues as third year learners at the secondary school is the main reason behind my choice of this topic; we think that the previous third year secondary school coursebook texts were not helpful in the learning of English vocabulary and did not meet our needs.

That book is no longer used since a new coursebook is introduced within the new educational system that the Algerian Ministry of Education has started to apply since 2007. The goal of this research is to investigate the effectiveness of this coursebook at the level of texts in the learning of English vocabulary. It aims at finding out whether these texts are helpful in learning vocabulary or not and whether they serve learners and fit teachers' expectations; it investigates the teachers' and learners' views concerning these texts. Furthermore, this study has the ambition of revealing the interaction that exists between learners and course-book texts.

3. Research Questions

The questions that we would ask are:

1. Are the texts introduced in the coursebook effective in the learning of new vocabulary items?

2. Do the coursebook texts attract students and meet their interests?

3. Do the coursebook texts meet the teachers' expectations?

4. Hypothesis

On the basis of what has been stated before, we hypothesize that the third year secondary school coursebook texts help students learn new vocabulary, but they do not meet the learners' interests and the teachers' expectation.

5. Tools of the Research

The material which is relied on in this study is the questionnaire. Two questionnaires will be used. The first one is for teachers who are using or who have used the third year secondary school course-book since they are the persons who interact directly with both learners and course-book texts and they can determine the degree of interaction between them. The second will be directed to the third year secondary school learners (languages stream) since English language is a fundamental course in their stream. What has been stated before leads us to a belief that these learners have the ability of putting their fingers on the points of weakness and can distinguish whether the course-book texts are helpful in the learning of English vocabulary or not.

These questionnaires will be conducted in three secondary schools which are: Massinissa and Mohammed Boudiaf in El Khroub and Moufdi Zakaria in Ben Badis. These schools are chosen because of their locations which facilitate work for the researcher.

6. Structure of the Study

This research is divided into two chapters:

The first chapter is a theoretical one which deals with a review of second language learning. It discusses the difference between acquisition and learning and between foreign and second language. It deals also with learning and teaching vocabulary and the evaluation of coursebook texts.

The second chapter is a practical one. It deals with a description of the teachers' and learners' questionnaires and tries to analyze and interpret these questionnaires.

CHAPTER ONE
Learning Vocabulary through Texts

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CONCLUSION

Introduction

Learning a second language is affected by many factors which lead to different levels of proficiency. These factors influence learning of all language components including vocabulary. Vocabulary is the spirit of any language since people can convey their messages through words even if they do not know their correct pronunciation and the different grammatical rules. But without words, communication can not be achieved even if the different grammatical rules are known. Therefore, vocabulary is given a great importance in the different teaching methods in addition to a number of teaching and learning strategies. Texts are one of these strategies; they are included in almost all coursebooks including the third year secondary school coursebook 'New Prospects' because texts help people to learn new words and to know their different uses within context.

On the basis of what has been stated before a review of second language learning will be introduced in this chapter which discusses the difference between acquisition and learning and between foreign and second language. It attempts also to shed light on some factors that affect second language learning.

Learning and teaching vocabulary is another important point which is dealt with in this chapter which tries also to give a definition and description of English vocabulary.

The third point which is included in this chapter is an attempt to evaluate the coursebook texts. A definition of texts and their effectiveness in learning vocabulary will be discussed in addition to a general presentation of the coursebook texts and their different aims.

1.1. Second Language Learning

Second language learning is a very important field of study. The use of different terminologies is one of the major issues that are dealt with in this field besides the several factors affecting second language learning since they take a large space in the various studies that are conducted by different linguists.

1.1.1. Difference between Second and Foreign Language

Some linguists made a distinction between 'Foreign' and 'Second' language. According to them, foreign language is a language that is not used in the surrounding-community whereas a second language is a language that is used in the learner's country or environment. Christophersen (1973) argues that a foreign language is used for the purpose of contacting with other nations cultures, whereas a second language is used as an alternative way of expressing the learner's original culture.

Littlewood (1984) is one of the linguists who agrees with this distinction and considers it as a useful one. According to him, "a 'Second' language has social functions within the community where it is learnt, whereas a 'Foreign' language is learnt primarily for contact outside one's own community" (p.2). However, many people do not make this distinction. Johnson (2008) and Yule (2006) consider that in each case, learners are trying to learn a new language rather than their mother tongue and that a second language can be used to describe both situations. Even Littlewood (1984) used the term 'Second' language as a cover term for both 'Foreign' and 'Second' language.

In the Algerian context, English is considered as a foreign language, whereas French is considered as a second language, but throughout this study, the term second language will be used as a cover term for both terms second and foreign since we are dealing with another language rather than the mother tongue.

1.1.2. Difference between Learning and Acquisition

Another distinction is made between 'Learning' and 'Acquisition'. Krashen argues that there are two major ways of mastering a second language and he calls them acquisition and learning (as cited in Johnson, 2008:80). According to him, acquisition is a natural and subconscious process whereas learning is a conscious process which usually takes place in classroom. But many linguists have argued that there is no clear cut between the two processes. Johnson (2008) pointed out from his personal experience as a foreigner that sometimes he acquires some language features from picking up through listening, other times he learns from reading grammar books, and so he considers learning a second language as a mixture between learning and acquiring.

For Littlewood (1984), it is not necessary to make this distinction because our knowledge about what is conscious and subconscious is ambiguous, and he decided to use learning as a cover term for both learning and acquisition. He argues also that some writers use the term 'learning strategies' for conscious learning and 'learning processes' for subconscious learning. For other writers, a 'learning strategy' is used as a cover term for both conscious and subconscious learning.

Throughout this study, the term 'learning' will be used as a cover term for both learning and acquisition and the term 'learning strategies' will be used to cover both conscious and subconscious learning.

1.1.3. Factors Affecting Second Language Learning

It is observed that some people learn a second language better and more rapidly than others. This variation in levels and success is related to individuals themselves. Therefore, many investigations have been carried out to identify individual differences and their influence on second language learning.

1.1.3.1. Motivation

In learning a second language, motivation is a crucial factor. It is a complex phenomenon and related to other factors. Lightbown and Spada (2006) defined it in terms of two factors: learners' communicative needs and their attitudes towards the second language; that is, if learners need to communicate through the second language in a given community, they will be motivated to learn it. Littlewood (1984) argued that positive attitudes towards the second language reinforce motivation, but if these attitudes are negative, many obstacles in learning a second language will be created.

Another distinction is made between 'Instrumental' and 'Integrative' motivation which are coined by Gardner and Lambert (1972) (see Lightbown and Spada, 2006). Learners with instrumental motivation want to learn L2 for a qualification purpose, whereas learners with integrative motivation want to learn L2 for social purposes in order to be an accepted member in a given community (Yule, 2006). Gardner and Lambert (1972) find a high correlation between integrative motivation and proficient language learning (as cited in Johnson, 2008), but there are also other studies that show the importance of instrumental motivation.

1.1.3.2. Age

Many people think that children can learn a second language better than adults. Studies of immigrants to North America are a concrete evidence because they show that younger persons become more proficient than adults. This view is related to the existence of the critical period when language learners can learn naturally and easily. However, this view has been generally criticized and researchers and experiences show that older learners can acquire high levels of proficiency in second language rather than younger learners (Littlewood, 1984).

Snow and Hoelnagel-Holile (as cited in Lightbown and Spada, 2006:74) found that when the objective of learning a second language is native-like mastery, it is better to be surrounded by this language as earlier as possible, whereas when the goal of second language learning is every day communication rather than native-like mastery, it may be more efficient to start learning later.

1.1.3.3. Input

According to Yule (2006), input is the language exposed to the learner. The nature of input therefore is an important factor that affects second language learning. It is argued that ideal input for second language learner should be similar to that exposed to children i.e., it should be comprehensible, relevant to their interests, not complex and not graded. However, most teaching approaches have adopted the assumption that learners' input should be graded for structural complexity (Littlewood, 1984).

1.1.3.4. Intelligence

Intelligence is another factor that affects second language learning. In the twentieth century, intelligence was considered as a crucial factor for learning a second language.

However, it is reported by Gardner and Lambert (1972) (as cited in Johnson, 2008:114-115) that there is a little correlation between intelligence and achievements in second language learning. Moreover, after an attempt to find the correlation between achievements in French at Canadian classes and intelligence, Genesse (1976) found that there is no relation between intelligence and what he calls "communicative skills" i.e., speaking and listening, but he found a correlation between intelligence and what ha calls "academic language skills" i.e., reading and writing.

1.1.3.5. Personality

A number of personality characteristics have been assumed to affect second language learning, but it has not been easy to demonstrate them since different studies about similar personality traits produce different results, for example, it is argued that an extroverted person is well suited to language learning.

Littlewood (1984) cited a number of studies that found a high correlation between achievements in second language learning and a number of personality characteristics. For example, Naiman et al (1978) found that learners with greater tolerance for ambiguity scored higher in tests of listening comprehension. Heyed (1979) found that a high level of self–esteem associated with second language proficiency. Guiora et al (1975) found that learners with a high capacity of empathy may perform better in pronunciation.

It is believed that personality will be shown as a very crucial factor which influences success in second language learning though it is combined in a very complex way with other factors that influence second language learning.

Factors affecting second language learning are a very complex phenomenon. It is difficult to identify which one is dominant because these factors do overlap and interact in a very complex way. However, educational programmers should take into account all these

individual differences in order to create an environment that can suit at least the majority of learners.

1.2. Vocabulary Teaching and Learning

Learning vocabulary is an essential step in learning a second language since words are the main way of conveying or receiving messages. Therefore, many researchers and teaching programmers have given a great importance to it in order to help learners enlarge their size of vocabulary.

1.2.1. Definition of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is defined in York English Dictionary for Students (1999) as all the words that are used by a person or group of persons. In Longman Dictionary (2002) vocabulary is defined as "a set of lexemes, including single words, compound words and idioms" (p.580).

A distinction is made between the items vocabulary and lexis. Scrivener (2005) argued that the term vocabulary refers mainly to single words and sometimes to linked two or three-word combinations, whereas the term lexis is bigger; it refers to the traditional single word vocabulary items, common going-together patterns of words and longer combinations of words that are typically used together if they were a single item. However, most teachers still use the terms vocabulary and lexis interchangeably and even Oxford Students Dictionary (2007) considers them as synonyms and defines them as all words in a language.

1.2.2. Vocabulary Description

The main linguistic branches that study vocabulary and its different forms, meanings and uses are lexicography and lexicology.

1.2.2.1. Lexicography

It is considered by Jackson and Zé Amvela (2000) as a special technique of writing dictionaries and defined also by Oxford Students Dictionary (2007) as "the theory and practice of writing dictionaries" (P.412). i.e., it is the act of grouping lexical items in a dictionary with their meanings, functions and examples of their uses.

1.2.2.2. Lexicology

According to Jackson and Zé Amvela (2000), lexicology is the study of lexis; it does not deal only with simple words but with complex and compound words also. Lexicology relies on information derived from morphology and semantics. It is concerned with how words are classified, formed and their different meanings.

1.2.2.2.1. Word Classification

Words classification is based on their function. The English language is classified into eight parts of speech: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, conjunctions, prepositions and determiners.

- ▪ ***A noun*** is a word that refers to

 -A person: John, man, doctor.

 -A place: school, Algeria.

 -A thing: door, box.

- ▪ ***A verb*** is a word that refers to an action, state, or event.

There are two types of verbs: regular and irregular. Regular verbs are verbs in which a 'D' or 'E D' is added to the present form in order to form the past or past participle:

- She cooks the lunch ➔ She cooked the lunch➔ She has cooked the lunch.

Irregular verbs are verbs that their forms change in the past and past participle.

- He writes the text ➔ He wrote the text ➔ He has written the text.

- **_An adjective_** is a word that is used to describe a noun. It may be used attributively i.e., before the noun e.g.: She is a beautiful girl; or predicatively, i.e., as a complement to the verb e.g.: You seem sad.

- **_An adverb_** is a word that is used to describe:

 - A verb: I was there.

 - An adjective: You are very happy.

 - Or an other adverb: She woks very hard.

- **_A pronoun_** is a word that can replaces a noun.

 - She (**Sonia**) reads the new novel

- **_A preposition_** is a word used to show:

 - A place: She is in the house.

 - A time: The English session starts at 9:30.

 - A position: It locates between two streets.

- **_A conjunction_** is a word used to join units in a sentence. There are two kinds of conjunctions. Coordinating conjunctions that join two main clauses:

 - They read the text and do the activities.

and subordinating conjunctions that join a main clause with a subordinating one:

 - I will come when I receive your letter.

- **_A determiner_** is a word used to qualify nouns. It can be:

 - An article: the, a, an.

 - Demonstrative adjective: this, these, that, those.

 - Possessive adjective: my, your, his, her, its, our, their.

1.2.2.2.2. Word Formation

Classes and meanings of words are changed through a process which is called word formation. Affixation and compounding are two main ways that contribute in this process.

- *Affixation*

It is the process of adding a letter or group of letters to the beginning of words and it is called prefixation, or to the end of words and it is called suffixation.

- Prefixation   ➔   like   ➔   dis + like   ➔   dislike.

- Suffixation   ➔   success ➔   success + ful ➔   successful.

- Prefixation + suffixation   ➔   rely ➔ un + rely + able ➔ unreliable.

- *Compounding*

It is the process of combining two different words that have different meanings to form a new word that have another different meaning.

-Washing + machine   ➔   washing machine

- Green + house   ➔   greenhouse.

1.2.2.2.3. Word Meaning

There are different relations concerning meanings that exist between words as hyponymy, synonymy, antonymy and polysemy.

Hyponymy

It is the inclusion of one word under the meaning of another word because they share common characteristics as including dog and bear in animals. The upper term, i.e., "animals" is the super-ordinate and the lower terms, i.e., dog and bear are hyponyms.

Synonymy

It is defined by Palmer (1976:88) as the "sameness of meaning", but he argued that there are no real synonyms because some of them belong to different dialects of the language. They may differ also in the degree of formality that we cannot use them in the same situations as the terms die and pass away. There are also evaluative differences as between the synonyms liberty and freedom. Some words are collocationaly restricted, i.e., they occur only in conjunction with other words e.g.: rancid occurs with better and addled with eggs though they have the same meaning that is no longer good for eat. Besides, many synonyms cannot be used interchangeably in all situations such as deep and profound that can be used with sympathy but only deep with water.

Antonymy

It is another sense relation that is described by Palmer (1976:94) as "oppositeness of meaning", and words which are opposites are antonyms such as wide / narrow. In many cases words are explained by their opposites.

Polysemy

It refers to the case in which one word may have different meanings. This word is polysemic. Thus, we may find a word in a dictionary with different definitions.

1.2.3. Teaching Vocabulary

1.2.3.1. Vocabulary in Teaching Methods

Vocabulary is given a great importance by the main teaching methods. Rivers (1968) reviewed these methods from the grammar translation method to the direct, reading and audio-lingual methods.

The grammar translation method aims at providing the learners with a wide literary vocabulary and training them to extract meaning from foreign texts by translation into the native language and memorization of bilingual vocabulary lists. However, this method is considered as not successful since words should be learned in context.

In the direct method, learning by the direct association of foreign words with objects without the use of the native language by the teacher or the student is advocated. When the meaning of words could not be made clear by concrete representation, the teacher should try to use sketches or explanations in the foreign language but never use native language translation. Even students were encouraged to seek direct comprehension by inferring meanings of unknown elements from the context rather than seeking equivalents in a bilingual vocabulary list. However, this method demands a lot of effort from teachers to convey meaning in the foreign language, and in many cases when teachers find it difficult to make the meaning of words clear by sketches or gestures, they would give explanations in the native language.

The reading method concentrates on the reading skill. According to this method, reading is intensive or extensive. Intensive reading occurs under the teacher's supervision where the student is not encouraged to translate but has to infer meaning of unknown words from the context. In extensive reading, the student reads entirely on his own many pages of connected discourse and the teacher guides him from one level to another as his reading ability develops and through this way, he acquires a large vocabulary.

For the audio-lingual method, vocabulary content should be kept to a minimum so that the student may concentrate on establishing a solid control of structure, and concentrate also on grammar and pronunciation. Vocabulary learning is given a minor role in this method.

1.2.3.2. Techniques for Teaching Vocabulary

There are several techniques and methods which are used to teach vocabulary. According to Allen (1983), teachers use three ways to show the meanings of words:

1. Pictures.

2. Explanations in the student's own language.

3. Definitions in simple English that is already known by students.

These ways can be classified in what is called visual and verbal techniques. In visual techniques, the learner can see what is named by the word mentioned such as pointing to the objects like different parts of the classroom or using pictures to show things or even looking at actions and gestures made by the teacher. In verbal techniques, words are defined by means of simpler English words as synonyms. Allen (1983) argues that games also can help learners learn English vocabulary because conditions which encourage vocabulary expansion can be created through making students feel that certain words are important, since without them, the object of the game can not be achieved.

Another technique is suggested by Scrivener (2005). He argues that the most common technique for conveying the meaning of one or more lexical items is a "presentation – practice route" in which the new item is presented first, and later an opportunity is given to the learner to use it in a short dialogue, and even Allen (1983) has focused on the necessity of putting new items in examples because they can help learners more than definitions.

Brown and Hatch (1995) argue that in language classrooms, teachers select high frequency words, using little slangs and few idioms. Bunker (1988) (as cited in Brown and Hatch, 1995) suggests the following techniques which are helpful in teaching vocabulary:

1. Use of common and familiar words.

2. Consistency in the use of terms.

3. More than five repetitions of word.

4. Definition of words in contexts.

Bunker argues also that some vocabulary adjustments do not contribute to understanding:

1. Use of short words.

2. Use of fewer synonyms.

3. Repetition of words fewer than five times.

1.2.3.3. Vocabulary Selection

Deciding on what words are basic for language learners is a basic issue in material development. Teaching methods have produced different approaches for the choice of vocabulary used and presented in language text-books. In 1950s and 1960s, the audio-lingual text-books used a plan for selecting and limiting vocabulary. Vocabulary was selected according to an expanding scope; the lessons began with vocabulary of the classroom, then school, home, community and work. Later, the list was enlarged to include common vocabulary about the state and the nation. Finally, the scope became communication around the world.

During the 1960s and early 1970s, a number of approaches appeared in the United States for specific sets of people. There are materials which were designed for immigrant students and vocabulary is selected to help them survive in new country and achieve their purposes such as: obtaining housing, doing banking, shopping…etc. Others are designed for teaching purposes in which the selected vocabulary relates to such social or global issues as: World peace, environment…etc.

Van Ek (1976) (as cited in Brown and Hatch, 1995) identifies a number of language functions and notions which help in planning materials and lessons with appropriate vocabulary. Functions such as exchanging intellectual information are related to a number of items like: agree**,** disagree, know…etc, and notions such as profession, occupation, travel…etc will give you a good idea about the vocabulary needed for each one. Therefore, each vocabulary textbook selects items in a different way according to its teaching purposes.

1.2.4. Learning Vocabulary

1.2.4.1. Learning Strategies

There are different strategies that are used by learners to learn different aspects of language including vocabulary. Repetition, associative and the key word method are the most useful strategies in learning vocabulary.

Researchers found that learners use some silent or written repetitions of the target word and its meaning since repetition as argued by (Schmitt, 2000) (as cited in Cohen and Maccaro, 2007) can be a highly effective and rapid vocabulary learning strategy since lists of 100 or more L2 - L1 word pairs can be studied and remembered within a short time. It is found also that aloud repetition is more effective than silent one. Lawson and Hogben (1996) (as cited in Cohen and Maccaro, 2007) found that repetition strategies were the most frequently used although elaboration strategies were more effective than repetition strategies.

Associative strategy is another useful strategy. Cohen and Aphek (1981) (as cited in Cohen and Maccaro, 2007) identify different types of associations used to memorize Hebrew words including associating a word or part of it to:

1. English words with similar sounds or meanings.

2. Another Hebrew word according to the structure.

3. A letter.

4. A frequent seen street sign or mental image of the words referent.

It is found that words which were learnt through association were more successfully retained one month later than words for which associations were not used.

In the key word method, sounds of the target word are associated with an L_1 word (acoustic link) and a visual image of the L_1 word linked to the meaning of the L_2 word (visual link). The key word method argued that the target word will be retrieved more quickly and effectively through visual and acoustic links.

Learners may use even communicative strategies to learn the meaning of new words. An example is given by Haukins (1998) (as cited in Johnson, 2008) in which a learner may develop the habit of asking people to explain the meaning of words. Learners use also dictionaries whether monolingual or bilingual to explain different new items.

1.2.4.2. Incidental and Intentional Vocabulary Learning

A distinction is made between incidental and intentional vocabulary learning. Ellis (1999) argues that intentional learning occurs when the learners' primary attention is focused on learning L_2 new words. It is defined also by Brown and Hatch (1995:368) "as being designed, planned for, or intended by teacher or student". On the other hand, incidental vocabulary learning is the acquisition of new words from context through reading and listening activities (Read, 2000). It is described also by Ellis (1999) as picking up L2 items while the learners' attention is focused on conveying messages.

It appears that intentional learning that utilizes contextual inferencing results in better memorizing of word meaning than incidental learning. However, it is also generally recognized that learners can never acquire a native like vocabulary through intentional

learning (Ellis, 1999). Many other works have proved the effectiveness of incidental learning especially from reading. Yun (1989) (as cited in Brown and Hatch, 1995) has found that learners have learned incidentally 16 percent of all unknown words with just one reading of the book she has given to them.

1.2.4.3. Receptive and Productive Vocabulary

In addition to the distinction between intentional and incidental vocabulary learning, another distinction is made between receptive and productive vocabulary which are also referred to as passive and active vocabulary. Haycraft (1978) (as cited in Hatch and Brown, 1995:370) defines receptive vocabulary as "words that the student recognizes and understands when they occur in a context, but which he can not produce correctly" and productive vocabulary as "words which the students understand, can pronounce correctly and use constructively in speaking and writing". Read (2000) argues that the number of words we can understand, i.e., receptive vocabulary are more than the number of words we can use, i.e., productive vocabulary in our speech and writing.

Read (2000) argues that the most important point of the receptive and productive discussion is that there are different ways to know a word. Receptive and productive vocabulary is considered as a continuum process of knowing a word, thus the learner knows the word receptively and later productively, and Melka (1997) (as cited in Read,2000) argues that learners can use new words after they gain more knowledge of their pronunciation, spelling, grammar, meaning, and range of use.

1.3. Evaluation of the Coursebook Texts

1.3.1. Definition of Text

Text is defined in York English Dictionary for Students (1999:801) as ''a main written section of a book''. In Longman Dictionary (2002) it is defined as a segment of spoken or written language that has the following characteristics:

1. It is made up of several sentences that together create a structure or unit such as a letter, a report, or an essay.

2. It has distinctive structural and discourse characteristics.

3. It has a particular communication function or purpose.

4. It can often only be fully understood in relation to the context in which it occurs.

1.3.2. The Role of Texts in Learning Vocabulary

Texts have a crucial role in learning vocabulary. According to Scrivener (2005:230), "texts are often more useful for teaching lexis than lessons that focus on lexis as separated, stand- alone items without such surrounding language''. Ellis (1999) argues that readers negotiate meaning from a text by process of self-interrogation. That is, they can comprehend a text by posing and answering questions about it and they can acquire new words by inferring their meaning through the use of variety of textual clues. According to him, readers guess the meaning of words they do not know by using the meaningful context they have created. Moreover, Scrivener (2005) suggested a number of questions which help in focusing attention on lexical items in the text and how they are used. Here are some of them:

1. Can you guess the meaning of this word from the meaning of the text around it?

2. Find some words in the text that mean….

3. In line X, what does….mean?

4. Find words in the text that match this list of synonyms.

5. What is the opposite of this word?

6. How many different words does the writer use to describe the…?

However, to keep students read these texts and benefit from them, their topics should be interesting and suitable for learners. Rivers (1968) argued that topics introduced to the student should be close to those topics that interest him in his mother tongue. That is, "if he is at the age when adventure and excitement are important to him in his native-language reading, then he must find these elements in his foreign-language reading'' (P.230). According to him, the background should be of the culture of the foreign country with emphasis on present day living since if strange and unusual things are stressed, the student's ability to infer meaning from context will be reduced.

Another point which is considered by Rivers (1968) as a very important condition for reading is the writing style in which a considerable repetition should be introduced without many new vocabulary items in addition to the physical arrangement which has a psychological importance in increasing the student's enjoyment in reading.

1.3.3. General Presentation of the Coursebook Texts

The third year secondary school coursebook 'New Prospects' contains a great variety of texts which have their sources indicated. It contains more than one reading text in each unit except unit 4 which contains only one reading text. These texts consist of more than two paragraphs, most of them are about one page or one page and a half and they deal with a variety of issues.

Throughout the coursebook, the following topics are introduced:

1. Text 1: *'Algerian at the Crossroads of Civilization'*, Unit 1, P.22-23, adapted from Africana: The Encyclopedia of African and American.

2. Text 2: *'Text'*, Unit 1, p.37-38, from victor Skip, Out of the Ancient word, penguin, P.61.

3. Text 3: *'Imitating property is theft'*, Unit 2, P.54-55, from the Economist, May, 17th, 2003.

4. Text 4: *'Text '*, Unit 2, P.66-67, adapted from Bill Mascull, Business Vocabulary in English, P.90.

5. Text 5: *'Education in Britain'*, Unit 3, P.83-84, from Guide to British and American Culture, P.66.

6. Text 6: *'Education in America'*, Unit 3, P.98-99, from D.K. Stevenson, American life and Institution, USIA**.**

7. Text 7: *'How is your Energy Balance'*, Unit 4, P.114-115, text written by the authors.

8. Text 8: *'The Solar System'*, Unit 5, P.143-144, from the Book of Popular Science and Alan E. Nourse, the Ciant Planets.

9. Text 9: *'Text'*, Unit 5, P.157-158, from International herald tribune, Tuesday, July 5, 2005, P.8.

10. Text 10**:** *'Feelings'*, Unit 6, P.174-175, from the Oxford Guide to British and American Culture, P.192.

11. Text 11: *'What I have lived for'*, Unit 6, P.186**,** Bertrand Russell, 1872-1970.

12. Text 12: *'The Unicorn in the Garden'*, Unit 6, P.189-190, Adapted from James Thurber, Fables of our time.

1.3.4. Aims of the Coursebook Texts

The reading passages aims at focusing on the following skills and strategies:

1. Skimming: rapid reading to get the main idea (e.g. Unit 1)

2. Scanning: reading to get particular information (e.g. Unit 1)

3. Persuading (e.g. Unit 4)

4. Paragraphing ideas (e.g. Unit 3)

5. Identifying types of discourse (e.g. Unit 5)

6. Distinguishing between different types of reasoning in argumentative text (e.g. Unit 5).

7. Distinguishing between facts and opinion (e.g. Unit 6)

8. Making logical links between sentences and paragraphs (e.g. Unit 3)

9. Analyzing and making synthesis (e.g. Unit 4)

10. Responding to a text (e.g. Unit 2)

11. Identifying and using reference words (e.g. Unit 2)

12. Discussing the organizational pattern of a text (e.g. Unit 6)

13. Predicting the content of a text (e.g. Unit 5)

14. Making inferences (e.g. Unit 6)

Conclusion

Learning a large number of words is an essential step for learning a second language. In the past, vocabulary was given a little importance in the different teaching programmes; it was believed that learners should master first the different grammatical rules. This view no longer exists nowadays since vocabulary is given a great importance and considered as a crucial element for mastering a second language. Thus, many strategies and techniques are developed to help learners achieve a large knowledge concerning it. Texts are one of these strategies; they are considered as very useful and helpful in the learning of new vocabulary items. Therefore, they are included in the various books that are designed for second language learners.

CHAPTER TWO

The Questionnaires Analysis

Introduction

2.1. Teachers' Questionnaire

2.1.1. Sample Description

2.1.2. Questionnaire Description

2.1.3. Questionnaire Analysis

2.2. Learners' Questionnaire

2.2.1. Sample Description

2.2.2. Questionnaire Description

2.2.3. Questionnaire Analysis

Conclusion

Introduction

This study aims at examining the effectiveness of texts included in the third year secondary school coursebook 'New Prospect' in the learning of English vocabulary. That is why it should be supported by information collected from people who are in direct contact with this coursebook. These data will be collected through two questionnaires. The first one is given to third year students and the second to their teachers. Therefore, in this chapter a description will be given for both learners and teachers' samples and questionnaires. It tries also to analyze and interpret them.

2.1.Teachers' Questionnaire

2.1.1. Sample Description

The sample of this study consists of English language teachers at the secondary school level. Most of them have taught third year learners.

The sample consists of 10 teachers taken from three different secondary schools: Massinissa and Mohamed Boudiaf in El Khroub and Moufdi Zakaria in Ben Badis.

| Schools	N of Teachers
Moufdi Zakaria	4
Mohamed Boudiaf	3
Massinissa	3
Total	10

Table 1: Number of teachers from each school

2.1.2. Questionnaire Description

11 questionnaires were given to the teachers but only 10 questionnaires were given back. The teachers were required to answer 15 questions by crossing the right box and making sentences when necessary.

The aim of the questionnaire is to investigate the teachers' views on third year coursebook texts to find whether they are attractive, interesting and helpful in the learning of new vocabulary items relying on their experience.

2.1.3. Questionnaire Analysis

1- Which level are you teaching?

a- 1st year ☐

b- 2nd year ☐

c- 3rd year ☐

Level Taught	N of Teachers
a c	3
b c	4
a b	3
Total	10

Table 2: Levels that are taught by teachers

The majority of teachers (6) are using the coursebook this year, whereas the other teachers are not using it. However, they have an idea about it from their own experience.

2- How long have you been teaching?

| Teaching Experience	N of Teachers
4 years	2
5 years	2
19 years	1
20 years	1
26 years	1
27 years	1
30 years	1
35 years	1
Total	10

Table 3: Teaching Experience

The majority of teachers (6) have from 19 to 35 years teaching experience and only (4) teachers have from 4 to 5 years. This shows that most of them are familiar with the 3rd year secondary school programme. Therefore, they are able to talk about the strengths and weaknesses of the coursebook.

3- Do the texts in the third year secondary school coursebook attract learners?

Teachers' Answers	N	%
Yes	3	30
No	2	20
Not all	2	20
No answer	3	30
Total	10	100

Table 4: Rate of teachers who think that the coursebook texts attractive
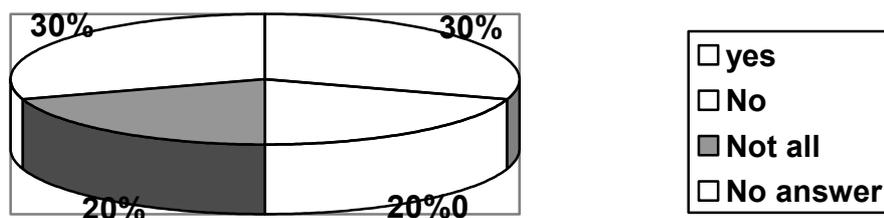
Figure 1: Rate of teachers who think that the coursebook texts attractive

The teachers' views were different since 30% agreed that the texts were attractive, 20% said that they are not attractive and 20% thought that not all texts are attractive. This difference in views is related to teachers themselves who prefer some topics more than others and to the nature of topics that is some of them attractive and others unattractive.

4- Which texts motivate learners?

The majority of teachers said that the topics which motivate learners are those about culture and sports because they suit their age and meet their interests as discovering new things and places or knowing news about stars of sports. However, historical and political texts do not motivate them since these topics are not interesting for them.

5- Are the third year secondary school coursebook texts suitable for the learners' level?

Teachers' Answers	N	%
Yes	1	10
No	9	90
Total	10	100

Table 5: Suitability of the coursebook texts for learners' level
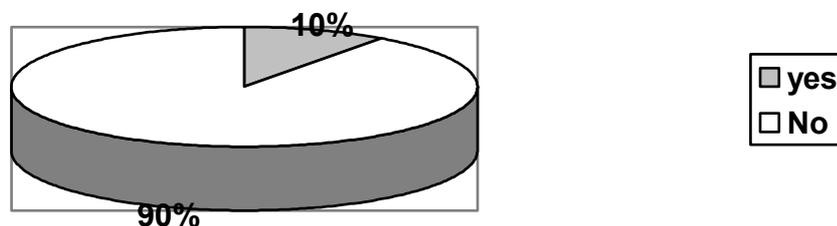

Figure 2: Suitability of the coursebook texts for learners' level

The majority of teachers (90%) said that the coursebook texts do not suit the learners' level. This view is derived from their observations when dealing with each text since learners' face many difficulties in understanding them.

6- Do you prefer short or long text?

Teachers' Answers	N	%
Short	8	80
Long	/	/
Both	2	20
Total	10	100

Table 6: Rate of teachers who prefer short texts.
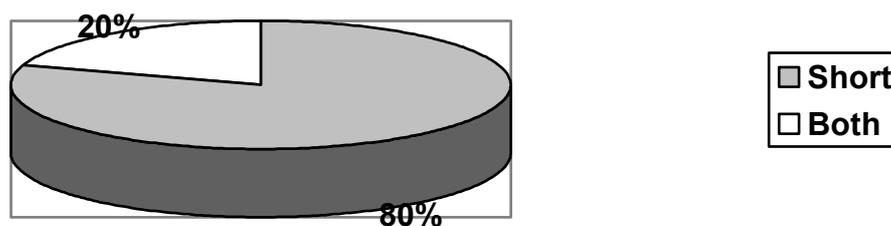
Figure 3: Rate of teachers who prefer short texts

The majority of teachers (80%) prefer short texts , whereas long texts are not preferable since they need energy by both learners and teachers in order to explain and understand them and take long time. All these things make long texts boring.

7- Are there many new items introduced in each text?

Teachers' Answers	N	%
Yes	9	90
No	1	10
Total	10	100

Table 7: Rate of teachers who think that there are many new items introduced in each text.
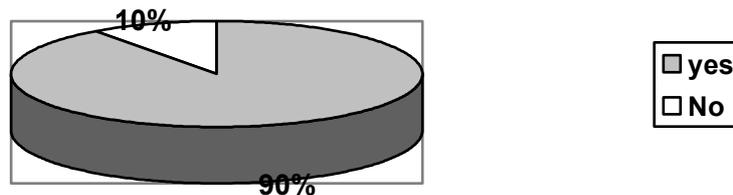
Figure 4: Rate of teachers who think that there are many new items introduced

in each text

Almost all teachers (90%) think that there are many new items introduced in each text since they deal with different topics such as business, economics and education i.e., a different jargon will be used in each text and so learners are expected to meet new items each time.

8- Do the learners ask you about their meaning?

Teachers' Answers	N	%
Yes	8	80
No	2	20
Total	10	100

**Table 8: Asking questions about new words meanings**
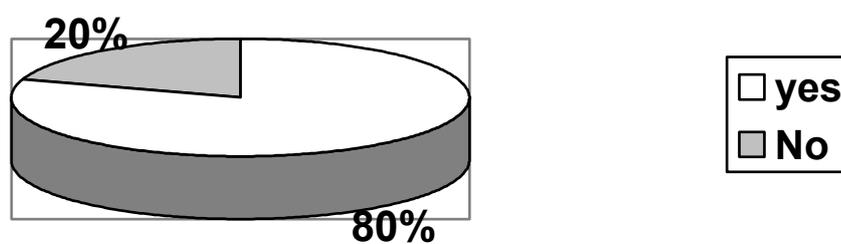
Figure 5: Rate of asking questions about new words meanings

The majority of teachers (80%) say that learners ask them about the meaning of new words. It demonstrates that asking teachers is one of the main strategies that are used by learners in dealing with new words.

9- Do they make correct inferences of new words from context?

Teachers' Answers	N	%
Yes	3	30
No	7	70
Total	10	100

Table 9: Rate of teachers who think that the learners' inferences incorrect
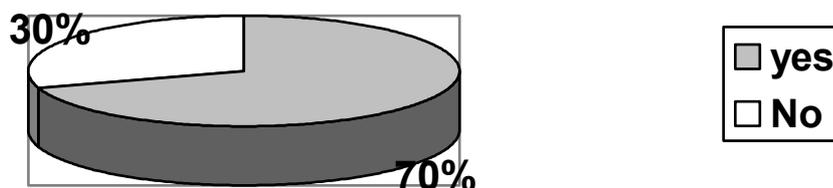
Figure 6: Rate of teachers who think that the learners' inferences incorrect

Nearly all teachers (70%) think that learners do not make correct inferences of the new words from context. This shows the difficulty that is faced by learners to understand the new words from context without additional help by their teachers, a dictionary or a footnote.

10- Do you find it easy to explain the new items to the learners?

Teachers' Answers	N	%
Yes	6	60
No	1	10
Depends on the situation	3	30
Total	10	100

Table 10: Rate of teachers who find no difficulty in explaining new items
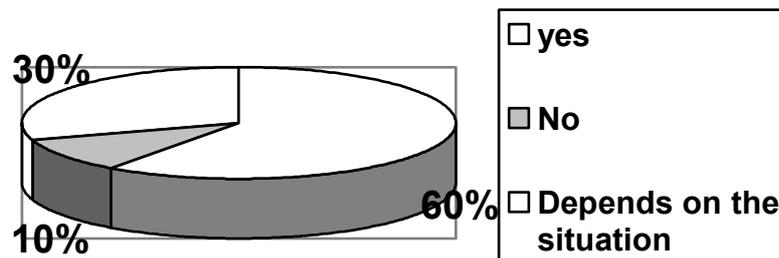
Figure 7: Rate of teachers who find no difficulty in explaining new items

The majority of teachers (60%) find no difficulty in explaining the new items to learners due to their experience and practice since qeutions about new words meaning are repeated each time .Thus , a useful and helpful strategy is developed by the teachers in order to convey the meaning of those words . However, 30% of teachers relate the difficulty of

explaining the word meaning to the situation and the degree of difficulty of the words themselves.

11- Do you prefer to follow texts with an explanation of the new items?

Teachers' Answers	N	%
Yes	8	80
No	2	20
Total	10	100

Table 11: Rate of teachers who prefer following texts with the explanation of new items
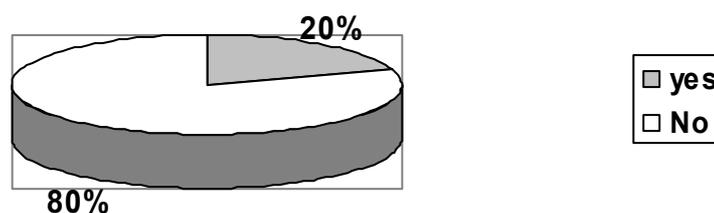
Figure 8: Rate of teachers who prefer following texts with the explanation of the new words

It is revealed that almost all teachers (80%) prefer to follow texts with an explanation of the new words. It facilitates work for both learners and teachers since it saves time and energy, i.e., teachers will not waste time in explaining new items and learners will try to ask teachers about other things such as structure and grammar instead about the meanings of words.

12- Do you think that these texts help students to learn new vocabulary?

Teachers' Answers	N	%
Yes	8	80
No	2	20
Total	10	100

Table 12: Rate of teachers who think that the coursebook texts help in the learning of English vocabulary
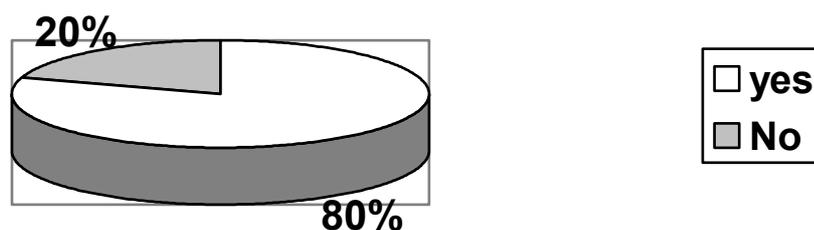
Figure 9: Rate of teachers who think that the coursebook texts help in the learning of English vocabulary

The majority of teachers (80%) agree that the coursebook texts help students to learn new vocabulary since texts are dealing with different topics and so different terms are introduced in each text. Thus, learners are expected to learn at least few of them.

13- Do you think that the coursebook texts meet the learners' interests and the teachers' expectations?

Teachers' Answers	N	%
Yes	3	30
No	7	70
Total	10	100

Table 13: Teachers' attitudes towards the coursebook texts
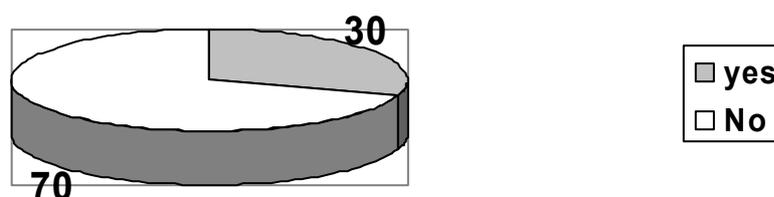
Figure 10: Teachers' attitudes towards the coursebook texts

The majority of teachers (70%) think that the coursebook texts do not meet the learners' interests and the teachers' expectations, whereas only 30% think that they do. Their answers derived from their experience as teachers who were expecting more attractive texts within the new book 'New Prospects' and who observe that learners are not interested in these texts.

14- Why?

Teachers who argue that the coursebook texts meet the teachers' expectation and the learners' interests think that these texts vary in terms of topics and vocabulary, deal with up-

to-date issues, and appeal to the learners' interests. However, those teachers who argue that the coursebook texts do not meet the teachers' expectations and the learners' interests relate it to a number of reasons. Some of them argue that texts are boring, complicated, and full of difficult words and do not suit the learners' level. Other teachers criticize the length of texts which are too long.

Topics that are introduced in the coursebook are another point which is dealt with by teachers who think that learners are not familiar with most topics or not interested in them.

15- If you have additional comment, please write it.

Teachers' comments were similar. They focus on two main points which are the size and the topics of texts. Nearly all teachers prefer short texts instead of long one whish are included in the coursebook 'New Prospects' because long texts destructs the learners' attention since they forget about the thesis statement of each text when they go towards their final paragraphs. Other teachers prefer to give comments on the texts topics. They argue that learners are not interested in most topics and that these topics do not fit actual situations that exist in Algeria which are preferable by learners in addition to topics about sport, culture and society. Teachers also agree that texts are boring and too complicated.

From this analysis, it is concluded that

-The coursebook texts are not suitable for the learners' level.

- Many new items are introduced in each ext.

- Learners do not make correct inferences of the new words.

- Following text with an explanation of the new words is preferable.

- The coursebook texts help students to learn new vocabulary items.

- The texts are too long and short texts are preferable

- Texts about sports, culture and actual situations are more attractive

- The coursebook texts do not meet the learners' interests and the teachers' expectations.

2.2. Learners' Questionnaire

2.2.1. Sample Description

The coursebook 'New Prospects' is taught to students of all streams. However, the sample consists only of those who study languages since English is a fundamental subject for them and they use the coursebook more than the other learners.Thus, they have a large view on it.

The sample consists of 30 learners taken from the three different secondary schools mentioned previously: Massinissa and Mohamed Boudiaf in El Khroub and Moufdi Zakaria in Ben Badis.

Schools	N of Learners
Moufdi Zakaria	13
Mohamed Boudiaf	6
Massinissa	11
Total	30

Table 14: Number of learners from each school

2.2.2. Questionnaire Description

36 questionnaires were given to the learners through their English teachers, but only 30 questionnaires were given back since the other learners were absent. The learners were required to answer 11 questions by crossing the right box. The aim of the questionnaire is to elicit the learners' attitudes towards their coursebook texts to find whether they are attractive, interesting and helpful in learning new vocabulary items.

2.2.3. Questionnaire Analysis

1- Are the texts in your coursebook attractive?

Learners' Answers	N	%
Yes	14	46.66
No	16	53.33
Total	30	100

Table 15: Rate of learners who think that the coursebook texts attractive
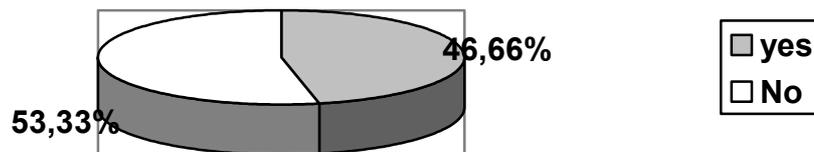
Figure 11: Rate of learners who think that the coursebook texts attractive

Table 15 and Figure 11 show that the rates of learners who think that the coursebook texts are attractive and of those who think that they are unattractive are nearly similar. This difference in views is related to the variety of topics that attract some learners and do not attract others. However, it is observed that the rate of learners who think that the coursebook texts unattractive is higher than that of learners who think that they are attractive even if it is with a small percentage.

2- Which texts do you prefer to learn?

It is revealed from the learners' choices that the topics which are preferred are those about culture and stories since they include the element of motivation, meet their interests and suit their ages, whereas political texts and biographies are not preferred by learners because young learners are generally not interested in politics and biographies.

3- Do you prefer short or long texts?

Learners' Answers	N	%
Short	25	83.33
Long	5	16.66
Total	30	100

Table 16: Texts size that is preferred by learners
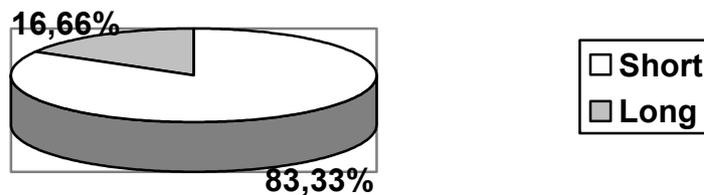
Figure 12: Texts size that is preferred by learners

The majority of learners (83.33%) prefer short texts. This reveals that short texts are more helpful for learners .Another important characteristic of short texts is that they are generally not boring because they do not require a long time to read. Learners also prefer to change topics, texts...etc; they prefer change and whenever they deal with a thing that takes a long time, they feel bored.

4- Are there many new items introduced in each text?

Learners' Answers	N	%
Yes	25	83.33
No	5	16.66
Total	30	100

Table 17: Rate of learners who think that there are many new items introduced in each text
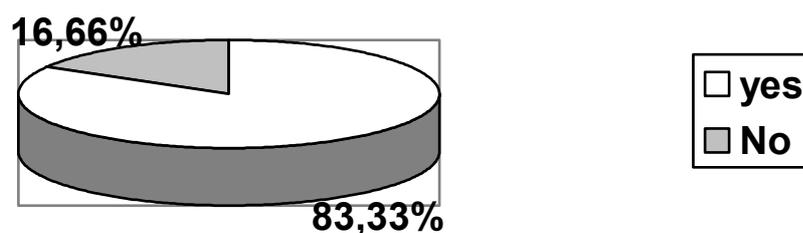

Figure 13: Rate of learners who think that there are many new items introduced in each text

Table 17 shows that the majority of learners (83.33%) say that they meet many new items in each text i.e., texts are not varied in terms of topics only but also in terms of vocabulary and learners are expected to learn a number of words in each time they deal with a new text.

5- Do you find it easy to understand them?

Learners' Answers	N	%
Yes	11	36.66
No	19	63.33
Total	30	100

Table 18: Difficulty of understanding the meaning of new words
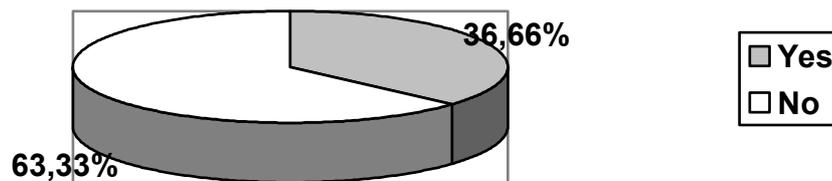
Figure 14: Difficulty of understanding the meaning of new words

The majority of learners (63.33%) find a difficulty in understanding the new items. This reveals that the coursebook texts are complicated and do not suit the learners levels. Texts include also a large number of new items which will distract the learners' attention, i.e., they cannot focus on all the new items and understand them.

6- When you do not understand a given word, do you?
  A- Ask you teacher   ☐
  B- Ask you colleagues   ☐
  C- Look for it in a dictionary   ☐

D- Ignore it   ☐

The learners' questionnaire reveals that the most useful techniques by learners in dealing with new items are using a dictionary or asking their teachers about their meanings, whereas asking their colleagues or ignoring the new words are not preferred by them. This demonstrates that learners give a great importance to these words and prefer to get their meanings from very confident sources which are dictionaries and teachers.

7- Do you infer meaning of unknown words from context?

Learners' Answers	N	%
Yes	23	76.66
No	7	23.33
Total	30	100

Table 19: Rate of learners who can make inferences
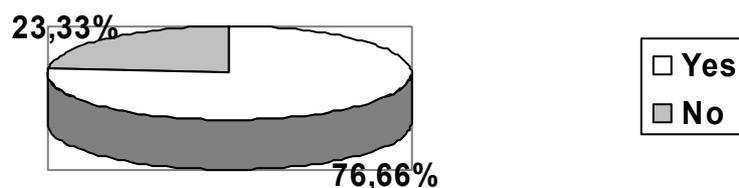
Figure 15: Rate of learners who can make inferences

The majority of learners (76.66%) say that they can infer meaning of unknown words from context. It shows that learners rely on another technique which is making inferences of

unknown words from context and that they are aware of the importance of learning words in context such as texts.

8- Do you prefer to have the explanation of the text key words after or next to it?

Learners' Answers	N	%
Yes	26	86.66
No	4	13.33
Total	30	100

Table 20: Rate of learners who prefer to follow texts with the explanation of new words
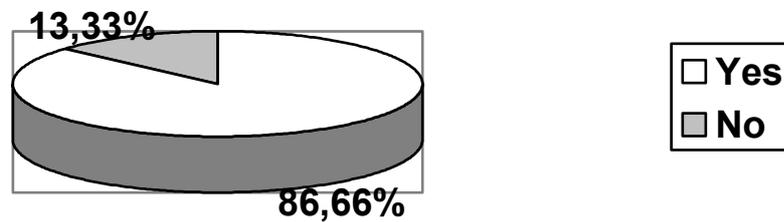
Figure 16: Rate of learners who prefer to follow texts with the explanation of new words

Almost all learners (86.66%) prefer to follow texts with the explanation of new words. It facilitates learning for them since it helps to understand texts and to save time and energy.

9- Do the coursebook texts help you learn English vocabulary?

Learners' Answers	N	%
Yes	26	86.66
No	4	13.33
Total	30	100

Table 21: Rate of learners who think that the coursebook texts helpful in the learning of vocabulary
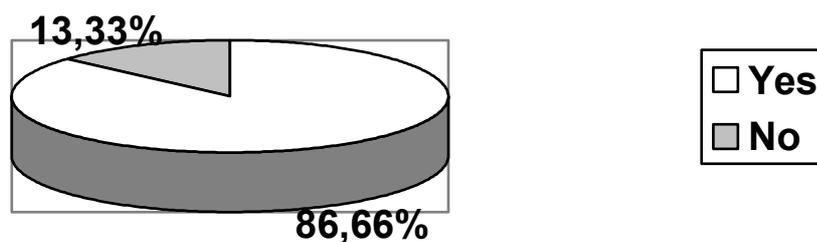
Figure 17: Rate of learners who think that the coursebook texts helpful in the learning of vocabulary

Nearly all learners (86.66%) agree that the coursebook texts help them to learn new vocabulary since these texts deal with different topics and include many items .Thus, learners are expected to learn new items and to know the language used in different fields each time they deal with a new text.

10- Do you think that these texts meet you interests?

Learners' Answers	N	%
Yes	9	30
No	21	70
Total	30	100

**Table 22:   Learners' attitudes towards the coursebook texts**
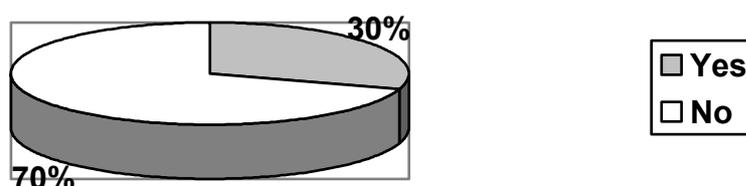
Figure 18: Learners attitudes' towards the coursebook texts

Nearly all learners (70%) agree that the coursebook texts do not meet their interest. It is related to a number of criteria as the variety of topics and the length of texts which are not enjoyable by the majority of learners. Learners are expecting more attractive texts.

11- If you have any additional comment, please write it.

Almost all learners give comments on the topics of texts which are considered as boring. Some of them suggest a number of topics as stories, literal and detective texts. Other learners prefer topics to be from their real life. The length of texts is another point which is criticized by other learners who prefer short texts.

From this analysis, it is concluded that

- The coursebook texts are not attractive

- Texts about culture and stories are more attractive for learners

- Many new items are introduced in each text

- Short texts are more enjoyable by learners

- Learners find a difficulty in understanding new items

- Learners can infer the meaning of unknown words from context

- Following texts with the explanation of new items is preferable

- The coursebook texts are helpful in learning vocabulary

- The coursebook texts do not meet the learners' interests

Conclusion

The teachers and learners' questionnaires reveal that third year secondary school coursebook texts help students to learn new vocabulary. However, they neither meet the teachers' expectations nor the learners' interests. They are too long, complicated, and not suitable for learners' level. Learners face many difficulties in understanding the new items which are introduced in each text. The questionnaires reveal also that culture, sports and stories are the most attractive topics for learners, whereas politics is not enjoyable by them. Another point which is welcomed a lot by both learners and teachers is following texts with the explanation of new items. Making inferences of unknown words is one of the texts aims. However, although the learners' questionnaire shows that learners can infer the meaning of unknown words, the majority of teachers agree that most of these inferences are incorrect.

General Conclusion

This work attempts to examine the texts introduced in the third year secondary school coureebook "New Prospects" in terms of vocabulary i.e., whether they are helpful in learning English vocabulary or not. It tries also to find whether these texts meet the teachers' expectations and the learners' interests.

After collecting and analyzing the required data, it is found that despite the fact that the coursebook texts are helpful in the learning of English vocabulary, they neither meet the teachers' expectations, nor the learners' interests. The majority of teachers and learners agree that these texts are too long, complicated and unattractive. They prefer short texts which attract learners, suit their levels and fit actual situations in Algeria.

Therefore, the Algerian Education Ministry should take into account all these points because these texts need many adjustments. In addition to that, teachers and learners are expecting more motivating and helpful texts in the future. The coursebook texts should keep changing through new texts which suit the learners' level and meet their needs.

On the basis of the present study, further research could be done on the other components of the coursebook to find out whether it is suitable for learners.

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APPENDICES

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Appendix 1: Teachers' Questionnaire

Appendix 2: Learners' Questionnaire

Appendix 1

Teachers' Questionnaire

This is a part of a research project. It aims at examining the effectiveness of the third year secondary school coursebook texts in learning English vocabulary.

I would be very grateful if you answer the following questions. Your answers will be of great help. Please put a cross in the appropriate box and complete sentences when necessary.

Thank you very much.

1- Which level are you teaching?

1ˢᵗ year ☐   2ⁿᵈ year ☐ 3ʳᵈ year ☐

2- How long have you been teaching?

....

3- Do the texts in the third year secondary school coursebook attract learners?

Yes ☐   No ☐

4- Which texts motivate learners?

A Historical ☐   **B** Scientific ☐   **C** Biographies ☐ **D** Others ☐

E Literary ☐   **F** Stories ☐   **G** Political ☐   **H** Cultural ☐ **I** Sports ☐

5- Are the third year secondary school coursebook texts suitable for the learners' level?

Yes ☐   No ☐

6- Do you prefer short or long texts?   Short ☐   Long ☐

7- Are there many new items introduced in each text? Yes ☐   No ☐

8- Do the learners ask you about their meaning?　　Yes ☐　　No ☐

9- Do they make correct inferences of new words from context?

　　Yes ☐　　　　No ☐

10- Do you find it easy to explain the new items to the learners?

　　Yes ☐　　　　No ☐

11- Do you prefer to follow texts with an explanation of the new items?

　　Yes ☐　　　　No ☐

12- Do you think that these texts help students to learn new vocabulary?

　　Yes ☐　　　　No ☐

13- Do you think that the coursebook texts meet the learners' needs and the teachers' expectations?

　　Yes ☐　　　　No ☐

14- Why?

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15- If you have any additional comment, please write it.

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Appendix 2

Learners' Questionnaire

This questionnaire is a part of research project .It aims at examining the effectiveness of third

year secondary school coursebook texts in learning English vocabulary.

Please read each question carefully, then put a cross in the appropriate box and complete

 sentences when necessary. If you do not understand a given word, please ask for help.

Thank you very much.

1- Are the texts in your coursebook attractive?

Yes ☐   No ☐

2- Which texts do you prefer to learn?

A Historical ☐   **B** Scientific ☐   **C** Biographies ☐   **D** Others ☐

E Literary ☐   **F** Stories ☐   **G** Political ☐   **H** Cultural ☐

3- Do you prefer short or long texts?

Short ☐   Long ☐

4- Are there many new items introduced in each text?

Yes ☐   No ☐

5- Do you find it easy to understand them?

Yes ☐   No ☐

6- When you do not understand a given word, do you

A. Ask your teacher about its meaning ☐

B. Ask your colleagues ☐

C. Look for it in a dictionary ☐

D. Ignore it   ☐

7- Do you infer meaning of unknown words from context?

     Yes   ☐   No   ☐

8- Do you prefer to have the explanation of the text keywords after or next to it?

     Yes   ☐   No   ☐

9- Do the coursebook texts help you to learn new vocabulary?

     Yes   ☐   No   ☐

10- Do you think that these texts meet your needs?

     Yes   ☐   No   ☐

11- If you have any additional comment , please write it

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