

# **Analysis of Speaking Activities in “Learning English: English Language Class 12” in Use in Mozambique**

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## **Dedication**

To my kids. You are a blessing!

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## **Abstract**

Textbooks can play an important role in leading the teachers to find meaningful activities and in helping students develop their oral communication skills. However, such textbooks should contained well-designed speaking activities that can be practiced in the classroom by the students so that towards the end of a learning cycle they can communicate with some confidence. This is a qualitative research that aims to analyze the effectiveness of speaking activities present in the grade 12 *Learn English: English language class 12*, a textbook in use in Mozambican secondary schools. To this end, a questionnaire was used to gather teachers' perspectives towards textbook use, and an evaluation checklist was used to analyze the textbook in terms of the effectiveness of its speaking activities. It was observed that this particular textbook gives emphasis to oral communication (60%) over written communication; the speaking activities are designed to promote communication among students; and they mirror real-life situations. Nevertheless, it was pointed that this textbook is not paired with a teacher's guide, and it lacks specific conversational strategies that the students could rely on when communicating. So it is recommended that further studies are carried out in large scale in order to determine what and how teaching materials in use in Mozambique can be improved, and to determine what other factors influence the students to fail to communicate in English after finishing their secondary studies.

**Keywords:** speaking activities, textbook analysis, English in Mozambique.

## Resumo

Os livros didáticos podem desempenhar um papel importante na orientação dos professores para encontrar actividades significativas e ajudar os alunos a desenvolver a sua competência oral. Entretanto, esses livros devem conter actividades orais bem elaboradas que possam ser praticadas em sala de aula pelos alunos para que, ao final de um ciclo de aprendizagem, possam comunicar com alguma confiança. Esta é uma pesquisa qualitativa que visa a analisar a eficácia das actividades de conversação presentes no livro da 12ª classe *Learn English: English language class 12*, um livro didático em uso nas escolas secundárias moçambicanas. Para isso, foi utilizado um questionário para compreender as perspectivas dos professores com relação ao uso do livro didático, e uma lista de verificação de avaliação foi usada para analisar o livro em termos da eficácia das suas actividades de conversação. Observou-se que este livro didático dá ênfase à comunicação oral (60%) em detrimento da comunicação escrita; as actividades de fala foram elaboradas para promover a comunicação entre os alunos; e elas simulam situações da vida real. No entanto, foi apontado que este livro não é acompanhado de um guia do professor e não tem conversação estratégias de conversação nas quais os alunos poderiam se basear ao comunicarem-se. Portanto, recomenda-se a realização de mais estudos em larga escala para determinar o que e como os materiais didáticos em uso em Moçambique podem ser melhorados, e para determinar que outros factores influenciam os alunos a não falarem Inglês depois de concluírem os seus estudos secundários.

**Palavras-chave:** actividades de conversação, análise de livros didáticos, Inglês em Moçambique.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

This paper aims to analyze the effectiveness of speaking activities present in the textbook *Learn English: English language class 12* (Pearson, 2013) in use in Mozambique towards the attainment of communication goals on the part of the students.

The importance of a textbook in the teaching and learning process of any subject matter is unquestionable. As Hutchinson and Torres (1994, p. 315) put it “No teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook.” This view suggests that a relevant textbook will serve to validate the learning situation both by the teacher and the students as they go through it, turning page after page and finding the material they need to explore. Also, this gives them the sense of progress in their teaching and learning situation.

Thus the textbook is an important resource for the learning to take place. And so it is expected that the textbook presents tasks and activities that can promote students’ speaking skills. However, in Mozambique many students finish high school without being able to communicate in English.

So it is truly relevant to evaluate textbooks, as through such an evaluation, teachers gain a better understanding of the contents of the textbook they use in the classroom, the strengths and weaknesses of the same, so that they can easily adapt it to suit the syllabus aims, the students’ linguistic competence needs and the teachers’ work.

It is unarguable that speaking is very important for communication among people. As (Martins, 2013, p. 9) understands, “It is the most immediate and important means that we have to express our feelings, ideas and opinions, and to achieve our communicative intention, which can be for example, to inform, to persuade, to amuse or to establish other kinds of relationships with people”.

This chapter is the introductory part of this paper, outlining the background of the study, its purpose, and the research questions; it is followed by a literature review where the main concepts pertaining to analysis of speaking activities are discussed along with the use of

the English language in Mozambique; after which follows the chapter on methodology where data gathering tools and the materials are explained; then the results of the research are presented; and finally the final considerations are made.

### **1.1 Background of the study**

Ur (1996, p. 120) says that “people who know a language are referred to as ‘speakers’ of that language, as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing; and many if not most foreign languages learners are primarily interested in learning to speak”.

The above shows the utmost importance of speaking over the other language skills because whoever speaks a language uses the grammar of the same, is able to listen to other speakers and has comprehensible vocabulary that allows them to communicate in that language.

In Mozambique English speakers have increased opportunities to get a better job over those who are not, so learning the English language is so important to all secondary school students that adult Mozambicans, if possible, seek to enroll their children in a language school because they know that it is of additional value when applying for a job, if not one of the most-sought-after requirements.

Before the year 2004, English as a subject was taught from grade 8 to 12, amounting to five years of study, and as from 2004, the government and its partners decided to introduce English as a subject from grade 6 to 12, a total of seven years. However, those who study English only at (public) schools in Mozambique are generally doomed to fail to communicate in English even after five or seven years of learning English. There might be multiple reasons for this problem: teacher education/preparation, curriculum requirements, the context and learning materials, including listening materials, reference books and textbooks.

This situation is an indication that one or more reasons mentioned above should be further analyzed in order to shed light on what leads to students’ failure to communicate in English even after some five, six or seven years of learning that target language.

As it is neither possible nor practically feasible to analyze all of the above aspects at once, this study will focus specifically on textbooks. This helps teacher practitioners, educators, students' guardians, and other stakeholders to better understand the role of the textbook in language learning and teaching as well as, if not particularly, the role of speaking activities contained in the textbook that has been chosen to be the primary instrument for use in the classroom.

The aim is not to question the value of the various textbooks in use in Mozambique for teaching and learning English. The importance of textbooks is obvious; however, it is important to look closely at the speaking activities included in a textbook to be used in the classroom to help teachers deliver their classes and students achieve some level of communication in English.

## **1.2 Purpose of the study**

This study is driven by some objectives to be attained by the end of the research. Such objectives can be divided into a main objective and specific objectives.

The main objective of this study is to analyze the effectiveness of reported speaking activities in the textbook selected on promoting students' speaking skills. Achieving this goal requires taking some small steps, in other words, specific objectives. And these are: (a) to identify speaking activities contained in the selected textbook; and (b) to compare the effectiveness of speaking activities in the textbook against a standardized checklist.

## **1.3 Research questions**

There are so any scholars who advocate for the importance of using textbooks in a language teaching context. To name a few, Hutchinson and Torres (1994), Cunningsworth (1995), Litz (2005), Cortazzi and Jin (1999), Radic-Bojanic and Topalov (2016) are in line with the view that textbooks are essential for any teaching and learning situation to take place. In this regard, it is expected that a language textbook will present tasks and activities

that can promote students' speaking skills. However, in Mozambique many students finish high school without being able to communicate in English.

This leads to the following research questions about the textbook in study:

- Does the textbook contain meaningful speaking activities?
- Do the activities in the textbook promote communication among students?
- Do the activities in the textbook promote communication between students and the teacher?
- What relative weight is afforded to speaking activities in the textbook?
- Do the activities promote fluency and accuracy?

To address these questions a series of methods, techniques, and strategies should be put in place, which are discussed in chapter 3 (methodology), starting with a survey of all speaking activities contained in the textbook and followed by an analysis of the same against a standardized checklist.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **2.1 English in Mozambique**

Mozambique is a highly diverse country when it comes to the languages spoken therein. Lopes (2016, p. 92) claims that “Mozambique is ranked among the 15 most linguistically diverse countries in Africa, meaning that in numerical terms, no language can claim majority language status at a national level”.

According to Lopes (2016, p. 92), around 27 languages are spoken accross Mozambique: 20 Bantu languages (Emakhuwa, Xitsonga/Xichangana, Cisena, Elomwe, Echuwabo, Cishona, Xitswa, Xirhonga, Cinyanja, Cinyungwe, Cicopi, Ciyao, Shimakonde, Gitonga, Ekoti, Kimwani, Kiswahili, Swazi, Cisenga, and Zulu); 4 Asian languages (Gujarati, Memane, Hindi and Urdu); and 3 European languages (Portuguese, English and French).

Portuguese has been used as the official language since Mozambique became independent in 1975. And English and French are “compulsory subjects” which are being taught “from primary and secondary school onwards, respectively” (Nhapulo 2013, p. 83).

According to Nhapulo (2013), English as a subject was introduced in the Mozambican Education System because of its importance in communication with people from neighboring countries. It is worth noting that Mozambique is surrounded by English speaking countries. “It is bordered to the north by Tanzania, to the east by the Mozambique Channel, which separates it from the island of Madagascar, to the south and southwest by South Africa and Swaziland, to the west by Zimbabwe, and to the northwest by Zambia, Malawi, and Lake Nyasa”.<sup>1</sup>

All of the abovementioned countries have English as their official language spoken countrywide, except for Madagascar, where French is used as the official language.

According to Firmino (2005, p. 84), in Mozambique English is “currently spoken in elite and rich families, among those families whose children study at schools which use English as

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/place/Mozambique>

the language of instruction or among those parents who are willing to send their children to study abroad.” This is why learning and being able to speak some English in Mozambique is necessary if one would like to have a better job or to be associated with those in higher societal positions.

It should be acknowledged that this is the environment where English coexists with other languages in Mozambique being taught and spoken as a foreign language. This leads to a discussion of its importance in the country.

### ***2.1.1 Importance of English in Mozambique***

After independence, Portuguese language was adopted as the official language in Mozambique. According to Mawere (2012), this is one of the hindrances to Mozambican students failing to communicate in English even after some years of studying it in primary and secondary schools.

As an African country, linguistically, Mozambique is so diverse, with so many languages spoken in the country, as “an artificial outcome of the colonization process” (Henriksen, 2010, p. 37). This is so true to the extent that there is not a single language in the country that is spoken countrywide or nationally, none of them can be considered to be unifying the nation from the north to the south. This environment enables Portuguese language to become “the sole medium of instruction and the main vehicle for the state administration and conduction of government’s businesses” (Henriksen, 2010, p. 45).

However, “English is increasingly becoming the global language with speakers in almost all parts of the world” (Mawere, 2012, p. 38), and Mozambique is part of this world where English is sought out as a means of communication among people from different parts.

According to Mawere (2012, p. 32), the “fact that English is a universal language, major source of communication in different cultures/civilizations and the most studied of all languages in the world makes it even more popular than Mandarin”. Despite this fact, “Mozambique is the only country in the region that uses Portuguese as its official language in public schools and job markets. This has made Mozambique to suffer isolation in terms of

trading, tourism, exchange of educational resources and in participation in regional and global politics, only to mention a few examples of cases of isolation” (Mawere, 2012, p. 39).

Gonçalves & Chauma (2020) point three reasons for the need of learning English in the country, namely geography, affiliation to international bodies, and globalization. In their words, the reasons for learning English in Mozambique are

“firstly, geographically, most Southern African countries have English as their official language. Second, Mozambique is a member of the Southern Africa Development Community and of the Commonwealth, which use English as the language of business. Third, from a global perspective, most social and economic interactions worldwide occur in English. Thus, Mozambique English (sic) introduced English in grades 6 and 7, to provide students with the basic vocabulary and language for communication” (Gonçalves & Chauma, 2020, p. 24).

Also, Mozambique joined the British Commonwealth of Nations in 1995 (Henriksen, 2010, p. 35).

Henriksen (2010, p. 52) states that “The value of English in Mozambique is widely recognised at all levels and sectors of the society”. This is true since all over the country many people seek to learn to speak English language, both in major cities and in other areas, “particularly in those areas where foreign companies or international organisations operate” (Henriksen, 2010, p. 52).

According to Henriksen (2010, p. 52-53), the reasons for learning to speak English are (a) “Mozambique’s geographical position” – the same reason that determined the introduction of French language in secondary schools; (b) “Mozambique’s membership to SADC (the Southern African Development Community), the Commonwealth of Nations, the UA (African Union), and other international organisations”; and (c) “Mozambique’s preparedness to face the globalisations phenomenon”. She explains that “Mozambique appears,

geographically, like an island surrounded by English Speaking countries, such as South Africa, Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, and Tanzania”. As part of the global world, Mozambique needs “to communicate with the rest of the world” (Henriksen, 2010, p. 53), and Portuguese cannot do that job.

So English becomes necessary, because most of the “international meetings, seminars, and conferences” (Henriksen, 2010, p. 53) are held in English even inside Mozambique when there are participants from other countries of the world. English is also used in Mozambique when communicating with foreigners who come to Mozambique for work or business as well as when they come for tourism; especially “waiters in bars and restaurants, receptionists at hotels, workers at mobile phone companies” and others not mentioned here really need English to communicate with foreigners (*Ibidem*).

In such occasions “English becomes the major vehicle of communication” (Henriksen, 2010, p. 54) between Mozambicans and the many international organizations that Mozambique is part of, namely non-government organizations such as SADC (Southern Africa Development Community), UN (United Nations), AU (African Union), EU (European Union), UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund), UNESCO (United Nations for Education, Science and Culture Organization), WHO (World Health Organization), etc., all of which use English as the main means of communication, and other government organizations, such as FINNIDA (from Finland), DANIDA (from Denmark), SIDA (from Sweden), UKAID (from United Kingdom), and USAID (from the United States of America).

Njirazafa (2023, p. 253) summarizes the importance of English in Mozambique as due to “globalization, employment, and academic mobility”. In fact, globally, Mozambicans need to communicate with people from other parts of the world either physically, when they meet in Mozambique or abroad, or virtually, when dealing with transactions online. Mastering English language also enables Mozambicans to access job offers with the foreign companies abroad or operating in the country. About “academic mobility”, Covele, Langa & Swanzy (2022) conducted extensive research in the field. They believe that the knowledge of English in Mozambique is intrinsically linked to “value-added opportunities” (Covele, Langa & Swanzy, 2022, p. 194) for one to aspire higher education abroad.

In their paper, these authors discuss the problems international education aspirants face when they look for opportunities to study abroad at the level of masters or doctorate degree offered in Europe or the North-America where the language of instruction is primarily English. For most of the applicants it is almost impossible to study abroad if one does not master the English language. The study showed that in Mozambique only a tiny percentage of academics is admitted to pursue international education there all because the majority cannot speak English fluently. They also pointed out that English is the biggest barrier that impedes people from accessing higher education or from acquiring their knowledge in certain subjects that are not offered locally, but abroad in English-speaking countries. Many applicants fail their IELTS/TOEFL examinations and thus they cannot pursue higher education outside the country.

It was also found that “almost 80 percent of the scholarship opportunities require English language competence” (Covele, Langa & Swanzy, 2022, p. 200).

### ***2.1.2 Teaching and learning English in Mozambique***

After discussing the relevance of English language in the country, it is now necessary to stress how it became part of the national curriculum in the system of education in Mozambique.

As a response to addressing widespread poverty in the country, the government decided to introduce the English subject in schools, because “English was believed to be a vehicle of change that would improve the country’s relations with the global world, open avenues for Mozambicans to the global job market, tourism, educational and political participation” (Mawere, 2012, p. 40).

Gonçalves & Chauma (2020, p. 27) say that “the introduction of English in the schools is, among many other reasons, justified for the purpose of communicating with foreigners as well as for the sake of globalization both of which require the application of teaching approaches and methods to meet learning goals”.

English as a subject in Mozambican system of education was first introduced in 1992 (Mawere, 2012, p. 38), but with its own challenges and difficulties, as this author puts it “the

teaching and learning of English in Mozambique has been a mammoth task since its implementation in school curriculum in 1992”.

Analyzing the English language in Mozambique in her paper, Henriksen (2010, p. 54) concludes by saying that “English is generally recognised as the main international language used in the country and taught in the Mozambican Education System, from Grade 6 in the upper primary school, to children aged 11 years” up to grade 12, when they are 17. So for Henriksen (2010, p. 57), “English is the main foreign language taught in the Mozambican school system”.

And others authors add that it is “followed by French” language. These two are the only foreign languages taught in the country. According to Henriksen (2010, p. 58), “The French language was introduced, for the first time in independent Mozambique, in 1994, and it is taught at the second cycle of the secondary school level (ESG2), in Grades 11 and 12” for the same reasons of the introduction of English in Mozambique.

Challenges affecting the English language teaching/learning include low salaries, and lack of teaching/learning resources (such as adequate classrooms, textbooks, and qualified teachers), as Mawere (2012, p. 40) puts it, “teacher wages are generally not typically full responsive to local labor market conditions or to individual characteristics, so many teachers substantial rents (...) in the form of illegal private tutoring to supplement their incomes”.

In order to tackle the said challenges, Mawere (2012) suggests introducing English as a subject from primary school, that is, from grade one onwards. By introducing English starting from grade one, students will have more time to study it, and they will probably be able to master the language by the time they finish school; unlike the present situation where students completing last year of formal education (grade 12) are not able to communicate in English at all. So being able to speak some English after completing grade 12 in Mozambique is seen as an exception or an achievement of genius people.

The author also recommends investing in teacher training programs in the country alongside hiring “qualified teachers from neighboring countries such as Tanzania, South Africa, Zimbabwe and Malawi to boost English teaching and learning” (Mawere, 2012, p.

44). In the same view, this author recommends “continuous professional development” workshops in the country that could be promoted annually in order to “ensure that teachers are constantly equipped with the necessary English teaching skills” (*Ididem*).

Kwagwanji (2016, p. 128) believes that the biggest challenge faced by the teaching of English in Mozambique is “poor English language background and lack of professional refresher courses and or training of teachers”. This influences “the students’ poor performance in English language in primary, secondary, and university schools” in Mozambique.

Discussing challenges facing English language learning/teaching in Mozambique, and drawing from conclusion from a case study conducted in Zambézia province with trainees attending local colleges offering teacher training programs, Gonçalves & Chauma (2020) identify two main problems that hinder the instruction of English language, namely teacher preparation/qualification, and teacher’s attitudes towards English teaching/learning. They recognize the lack of knowledge on the part of the teachers who have undergone teacher training programs in the country’s universities and institutes.

Gonçalves & Chauma (2020, p. 27) believe that “if by the end of a teacher training program, the English language teachers are equipped with communicative competence and communicative teaching approaches, they can help their learners perform well in English classes”. In their view,

“In the context of Zambézia Province, English language teachers trained at the primary school teacher training colleges find communicative language teaching a challenge. They find it easy to apply the approaches used in the Portuguese language, which are in some ways incompatible to those of English, bearing in mind that English must be taught as a foreign language” (Gonçalves & Chauma, 2020, p. 27).

In sum, more research is necessary in order to identify all the challenges of English language teaching in Mozambique and to pinpoint the possible solutions so that in a near future students attending secondary school in Mozambique can become fluent by the time they finish school, thus increasing their job and academic opportunities offered inside and outside the country.

## **2.2 Teaching speaking**

### ***2.2.1 The concept of speaking***

Chaney (1998), cited by Keyi (2006), defines speaking as “the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts” (Martins, 2013, p. 8).

Nazara (2011, p. 30) believes that “speaking is a multifaceted construct, and that the best one can do is to define speaking by its feature, its functions and its conditions”. Looked through its features, “speaking is a social, multi-sensory speech event, with an unpredictable topic”, according to Martins (2013, p. 8). This author adds that speaking “also involves paralinguistic features such as eye contact”, acknowledging that normally it is “cooperatively constructed” (Gumperz, 1999, p. 74). In terms of functions, “speaking is a way to verbally communicate for mostly interpersonal and somewhat transactional purposes” (Martins, 2013, p. 8). And taking into account its conditions, speaking involves participation of two or more people.

Martins (2013, p. 9) argues that, since speaking itself is too complex to conceptualize, as it can be seen from the difficulty faced when defining it, there will always be some pedagogical implications. Thus, teaching speaking will imply also teaching a number of different areas of knowledge.

Since speaking is very important to learners, this ability is crucial to be taught in a language class, because according to Martins (2013, p 9) “teaching learners to speak English language means providing them with another instrument that will enable them to express themselves and to interact with people”.

The Council of Europe (2001, p. 73) finds the ability of speaking as a form of “spoken production and spoken interaction”. Spoken production means that a speaker will have to produce an oral text to an audience. Spoken interaction is when someone “acts alternately as speaker and listener with one or more interlocutors” (Martins, 2013, p. 8).

### ***2.2.2. Principles for teaching speaking***

Martins (2013, p. 16) understands that being able to speak a language “is to be able to use” its pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and accuracy. This author refers to these different aspects of speaking as its sub-skills.

Penny Ur (1996) is cited by Kusmierek (2015, p. 75) as emphasizing the importance of the speaking over other skills. This is because speaking implies the ability to mobilize large knowledge of the language, including extra linguistic knowledge, such as the culture, the context of speaking, and the people (the interlocutors). In Mozambique in particular, a person who speaks English fluently, irrespective of being able to write it or not, is considered to be the most qualified for most of the highly-paid jobs in multinational companies in the country.

However, speaking can be the most difficult skill to be taught or developed in a language classroom, according to Kusmierek (2015). In fact, most of the times, students do not use the target language outside the classroom; once they leave the room, they don’t use English any more until the next time they get back to the lessons. The said author acknowledges this view and puts it as the disadvantage of teaching L2. In his words, “one of the disadvantages of teaching English as a foreign language is that students cannot use the language in everyday speech” (Kusmierek, 2015, p. 76). In Mozambican secondary schools, per week, English is taught for 90 minutes (two lessons of 45 minutes) in grade 10, for 135 minutes (three lessons) in grade 8 and 9, and for 225 minutes (five lessons) in grades 11 and 12. So, most of the time, students do not use English in their conversations. Even during English classes, especially when not constantly monitored by the teacher, students almost always communicate with each other in their L1. Probably, this is why some private schools tend to prioritize speaking in their teaching than other language skills.

Speaking about the “complexity of the speaking process”, Kusnierek (2015, p. 77) understands that “being able to communicate successfully in a foreign language demands not only practice but also the understanding of some linguistic elements which are important for verbal interaction”. In his view, it is clear that teachers really need to ensure that their students have plenty of time to practice the elements of the target language, as this is the only and the most valuable opportunity that they have for practicing the use of English as their L2.

This author thus suggests a complex knowledge that the students need to acquire in order to be able to speak the target language. Students need to have (a) the knowledge of the context, (b) the knowledge of the speaking strategies, (c) the knowledge of the language features, and (d) the knowledge of the “cultural and social rules”. Regarding the knowledge of the context, students need to know how to adequate their speech according to various contexts or speaking situations. About the knowledge of the speaking strategies, students need to know how to cope with difficulties when speaking so that they can get their message across. Concerning the knowledge of the language features, students need to know the vocabulary, sounds, grammar of the target language. In this case, the practice of “connected speech” will help develop fluency in the language. And relating to the knowledge of cultural/social rules, students need to know if it is appropriate to speak loudly or not, how to take turns, how to express their feelings, opinions, and ideas.

Teaching conversation strategies is important so that students are able to “ask for clarification (what), ask someone to repeat (huh? Excuse me?), use fillers (Uh, I mean well), use conversation maintenance cues (uh huh, right, yeah, okay, hmm...), get someone’s attention (Hey, say, so), use paraphrase for sturtures that one cannot produce, appeal for assistance from the interlocutor (to get a word or phrase, for instance), use mime and nonverbal expression to convey meaning, and the like” (Royani & Tukimum, 2023, p. 43).

Therefore, looking at all this complexity, Kusnierek (2015) suggests that participation in the classroom should be even, that motivation should be high, with appealing topics/tasks, and “acceptable level” of difficult when it comes to speaking activities. In order to maintain a “high level of motivation”, teachers are advised to select relevant types of activities that raise “students’ interest” (Thituyetanh, 2015, p. 50).

Also, it is important to ensure that there is an environment where students feel relaxed “in order to play guessing games, doing the rehearsal in small groups before speaking in front of many people” (*Ibidem*).

Jondeya (2011, p. 22) cites Nunan (2003) and Kayi (2006) as suggesting “second and foreign language” awareness in the language classroom, practice time, “group-work and pair-work”, “negotiation of meaning”, “transactional and interactional” activities, “to prompt students to speak”, give “delayed feedback” that is written, involve students, monitor students during classroom work, and increase “student speaking time”.

Thituyetanh (2015, p. 49) supports this idea and understands that students need to have plenty of time for speaking English in the classroom “so that they can develop their ability to produce language in real life or to use it as a means to do their jobs”.

Kamal (2013) believes that when students have increased listening opportunities, they can well benefit from it and develop their speaking.

According to the students’ level, Thituyetanh (2015, p. 51) proposes “teaching each individual pattern [of the language] at a time and then practice with the pattern mechanically and repetitively after the teachers first. In this way, teachers help students get into the habit of speaking and gradually build up their confidence to use the language without reluctance”.

Also, it is important to give students plenty of opportunities to speak about a certain topic of their choice, as “Students may talk about any topic choosing to mention the reason, the time, the place, the benefit, advantages, causes, harms, difficulties, obstacles, etc in their talk so that they can have something to say and shouldn’t struggle with running out of ideas” (Thituyetanh, 2015, p. 51).

As one of the teaching principles, Royani and Tukimum (2023, p. 39) think that speaking should involve “form-focused instruction”, meaning focused instruction”, and “opportunities to improve fluency”.

### 2.3 Speaking activities and tasks

According to Nunan (2004, p. 4) cited by Yulianda, Riza & Ikhsan (2023, p. 1048), speaking activities are “a set of classroom activities in which students complete, manipulate, produce, or interact in the target language while their attention is focused on mobilizing their grammatical knowledge to express meaning, and where the intention is to convey meaning rather than manipulate form”.

In his turn, (Richards, 2006) cited by the same authors says that “a speaking task is an exercise that demands pupils to reach and achieve a goal from supplied knowledge through a mental process that is controlled and regulated by the teacher”.

So “speaking tasks are activities that require speakers to use language in order to attain a certain goal in a specific speaking circumstance” (Yulianda, Riza, & Ikhsan, 2023, p. 1048).

From the concepts of speaking activities above, it is unarguably that a speaking task is primarily focus on conveying meaning orally in the classroom between students and between teacher and students rather than on discussing the linguistic forms.

In terms of their types, “speaking activities are divided into two categories according to learners’ degree of communicative involvement”, such as “pre-communicative and communicative” (Tas & Khan, 2021, p. 3501). Each of these, in their turn, includes two totally different types of activities: “pre-communicative activities include structural and quasi-communicative tasks”; and “communicative activities include functional communication and social interaction” (*Ibidem*).

In other words, “pre-communicative activities cater for the development of the linguistic system (i.e. grammatical competence and discourse competence), communicative activities target functional aspects of the language (i.e. strategic competence and sociolinguistic competence)” (Tas & Khan, 2021, p. 3501).

Examples of speaking activities include conversations, interviews, information gap and jigsaw activities, scripted dialogues, drama, role-plays, logic puzzles, describing pictures, picture differences, things in common, giving instructions, and story-telling (Tas & Khan, 2021).

## 2.4 Textbook use in language teaching

According to Radic-Bojanic and Topalov (2016, p. 138), “Textbooks are undoubtedly the most popular teaching materials used in foreign language classes.”

Their definition of textbook is based on OALD (2000, p. 1238), which states that “a textbook is a book that teaches a particular subject and that is used especially in schools and colleges” (Radic-Bojanic & Topalov, 2016, p. 138).

In terms of usefulness, “textbooks aim at providing learners with necessary knowledge, language skills and information about English speaking countries and preparing them for interaction with people from foreign countries and of different cultural backgrounds” (Radic-Bojanic & Topalov, 2016, p. 138).

So textbooks are advantageous for teachers and learners in view of all that has been said above (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994).

Cummingsworth (1995), cited in Radic-Bojanic and Topalov (2016, p. 139), summarize the importance of textbooks as “effective resource for self-directed learning and self-study; a valuable resource for presentation material; a source of ideas and activities for learner practice and communicative interaction; a reference source for students; a syllabus; a support for less experienced teachers to gain confidence and demonstrate new methodologies.”

Radic-Bojanic and Topalov (2016, p. 141) are in favor of using textbooks in the classroom because they can be used as the basis of teaching process while the teachers look and find supplementary materials for their job. As they put it, “Textbooks and instructional materials should aim at raising novice teachers’ awareness of pedagogical issues. Less experienced teachers can use the textbook as a framework of reference as they slowly become more attentive to individual student needs” (*idem*).

While they argue that “there is no perfect textbook that meets the needs of all students, teachers, schools and curricula” since “no textbook designed for general market can be perfectly suitable for a specific group of learners”, so textbooks should be seen as just a “starting point” (*ibidem*).

As a framework of reference, textbooks are susceptible to “improvisation, adaptation and a spontaneous and creative interaction in the classroom” (Radic-Bojanic & Topalov, 2016, p. 141), all because “textbooks are merely proposals for action, not instructions for use. Teachers should look at the proposals and decide whether they agree with them or not”.

Another group of scholars sees textbooks as disadvantageous. According to Radic-Bojanic and Topalov (2016, p. 142), these academics claim that “textbooks are too rigid and they mirror the pedagogic, psychological and linguistic predilections and biases of their authors. Textbooks impose, determine and control de language learning and teaching methods, techniques, approaches and processes.”

Sometimes, textbooks are biased culturally, “as they contain evident examples of sexism, stereotyping and gender bias, specially (sic) in terms of sexist and unrealistic characterization of both men and women, under-representation and disregard of female characters and stereotypes regarding occupations, relationships, actions and roles in society” (Radic-Bojanic & Topalov, 2016, p. 142).

Therefore, it will be really necessary that every teacher conducts their own analysis of the textbook before they implement it in their classroom. Also, they should be competent in terms of language, the different cultures in the environment they work in as well as the teaching approaches and principles if they want to help their students to master the English language in written and oral communication.

However, textbooks have their own disadvantages, and Radic-Bojanic and Topalov (2016, p. 143) advise that “In order to avoid prevalent bad sides and disadvantages of instructional materials, it is necessary to carry out a systematic analysis of textbooks based on well-established criteria and determine their strengths and weaknesses.”

Teachers and other important stakeholders need to analyze textbooks “in order to determine whether they are suitable or not for classroom usage” (Radic-Bojanic & Topalov, 2016, p. 143). In any case, textbooks are analyzed before they are introduced in the language classroom or while they are being used. According to Radic-Bojanic and Topalov (2016, p.

143), the former analysis is called “predictive analysis” and the latter is called “retrospective analysis.”

Litz (2005, p. 5) cites Sheldon (1988, p. 137) as suggesting that textbooks “represent the visible heart of any ELT program” because “they offer considerable advantages – for both the student and the teacher – when they are being used in the ESL/EFL classroom.”

Litz (2005, p. 5) defends the need of use of textbooks saying “textbooks are generally sensitive to students’ needs, even if they are not designed for them, they are efficient in terms of time and money, and they can and should allow for adaptation and improvisation.”

Textbooks can also save “students from a teacher’s deficiencies” (Litz, 2005, p. 6). For textbooks presents the content for teaching, also supporting them with how the content should be taught.

On the other hand, there are some downsides of textbooks. For Litz (2005, p. 6), “textbooks are too inflexible and generally reflect the pedagogic, psychological, and linguistic preferences and biases of their authors,” they indirectly impose “external language objectives and learning constituents on students as well as potentially incongruent instructional paradigms on the teachers who use them,” and “essentially determine and control the methods, processes and procedures of language teaching and learning.”

Litz (2005, p. 7) believes that “it is not really possible to teach a language without embedding it in its cultural base.” Such cultural reflections are found in any language textbook since the writers have their own cultures.

It is really important to have students practice authentic materials different from the ones found in the textbooks, which generally are “unnatural and inappropriate for communicative or cooperative language teaching because they do not adequately prepare students” for navigation in real life.

According to Çakit (2006, p. 12), “Textbooks play a prominent role in the teaching /learning process and they are the primary agents of conveying the knowledge to the learners. Besides, one of the basic functions of textbooks is to make the existence knowledge available and apparent to the learner in a selected, easy and organized way.”

When there is no textbook to be used in a language course, Çakit (2006) understands that there will be no clear way to teach, as the textbook provides a structure for teaching in a form of a syllabus, and “students in different classes will receive a similar content and therefore can be evaluated in the same way.”

Textbooks help students track their progress since they can see where they were before, where they are now and where they are going (Salgot, 2015). This fact gives them a sense of achievement.

According to Pavesic and Cankar (2022, p. 31), “Textbooks are a fundamental written source of knowledge,” all because they “present teachers with a set of learning objectives and their transformation into didactic presentations of the material intended for teaching.” They add that textbooks constitute “a fundamental and reliable source of information for students as they acquire new knowledge, while offering the teacher the opportunity to focus on improving pedagogy and effective learning outcomes” (*ibidem*).

Textbooks contain all the relevant content that is expected to be taught in schools of a certain country to specific students.

Being one of the learning/teaching materials, textbooks alone cannot enable students to achieve the desirable outcomes, other relevant elements should be taken into account for the students’ attainment of what the nation/government needs their people to accomplish. In this regard, Pavesic and Cankar (2022, p. 32) stress that “teachers matter more than textbooks.”

Hutchinson and Torres (1994) advise that textbooks should be seen as beneficial to the teaching and learning process and they condemn some authors such as Swan (1992) and Littlejohn (1992) who posit an hostile view of the textbook as being artificial and “too rigid” (Radic-Bojanic & Topalov, 2016, p. 142), leaving no space for adaptation or negotiation on the part of teachers and students. For those textbook-favorable authors, “No teaching-learning situation, it seems, is complete until it has its relevant textbook” (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994, p. 315).

Even with all the criticism surrounding textbooks, they still survive and thrive, “because they satisfy certain needs” (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994, p. 317). These needs can be

perceived as the different roles textbooks play. Drawing from the above authors, in terms of the needs that textbooks satisfy, it could be summarized as follows:

- Textbooks provide structure for the learning process;
- Textbooks provide content for learners to explore in the classroom as well as on their own during class activities and homework or self-study;
- Textbooks facilitates teachers and give them “confidence and security” (Hutchinson & Torres, 19994, p. 318);
- Textbooks serve as a map for the teaching learning process to occur being accessible for both teachers and students.

Hutchinson and Torres (1994, p. 325) conclude that textbooks are merely “a workable compromise,” something that should be constantly adapted and supplemented in order to meet particular student’s needs, because no textbook can, on its own, meet the needs of all particular students.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

This is a qualitative research wherein the researcher analyzes the effectiveness of speaking activities in the grade 12 English textbook in use in Mozambique, entitled *Learning English: English Language Class 12*. The purpose is to find out whether this book can be relied upon in leading students to develop their speaking skills or not.

The analysis begins with a brief description of the subject of the study, i.e., the textbook itself in terms of its organization, and the teachers who provided the material in examination: their perceptions towards English textbook and their analysis of the same textbook. Ten teachers, who work in the same school as the researcher, were asked to provide their perceptions toward the importance of textbook use. They were given a questionnaire with statements for them to respond to.

The questionnaire<sup>2</sup> is comprised of a total of 13 statements, for the respondents to indicate their level of agreement. It is divided into two categories: the first 7 statements are about the importance of textbook use in the classroom, and the other 6 are about the methodology presented in the textbook in terms of promoting speaking abilities among the students.

Two other teachers were invited to analyze the textbook in study using the same checklist<sup>3</sup> as the researcher of this study. This approach helped to triangulate the results with those of the researcher.

#### **3.1 Description of the subject of the study**

The subject of this study is the textbook entitled *Learning English: English language class 12*. Also, the teachers who contributed to this study with their perceptions and who helped to validate the analysis are briefly profiled after the description of the textbook in analysis.

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 1: Questionnaire.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 2: Checklist.

### ***3.1.1 Learning English: English Language Class 12***

In this study the textbook entitled *Learning English: English language class 12* is analyzed in order to assess the effectiveness of the speaking activities present therein. This textbook was first published in 2013 by Pearson Moçambique, Lda, a holding of the South African-based publishing house Longman (or Pearson Longman). Furthermore, it is part of a larger company with offices and branches across the world, whose primary goal is to publish core and supplementary educational materials in a wide range of subjects at different levels.

According to some web-based sources, their “materials are based on Mozambique’s latest syllabus documents and deliver complete curriculum coverage at all levels. All their products are developed and written by teachers and education experts who have extensive local and international experience”<sup>4</sup>.

This particular textbook was authored by Manuel Cabinda and Daphne Paizee. Mr. Cabinda is a Mozambican-born teacher of English as second language and textbook author for primary and secondary levels in Mozambique. Mrs Paizee is a South African-based full-time author of language textbooks.

The textbook is organized around topical units, and there is a mini-dictionary at the end of it. There are a total of 15 units: Famous people and idols; Heroes; Entertainment; Business and etiquette; Business communication; Taxes; Health – common illnesses; Self-employment; Literature; Law; Drugs; Religions and beliefs; Life after school; News; and Life in 2025.

Each unit has 5 lessons, the last of which being a review lesson, except for unit 8 (Self-employment) which has 6 lessons. The units are organized in a way that all of them start with a “Warm-up” page where students are required to do a speaking activity before delving into the main contents of the unit. This opening page contains instructions, questions, and images for the students to base their speaking on. The instructions are fairly clear for the students that they can even use the textbook for independent study. The images help students visualize

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.developmentaid.org/organizations/view/98791/pearson-mozambique> (retrieved on May 25, 2023)

what they are going to talk about; and the questions are useful for prompting interactions among students and the teacher.

In the following 4-5 lessons, activities are labeled as “Speak” for speaking exercises; “Read” for reading exercises; “Write” for writing exercises; and “Learn” for grammar point explanation. And the last lesson of each unit, as aforementioned, is a review where students basically do exercises on the previous learned contents in the unit. This sums up everything discussed from the first lesson of the unit to the last one.

The mini-dictionary present at the end of the textbook is bilingual, in English and Portuguese, and contains translations of words deemed central to the understanding of texts throughout the book. To facilitate comprehension, these words are written in bold type within the book, so each time a reader or student finds a bold type word in the book and does not know its meaning, they can quickly find the Portuguese translation of said word in the mini-dictionary on the final two pages of the book. For a quick reference, the words are found in alphabetical entries.

Finally, the textbook closes with an index, which contains the main grammar points, language functions and key vocabulary covered in the book along with the page numbers where these can be found.

### ***3.1.2 Profile of the teachers who provided the research material***

In this study it was deemed important to gather teachers’ perceptions towards textbook use in order to know whether textbooks are important for them or not. Also, in order to validate the research findings, it was important to invite other teacher practitioners to use the same tool and analyze the same textbook.

So, 10 English language teachers were asked to respond to the questionnaire about their perceptions towards the use of textbook in language instruction. These teachers have 5 years’ experience as teachers and have taught all grades in Mozambique, from grade 1 to grade 12, in different places in the country, having been in contact with different cultures and students. Now, they all teach in the same school that has been renewed and expanded.

Among those teachers, 2 of them were asked to analyze the same textbook using the same checklist as the researcher. These two have been in the public sector for more than 10 years, and they hold university degrees in English language teaching.

Taking into account these aspects, namely extensive experience in the field of teaching and formal higher education in teaching, it is believed that they can be a source of useful information for the purpose of this study.

### **3.2 Data collection**

An evaluation checklist and a questionnaire were used in analyzing the textbook in terms of how its speaking activities enable students to interact in the classroom. The question about whether these activities are meaningful and/or communicative is also closely examined.

The questionnaire was based on Cunningsworth (1995) where statements about the importance of textbook use are evaluated by teachers in order for the researcher to gather their perception towards the effectiveness of use of textbook in foreign language classrooms. In this questionnaire (see Appendix 1: Questionnaire) 13 statements about the importance of textbook use are analyzed by the researcher's fellow teachers where they indicate their level of agreement to those from 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree).

The checklist is an adaptation of previously designed checklists (see Appendix 2: Checklist). A Likert scale ranging from 0 (strongly agree), through 1 (agree), 2 (neutral), 3 (disagree) to 4 (strongly disagree) was used to respond to each question posed in the checklist.

In order to triangulate the results two other teachers were invited to provide their evaluation of the said textbook using the same checklist. This served to compare the researcher's results to those of other teachers.

The analytical method that was used to evaluate the effectiveness of speaking activities in the textbook in a form of a checklist was combined with a bibliographical review method that was crucial for the comprehension of the main concepts related to the topic, especially those

dealing with importance of textbooks in EFL settings, textbook evaluation, and principles for teaching speaking skills.

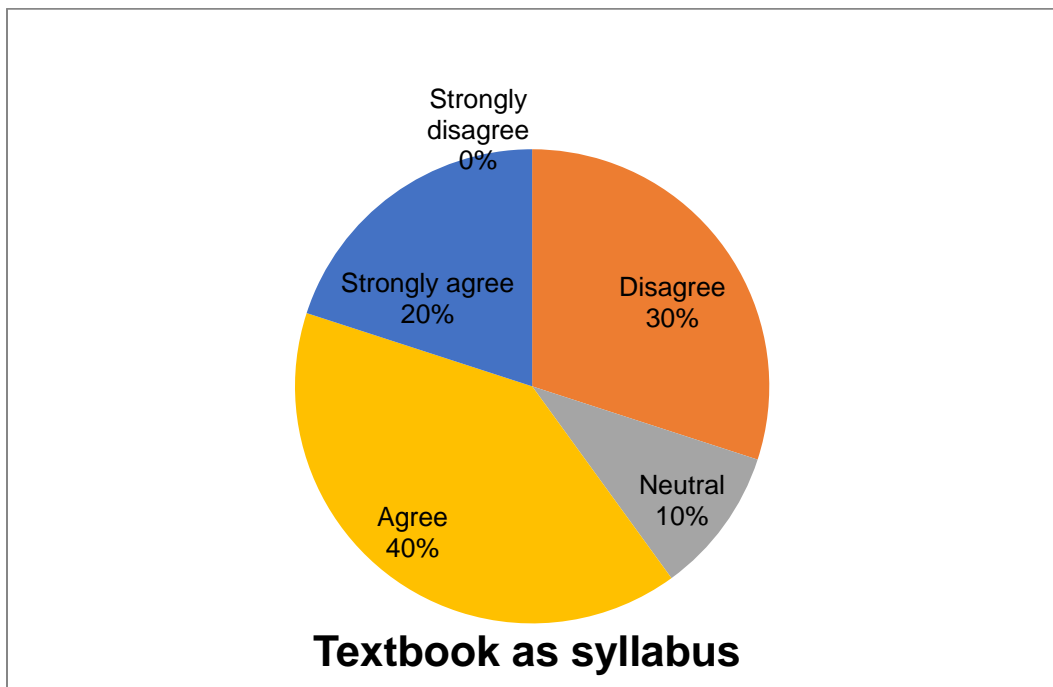
## Chapter 04: Results and Discussion

Upon data collection, these are analyzed in order to be meaningful. In this step, firstly the perceptions of teachers towards the use of textbook gathered through the *Questionnaire* are examined, and then follows the analysis of the textbook itself in terms of the effectiveness of its speaking activities.

### 3.1 Teachers' perceptions towards textbook use in English classroom

Cunningsworth (1995) stresses the importance of textbook use in the classroom as an essential tool for effective learning. Here are the results from the respondents.

**Chart 1: The textbook serves as a syllabus**

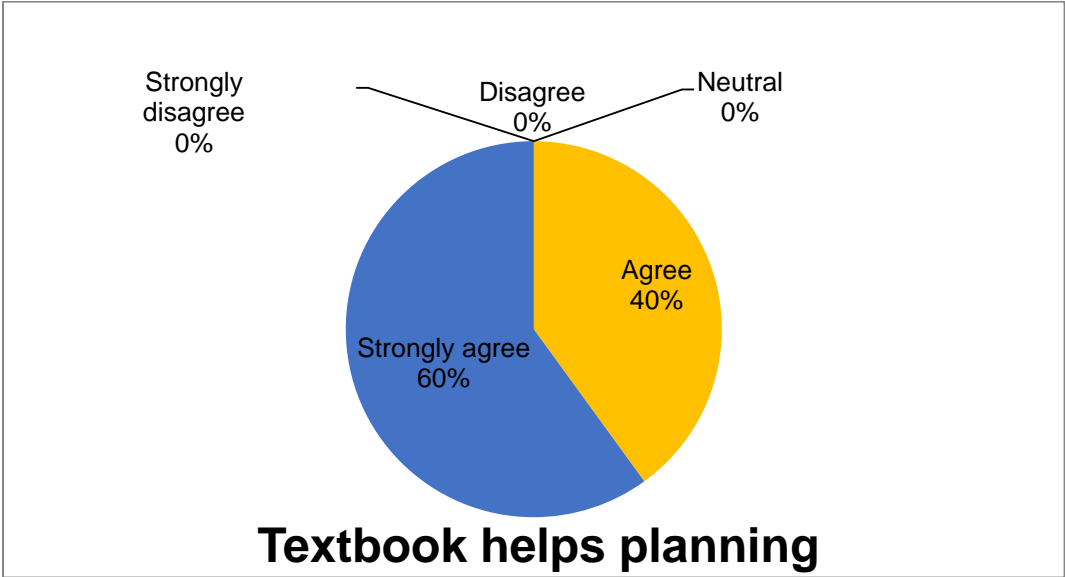


**Source: Author, 2024**

To Statement 1 (*The textbook serves as a syllabus*), 30% of the respondents disagreed, meaning that they never use a textbook as a syllabus nor they follow the sequence provided in it; while 60% agreed that they use the textbook as a syllabus – they can follow the sequence given in the textbook to deliver their classes. Among these, 10% stayed neutral, they preferred not to respond.

This means that most of the teachers agree that the textbook can be used as a syllabus for contents they need to use in the classroom.

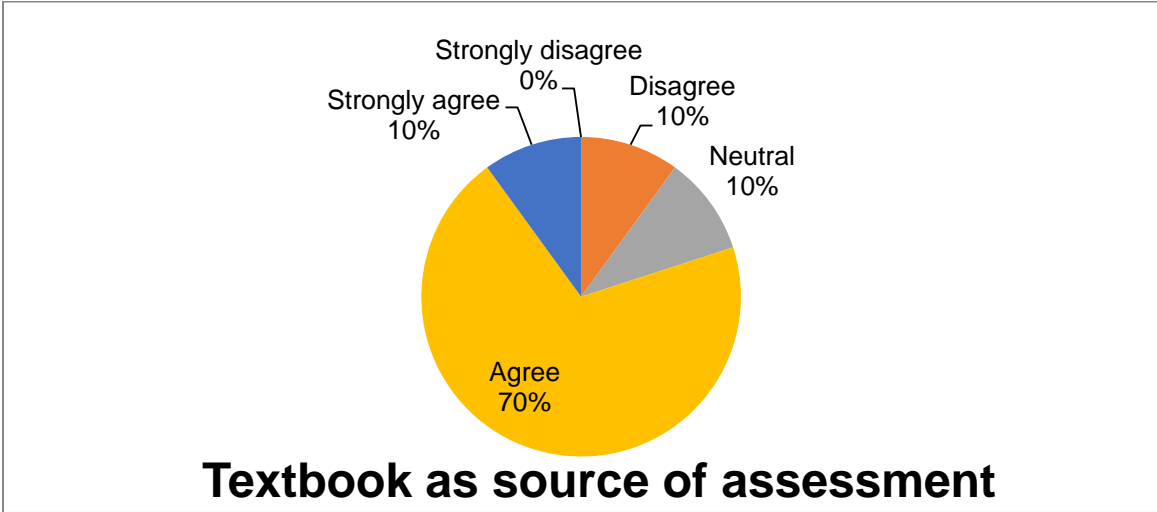
**Chart 2: The textbook helps planning daily instruction**



Source: Author, 2024

To Statement 2 (*The textbook helps planning daily instruction*), all respondents (100%) agreed. For them, the textbook should always be used when planning lessons along with the syllabus and other relevant material.

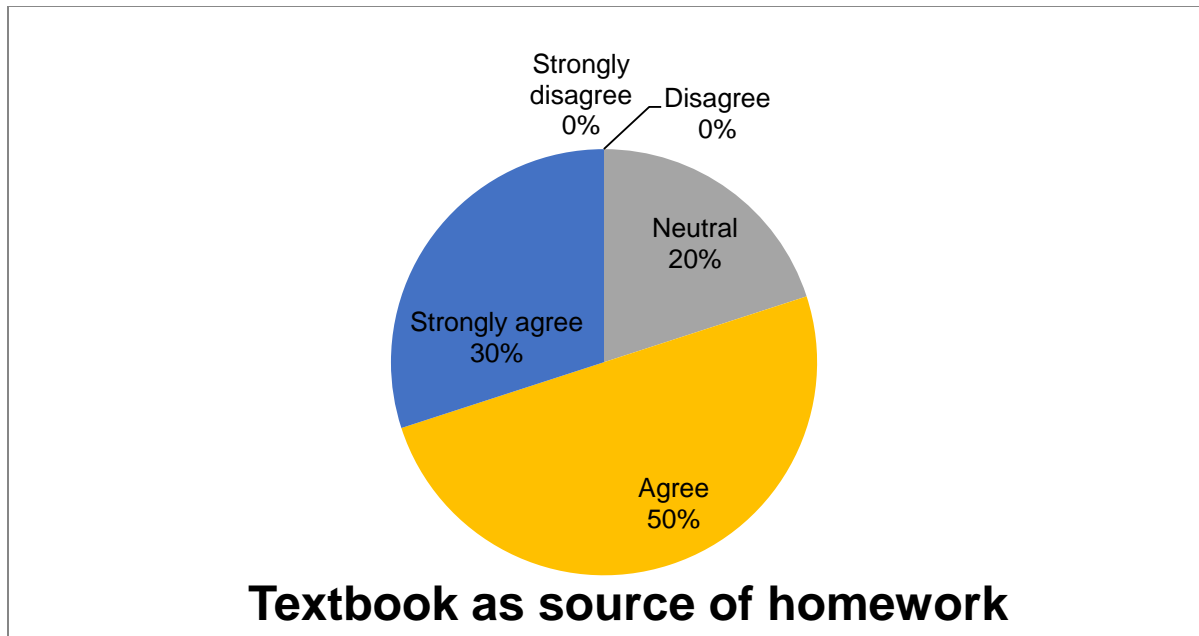
**Chart 3: The textbook serves as a source of assessment items**



Source: Author, 2024

To statement 3 (*The textbook serves as a source of assessment items*), the majority of the respondents agreed (80%), and 20% of them stayed neutral, did not disclose their opinion towards it. This means that the teachers use the textbook as a source of homework activities for their students.

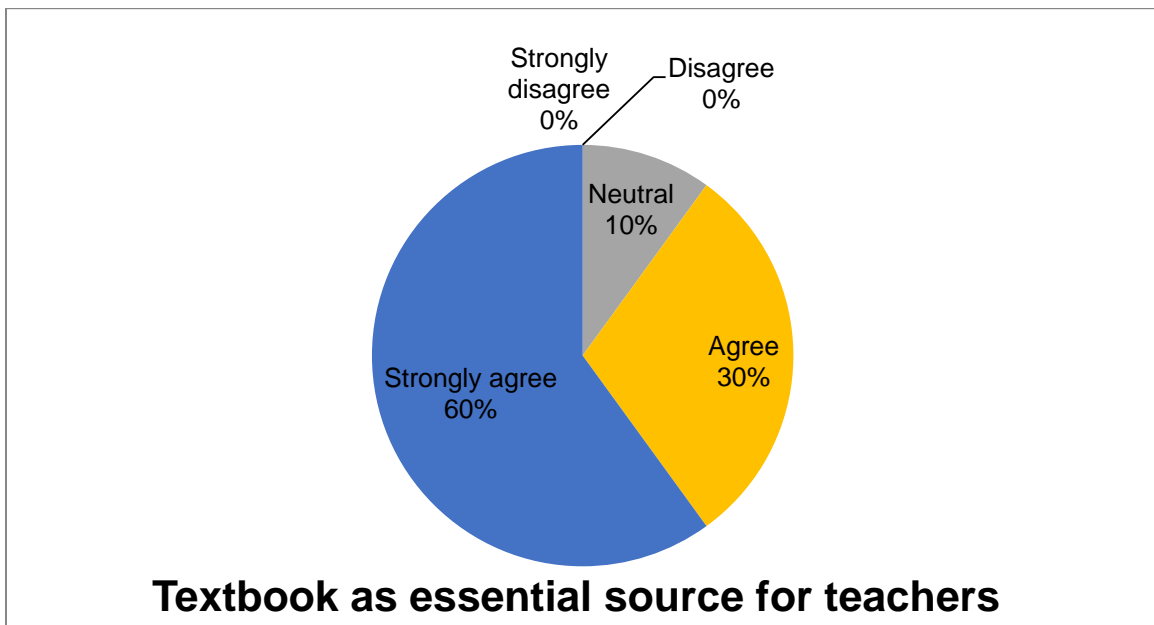
**Chart 4: The textbook serves as a source of homework**



Source: Author, 2024

To statement 4 (*The textbook serves as a source of homework*), 20% of the respondents stayed neutral, did not give their opinion towards the use of textbooks as a source of homework, and 80% agreed that they use the textbook as their source of homework activities. In other words, most teachers of English give their students homework based on the textbook.

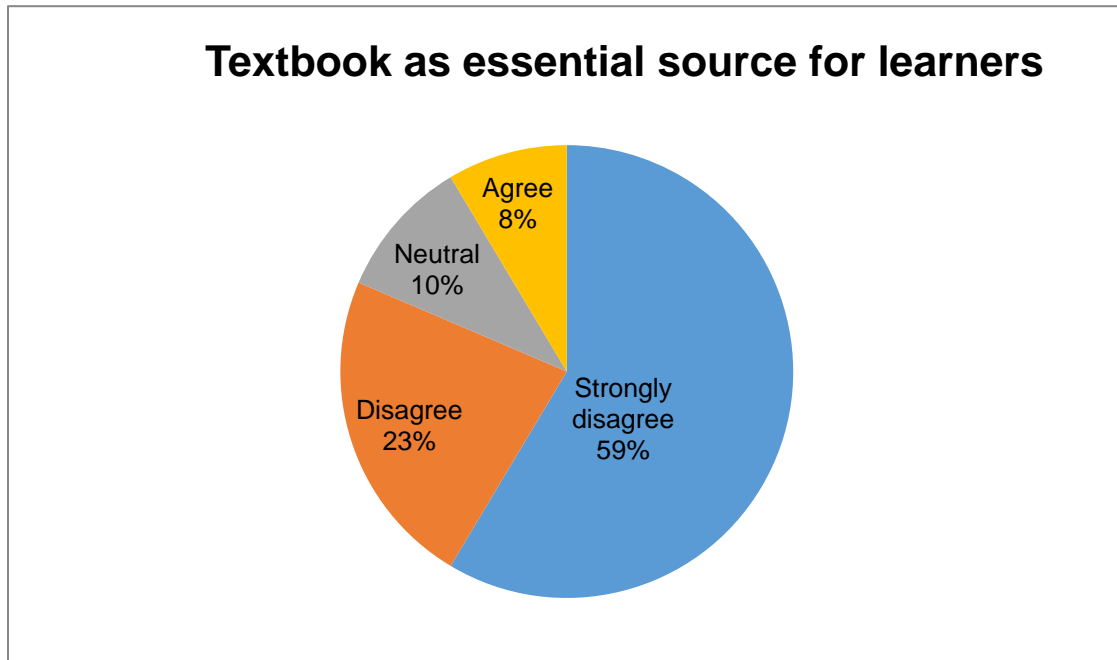
*Chart 5: The textbook serves as an essential source for teachers*



Source: Author, 2024

To statement 5 (*The textbook serves as an essential source for teachers*), 10% of the respondents stayed neutral, and 90% of them agreed that the most immediate material for their teaching is the student textbook. Almost every teacher considers the textbook to be their most important material for teaching English as a foreign language.

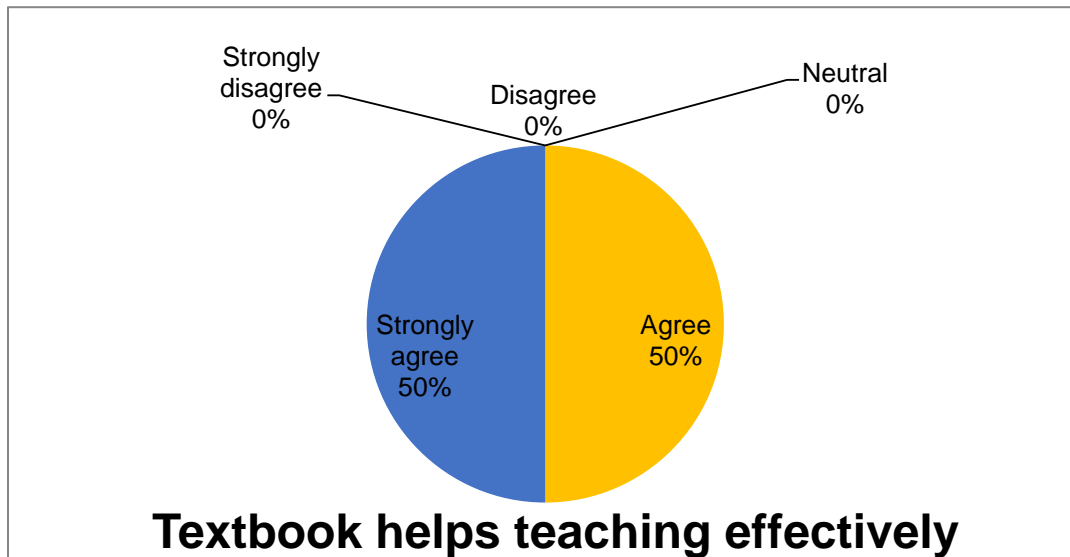
*Chart 6: The textbook serves as an essential source for learners*



**Source: Author, 2024**

To statement 6, (The textbook serves as an essential source for learners), all respondents (100%) agreed, meaning that the teaching of English cannot take place without the use of textbooks, because the learners will need it as their main source of language material.

**Chart 7: The textbook helps teachers to teach English effectively**



Source: Author, 2024

To statement 7 (*The textbook helps teachers to teach English effectively*), everyone in the study (100%) agreed – for them learning cannot take place effectively without a textbook. If no textbook is used, probably the teaching and learning of a language will not be significant.

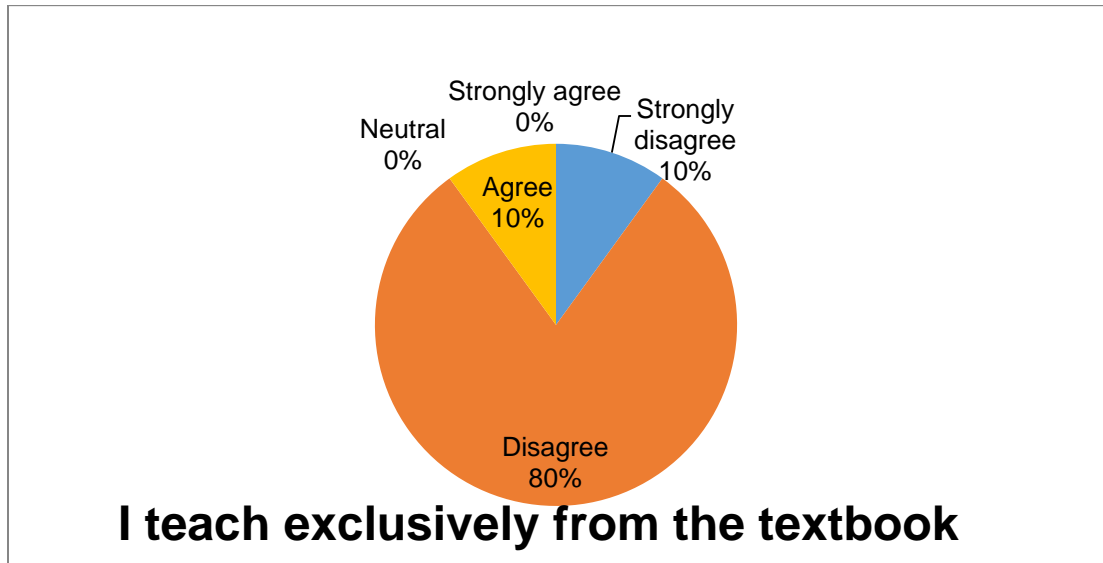
**Chart 8: I follow the sequences of contents provided in the textbook**



Source: Author, 2024

To statement 8 (*I follow the sequence of contents provided in the textbook*), 20% of the respondents disagreed, 60% of them stayed neutral, and 20% agreed. In short, the minority (20%) of the teachers follow the sequence of contents of the textbook they use, while most teachers do not follow that sequence, they prefer to select the contents according to various circumstances in the classroom and/or according to their students' needs.

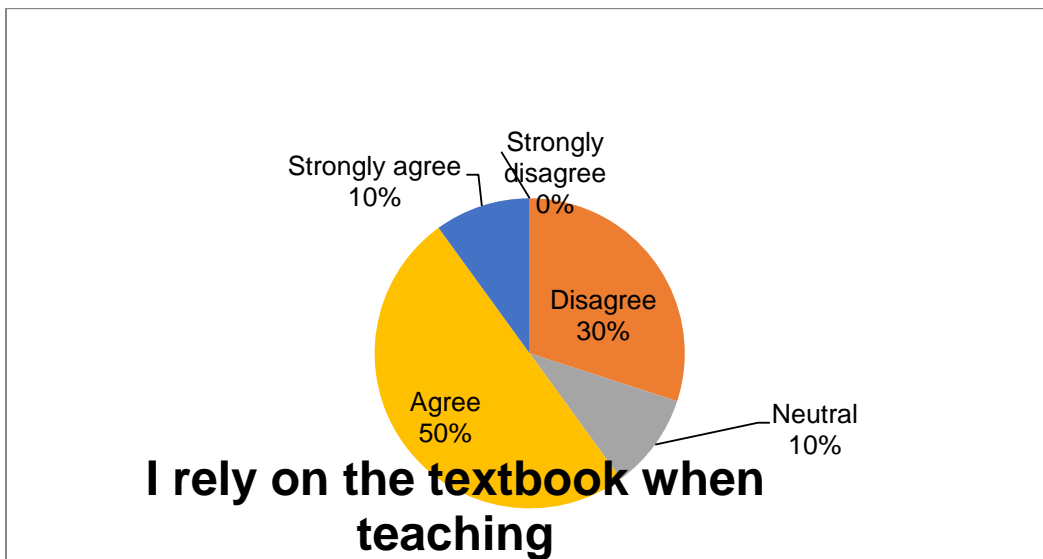
**Chart 9: I teach exclusively from the textbook**



Source: Author, 2024

To statement 9 (*I teach exclusively from the textbook*), 10% of the respondents agreed, and 90% of them disagreed, meaning that the textbook is not the only material they use for instruction in the classroom, they complement it with other materials they deem important for the learning process.

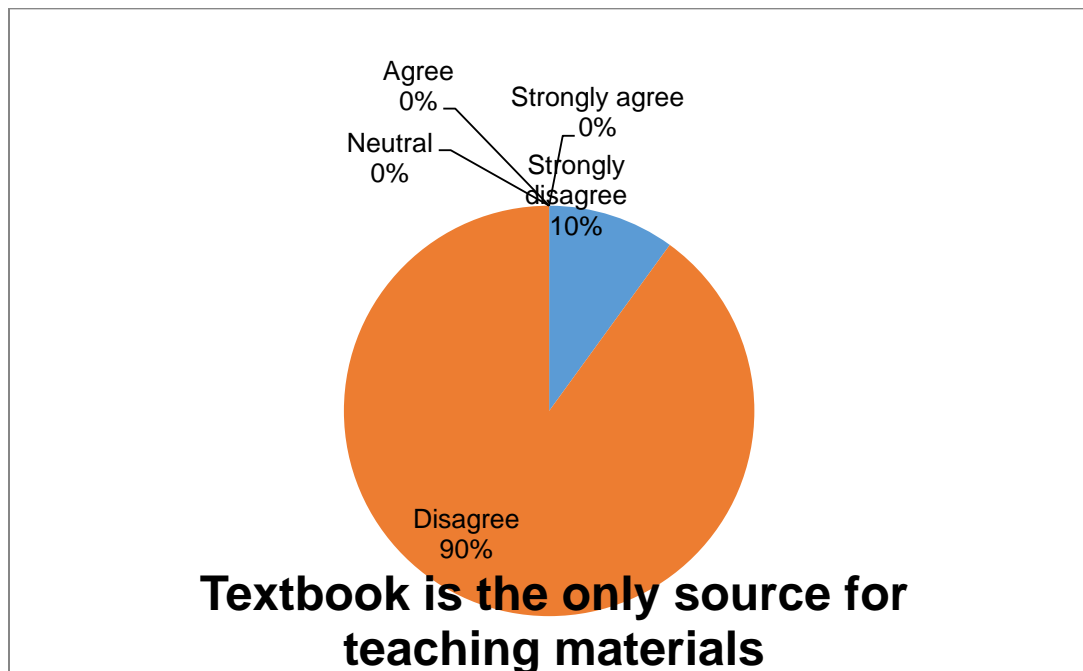
*Chart 10: I rely on the textbook when teaching*



Source: Author, 2024

To statement 10 (*I rely on the textbook when teaching*), 305 of the respondents disagreed, 10% did not give their opinion, and 60% agreed that they depend on the textbook for their teaching.

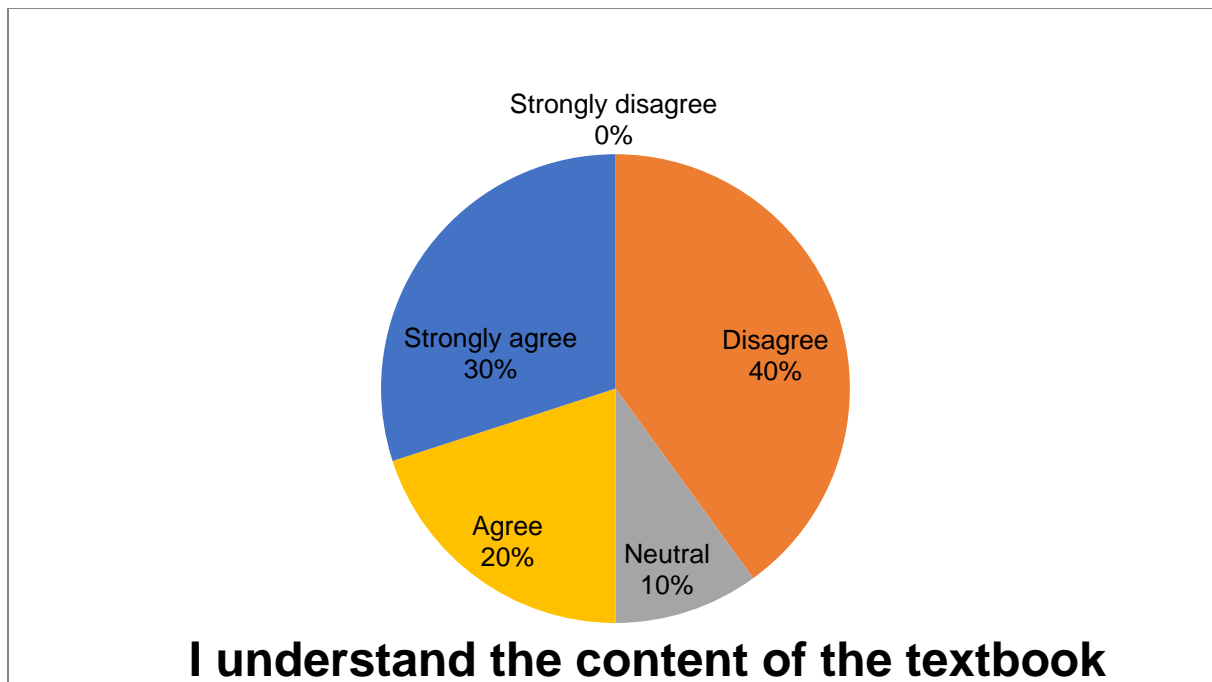
*Chart 11: I use the textbook as the only source for teaching materials*



Source: Author, 2024

To statement 11 (*I use the textbook as the only source for teaching materials*), all respondents (100%) disagreed, meaning that under no circumstance they use the textbook as the only source for teaching.

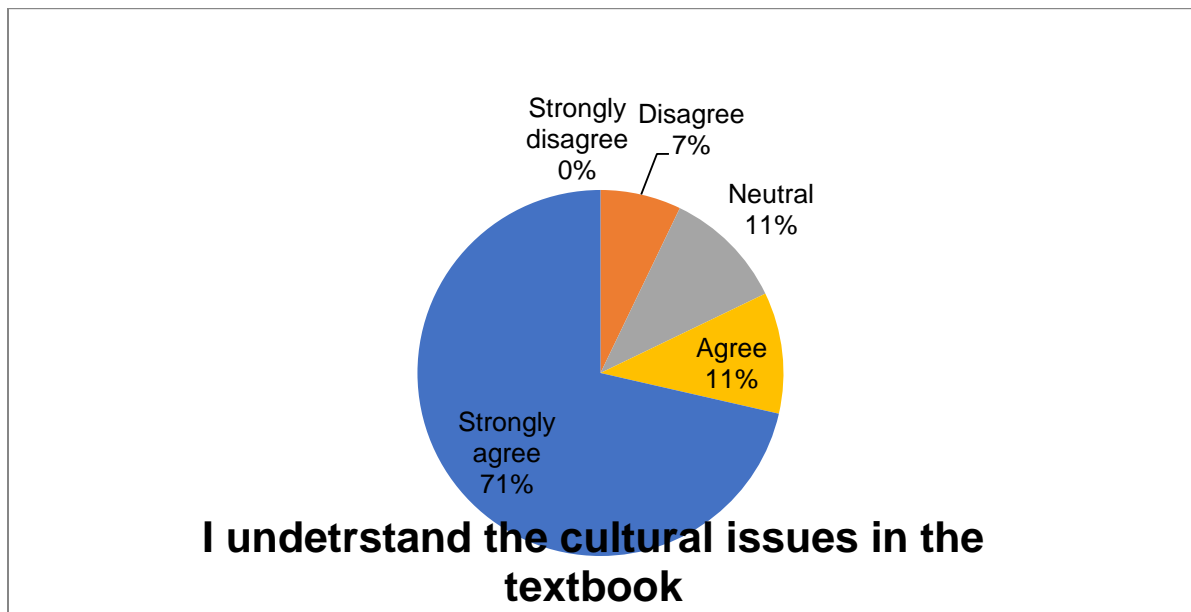
**Chart 12: I fully understand the content presented in the textbook**



Source: Author, 2024

To statement 12 (*I fully understand the content presented in the textbook*), 40% of the respondents disagreed, 50% of them agreed, and 10% stayed neutral. Opinions are divided when it comes to the understanding of the textbook contents. Not every teacher understands the contents in the textbook they use for teaching English.

**Chart 13: I fully understand cultural issues presented in the textbooks**



**Source: Author, 2024**

To statement 13 (*I fully understand cultural issues presented in the textbooks*), 20% of the study respondents disagreed, 30% of them stayed neutral, and 50% of the same agreed. Also in regards to the understanding of cultural issues on the part of teaching, opinions are divided, but the majority tends and tries to understand cultural aspects in the textbook they use in the classroom.

From the results shown above, it is comprehensible that teachers in general believe that the textbook is of paramount importance for their teaching to take place, as they use the textbook when planning lessons both as syllabus and as a source for classroom activities. This is in line with Richards's (2001) claims that "a textbook provides structure and a syllabus for a program," and that "a textbook provides a variety of learning resources".

Furthermore, looking at these results, it can be said that from being used both as syllabus and as source of learning activities, the textbook is an essential tool for both teachers and students because it provides them with assessment and homework items.

However, teachers seem not to teach exclusively from the textbook, according to the results obtained, rather they bring other materials to supplement it with. In any case, the textbook still constitutes the core teaching resource.

Also, the results show that most teachers do not understand all language and cultural contents presented in the textbook although they use it as their primary resource for teaching English to their learners. Despite the fact that the authors of the textbook in analysis claim to be knowledgeable of Mozambican cultural context, the teachers who use this textbook say that they do not fully understand the cultural issues present therein. This can be cause of concern, but for the purpose of this study, it won't be further analyzed.

### 3.2 Speaking activities in the textbook

The purpose of this study is to analyze the speaking activities presented in the textbook *Learning English: English Language Class 12*. The analysis of the research material is outlined in order to bring some light to the readers about the extent at which the textbook in question provide meaningful speaking activities and how these are effective to prepare learners to communicate in real-life situations.

**Table 1: Methodology of the textbook**

Textbook Evaluation Checklist		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
		4	3	2	1	0
<b>A. Methodology</b>						
i.	The textbook contents fit the syllabus.	X				
ii.	The aims of the textbook correspond closely with the aims of the teaching programme.					X
iii.	The aims of the teaching programme correspond with the needs of the learners.		X			
iv.	There are specific communicative aims or objectives indicated, either generally or in connection with individual units.					X

v.	There is reference to communicative methodology.				X	
vi.	The textbook claims to be communicative in its aims.					X

**Source: Cunningsworth (1995)**

The checklist shown above indicates that the textbook in analysis fits the syllabus for the level in terms of scope and sequence of contents from Unit 1 (Famous People and Idols) through Unit 15 (Life in 2025).

However, no aims are stated in the textbook, except in the Syllabus in terms of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. As for the speaking aims, the syllabus states that, by the end of the cycle, students should be able to:

- “Communicate with some confidence on familiar routines and non routines (sic) matters related to his or her interests;
- Exploit a wide range of simple language to deal with most situations likely to arise in everyday interactions;
- Enter unprepared into conversation;
- Express personal opinions and exchange information on topics that are familiar of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life.” (INDE/MINED, 2010, p. 10)

Since the contents are aligned in the syllabus and in the textbook, it could be said that it is a good match, and the aims of the syllabus are realized in the textbook. It could be understood as a form of aligning the aims of the syllabus with the learners’ needs, although it is not made explicit.

Again, the textbook has no reference nor does it claim to be communicative in its aims or methodology, in spite of the syllabus claiming so. The syllabus states “The balance of skills and activities in this grade should be 60 percent oracy (Listening and Speaking) and 40 percent writing (Reading and writing)” (INDE/MINED, 2010, p. 45).

In sum, it could be said that the textbook itself does not contain any aims at all nor does it claim to be communicative in its methodology and approach to English teaching, but it attempts to follow closely the aims, scope and sequence of contents presented in the syllabus. Taking into account that the syllabus tends to focus more on the spoken language than on the written one, it’s assumed that the textbooks also attempts to do so. But this fact will be confirmed or not by conducting a survey of all speaking activities in the textbook.

**Table 2: Speaking activities in the textbook**

Textbook Evaluation Checklist		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
		4	3	2	1	0
<b>B. Speaking activities</b>						
i.	There are interactive and task-based activities that require students to use new vocabulary to communicate.		X			
ii.	There are realistic activities that can promote the learning of communicative skills and strategies which are transferable to real-life communication.		X			
iii.	The speaking activities mirror real-life situations, through conversation, debate, discussion, and story-telling.		X			
iv.	There are elements of genuine communication:					X
	- unpredictability;					X
	- opportunities to express real information, feelings, opinions;					X
	- opportunities for learners to structure their own discourse;		X			
	- need to formulate and use communication strategies;				X	
	- emphasis on co-operation between speakers in communicative interaction.		X			
v.	There is emphasis on spoken English in the textbook.		X			
vi.	There are specific strategies for conversation or other spoken activities, e.g. debating, giving talks.		X			
vii.	There is material for speaking in the textbook, such as oral presentation and practice of language items; dialogues; and role-plays.		X			
viii.	The material for spoken English (dialogues, role-plays, etc.) is well designed to prepare learners for real-life interactions.				X	
ix.	The textbook presents authentic material at an appropriate level.				X	
x.	The activities are balanced between individual response, pair work and group work.		X			
xi.	The activities are developed to initiate meaningful communication.		X			

xii. There are conversational strategies for the students to use in real-life situations (repair, turn-taking, discourse markers).					X
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**Source: Cunningsworth (1995)**

After surveying the textbook in order to provide answers to the checklist, the speaking activities contained in the textbook were surveyed. Out of a total of 88 speaking activities spread across 15 learning units, 51 of them (equivalent to 58.95%) are interactive and task-based, prompting students to work either in pairs or in groups for the achievement of a certain learning goal, such as preparing a report of activities, a presentation, or a speech.

With this survey, it was seen that 49 speaking activities, equivalent to 55.68% “are realistic activities” and they can “promote the learning of communicative skills and strategies which are transferable to real-life communication” (Cunningsworth, 1995, p. 118). For example, one of these sorts of activities prompts students to work in groups and write a speech pretending to be a political party representative.

Out of 88 speaking activities contained in the textbook, it was observed that 63 of them, equivalent to 71.59%, mirror real-life situations through discussions, debates and conversations, although there is no reference to story-telling activities performed in the classroom.

Going through the textbook, no evidence of speaking activities with “elements of genuine communication, such as unpredictability, opportunities to express real information, feelings, opinions”, and the “need to formulate and use communication strategies” (Cunningsworth, 1995, p. 129). However, students are given the opportunities to structure their own discourse in most of the activities (63.23%), and emphasis on co-operation between speakers in communicative interaction, with 62.17% of the said 88 speaking activities contained in the textbook.

As observed earlier, surely there is emphasis on spoken English in the textbook, since each unit starts with a speaking activity before the introduction of the main aspect to be

studied in it. For example, the minimum number of speaking activities in each unit is 3 (unit 6) and the maximum is 10 (unit 4), with other units having at 4 to 5 activities.

Although in small amount (41.20% of the activities in the textbook), it can be said that there are specific strategies for conversation or other spoken activities, such as debating and giving talks.

Surely, there is material for speaking in the textbook, such as oral presentation and practice of language items, dialogues, and role-plays. This could be observed in 59 activities, which is equivalent to 67.04%.

As seen, there are plenty speaking activities in the textbook, but just a few of them (41 out of 88) are well designed with clear instructions on how to be completed, so it can't be said that this material will prepare learners for real-life interaction.

In fact, there are some authentic materials in the textbook, such as news articles and job postings, but they are very few (about 16.32%) and it is not clear if they were truly taken from real newspapers or they were just made for the purpose of teaching. In such a case, they can't be called authentic.

Clearly, the speaking "activities in the textbook are balanced between individual response, pair work and group work" (Cunningsworth, 1995, p. 129). It was observed that 72 out of 88 speaking activities (81.81%) are designed in such a way that some demand individual work, and others are done either in pairs or in small groups.

The activities are developed to initiate meaningful communication, and most of them (69.78%) encourage students to interact in order to perform a task. It is though these interactions and dialogues among the students that communication is initiated and developed.

In terms of specific speaking strategies, the textbook contains only a few activities with conversational strategies for the students to use in real-life situations, such as repair strategies, turn-taking strategies, and discourse markers. Out of 88 speaking activities, it

could be seen that 3 of them, equivalent to 03.40%, encourage students to use discourse markers in their classroom interactions.

To sum up this part, looking at the results above, it can be said that the textbook in analysis presents speaking activities that are interactive, realistic and task-based in order to promote communication among students. These activities mirror real-life situations, such as conversation, debate, discussion, and story-telling), and they give students opportunities to structure their own discourse, which will overall help learners improve their English speaking skills. Furthermore, among the activities there is always emphasis on co-operation, as it could be seen that most of the tasks required students to work collectively, so that the students build interaction in their communication to achieve a goal. Also, the speaking activities presented in the textbook are “balanced between individual response, pair work and group work” (Cunningsworth, 1995, p. 129) in a way that they can initiate meaning communication among the students.

Nevertheless, also looking at the results above, it could be observed that the speaking activities contained in the textbook lack “elements of genuine communication, such as unpredictability, opportunities to express real information, feelings and opinions”, and the “need to formulate and use communication strategies” (Cunningsworth, 1995, p. 129). In this textbook there are no enough conversation strategies for the students to use in real-life situations – hence the lack of opportunities to formulate and use communications strategies. Also, there is no enough authentic material for the students to practice, and the material for spoken English is not well designed to prepare students for real-life interactions – some of the speaking activities lack clarity when it comes to instructions of what the students are specifically expected to do in the classroom.

### **3.3. Cross analysis by other teachers**

As said earlier, two other teachers who work in the same school as the researcher were asked to provide their own review of the textbook in analysis. They were given the same textbook and the same checklist.

In terms of methodology underlying the textbook, both teachers agreed that the textbook fits the syllabus (statement A i.), and that “the aims of the textbook correspond closely with the aims of the teaching program” (statement A ii.) (Cunningsworth, 1995). They both disagreed that “the aims of the teaching program correspond with the needs of the learners” (A iii.) (Cunningsworth, 1995). One of them agreed that there are “specific communicative aims or objectives indicated, either generally or in connection with individual units” (A iv.) (Cunningsworth, 1995, p. 118), while the other one disagreed. Also, one agreed that in the textbook there is “reference to communicative methodology” (A v.) (Cunningsworth, 1995), and that the textbook claims to be communicative in its aims (A vi.), while the other one disagreed.

As seen above, opinions converge in regards to statements A i., A v. and A vi. Here everyone agrees that the textbook fits the syllabus (statement A i.). And one of the teachers and the researcher find that there is no reference to communicative methodology in the textbook (statement A v.) and that the textbook does not claim to be communicative in its aims (A vi.). However, opinions diverge when it comes to statements Aii, Aiii, and Aiv. The researcher agreed that the aims of the teaching program correspond with the needs of the learners (A iii.), while the invited teachers disagree with this statement. And the researcher disagrees that “the aims of the textbook correspond closely with the aims of the teaching program” (A ii.) (Cunningsworth, 1995) and that there are “specific communicative aims or objectives indicated, either generally or in connection with individual units” (A iv.) (Cunningsworth, 1995, p. 118), while the other teachers agree.

In terms of the effectiveness of speaking activities found in the textbook, the invited teachers have different opinions when it comes to the existence of “interactive and task-based activities that requires students to use new vocabulary to communicate” (statement Bi.) (Cunningsworth, 1995); the existence of “realistic activities that can promote the learning of communicative skills and strategies which are transferable to real-life communication” (Bii.) (Cunningsworth, 1995); that the “material for spoken English is well designed to prepare learners for real-life interactions” (Bviii.) (Cunningsworth, 1995); that the textbook presents authentic material at an appropriate level (Bix.); and that there are conversational strategies

for the students to use in real-life situations (Bxii.). However, they converge in opinion in regards to other seven statements. Both these teachers agree that

- the speaking activities mirror real-life situations, through conversation, debate, discussion, and story-telling (Biii.);
- there are elements of genuine communication (Biv.)
- there is emphasis on spoken English in the textbook (Bv.);
- there are specific strategies for the conversation or other spoke activities such as debating and giving talks (Bvi.);
- there is material for speaking in the textbook, such as oral presentation and practice of ;language items, dialogues and role-plays (Bvii.);
- the activities are balanced between individual response, pair work and group work (Bx.); and that
- the activities are developed to initiate meaningful communication (Bxi.)

As it can be seen, the researchers view is fully refuted by the other teachers in one out of twelve instances (8.33%). Those teachers agree to the statement Bvi. (there are elements of genuine communication), while the researcher disagrees.

However, the researcher is backed by both teachers in six out of twelve (50%) and by one of them in five out of twelve (41.66%). All together, the researcher is supported in his opinion in 11 statements out of 12 (91.66%). This is to say that the researcher's analysis is supported by other teachers who used the same checklist to study the textbook in review.

### **3.4. Limitations of the study**

Along the research some limitations were encountered, which could affect the results and conclusions of this study. Among these limitations the lack of time and resources can be pointed, which did not allow involving more teachers to participate in the research with their perceptions towards the importance of textbooks in language learning and teaching and with their cross analysis of the textbook in review. If more teachers were involved, the results could be more accurate, although the present results serve as a mirror of future studies.

Through the survey of speaking activities in the textbook and through analysis of the same against the checklist, it was observed that this textbook can safely be used to improve students' speaking skills, since it emphasises speaking tasks over other skills, but in this study it was not seen in practice how teachers use the book in the classroom. It could have been interesting to observe the textbook being used in the classroom by the teachers and students.

Moreover, in the field it was observed that there is no teacher's book for this level. It could be useful if the teachers had a teacher's guide or book to pair the textbook with in their teaching job.

## **Chapter 05: Conclusion**

In this last section of the study some final considerations are stated and some recommendations are given.

### **4.1 Final considerations**

This research explored the effectiveness of the speaking activities contained in the grade 12 students' book in use in Mozambique with the aim of determining whether this material can be relied upon when it comes to promote students' ability to communicate orally.

To that end, five questions were posed, namely “Does the textbook contain meaningful speaking activities?”; “Do the activities in the textbook promote communication among students?”; “Do the activities in the textbook promote communication between students and the teacher?”; “What relative weight is afforded to speaking activities in the textbook?”; and “Do the activities promote fluency and accuracy?”.

The results show that the textbook does contain meaningful speaking activities, where students are given a task “to complete and that the students should want to complete it” (Harmer, 1998, p. 87), and these activities really promote communication among students through debate, role-play, discussion, simulation, and dialogue, while promoting communication between students and the teacher. Also, the results show that speaking is given more emphasis in the textbook, just like the syllabus states “The balance of skills and activities in this grade should be 60 percent oracy (Listening and Speaking) and 40 percent writing (Reading and Writing)” (INDE/MINED, 2010, p. 45). As for the last question, it could be observed that the textbook promotes fluency through the speaking activities surveyed in it, but it was closely examined whether they also promote accuracy since the focus was on fluency.

According to the results obtained through the survey of speaking activities in the textbook analyzed against the checklist, it can be said that this textbook can safely be used in the classrooms by the teachers to promote oral communication among their students. However, it would be necessary to implement some changes to some of the speaking

activities of this particular textbook, to adapt them in terms of specific instructions about what the students should really be doing in the classroom. For instance, in Unit 1, Lesson 1, there is an activity that prompts students to speak about a famous person in the continent (Nelson Mandela), but no further instructions are given to the students, there are just some questions for the students to answer. It is not stated how the students will be grouped nor how will they speak about this person. Again, probably this drawback could be surpassed if the textbook was accompanied by a teacher's guide, which does not exist. Furthermore, it could be seen that the textbook lacks conversational strategies, such as repair and turn-taking strategies, which would be useful for the students in real life situations.

#### **4.2. Recommendations**

To the publisher of this textbook it is recommended that:

- a) A teacher's guide is produced in order to help them when planning to practice speaking skills with their students in the classroom;
- b) Future editions include clear instructions given to the students to practice speaking in order to promote oral communication among them; and
- c) More specific strategies for conversation are included in future editions of this textbook.

To the teachers it is recommended that;

- a) They can safely use this textbook if they want their students to be able to communicate orally in English;
- b) The speaking activities present in this textbook should be further adapted to suit specific students' needs, especially when it comes to the adequacy of authentic materials and conversation strategies.

To researchers it is recommended that further studies are carried out in large scale in order to determine what and how teaching materials in use in Mozambique can be improved. This would also determine what other factors can impact the students to fail to communicate after finishing their secondary studies.

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## Appendix 1: Questionnaire

### Teachers' Perceptions toward English Textbooks (from Martins, 2013)

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	4	3	2	1	0
<b>Roles of textbook</b>					
1. The textbook serves as a syllabus.					
2. The textbook helps planning daily instruction.					
3. The textbook serves as a source of assessment items.					
4. The textbook serves as a source of homework.					
5. The textbook serves as an essential source for teachers.					
6. The textbook serves as an essential source for learners.					
7. The textbook helps teachers to teach English effectively.					
<b>Teachers' perceptions towards textbook</b>					
8. I follow the sequences of contents provided in the textbook.					
9. I teach exclusively from the textbook.					
10. I rely on the textbook when teaching.					
11. I use the textbook as the only source for teaching materials.					
12. I fully understand the content presented in the textbook.					
13. I fully understand cultural issues presented in the textbooks.					

**Appendix 2: Checklist (from Cunningsworth, 1995)**

Textbook Evaluation Checklist		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
		4	3	2	1	0
<b>A. Methodology</b>						
vii.	The textbook contents fit the syllabus.					
viii.	The aims of the textbook correspond closely with the aims of the teaching programme.					
ix.	The aims of the teaching programme correspond with the needs of the learners.					
x.	There are specific communicative aims or objectives indicated, either generally or in connection with individual units.					
xi.	There is reference to communicative methodology.					
xii.	The textbook claims to be communicative in its aims.					
<b>B. Speaking activities</b>						
xiii.	There are interactive and task-based activities that require students to use new vocabulary to communicate.					
xiv.	There are realistic activities that can promote the learning of communicative skills and strategies which are transferable to real-life communication.					
xv.	The speaking activities mirror real-life situations, through conversation, debate, discussion, and story-telling.					
xvi.	There are elements of genuine communication:					
	- unpredictability;					
	- opportunities to express real information, feelings, opinions;					
	- opportunities for learners to structure their own discourse;					
	- need to formulate and use communication strategies;					
	- emphasis on co-operation between speakers in communicative interaction.					
xvii.	There is emphasis on spoken English in the textbook.					
xviii.	There are specific strategies for conversation or other spoken activities, e.g. debating, giving talks.					
xix.	There is material for speaking in the textbook, such as oral presentation and practice of language items; dialogues; and role-plays.					
xx.	The material for spoken English (dialogues, role-plays, etc.) is well designed to prepare learners for real-life interactions.					

xxi.	The textbook presents authentic material at an appropriate level.				
xxii.	The activities are balanced between individual response, pair work and group work.				
xxiii.	The activities are developed to initiate meaningful communication.				
xxiv.	There are conversational strategies for the students to use in real-life situations (repair, turn-taking, discourse markers).				

## Annex A: Researcher's Checklist

My Checklist

Textbook Evaluation Checklist		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
		4	3	2	1	0
<b>A. Methodology</b>						
i.	The textbook contents fit the syllabus.	X				
ii.	The aims of the textbook correspond closely with the aims of the teaching programme.					X
iii.	The aims of the teaching programme correspond with the needs of the learners.		X			
iv.	There are specific communicative aims or objectives indicated, either generally or in connection with individual units.					X
v.	There is reference to communicative methodology.				X	
vi.	The textbook claims to be communicative in its aims.					X
<b>B. Speaking activities</b>						
i.	There are interactive and task-based activities that require students to use new vocabulary to communicate.		X			
ii.	There are realistic activities that can promote the learning of communicative skills and strategies which are transferable to real-life communication.		X			
iii.	The speaking activities mirror real-life situations, through conversation, debate, discussion, and story-telling.		X			
iv.	There are elements of genuine communication:					X
	- unpredictability;					X
	- opportunities to express real information, feelings, opinions;					X
	- opportunities for learners to structure their own discourse;		X			
	- need to formulate and use communication strategies;				X	
	- emphasis on co-operation between speakers in communicative interaction.		X			
v.	There is emphasis on spoken English in the textbook.		X			
vi.	There are specific strategies for conversation or other spoken activities, e.g. debating, giving talks.		X			
vii.	There is material for speaking in the textbook, such as oral presentation and practice of language items; dialogues; and role-plays.		X			
viii.	The material for spoken English (dialogues, role-plays, etc.) is well designed to prepare learners for real-life interactions.				X	
ix.	The textbook presents authentic material at an appropriate level.				X	
x.	The activities are balanced between individual response, pair work and group work.		X			

Designed by the author

xi.	The activities are developed to initiate meaningful communication.	X			
xii.	There are conversational strategies for the students to use in real-life situations (repair, turn-taking, discourse markers).				X

Designed by the author

## Annex B: Teacher 1 Checklist

My Checklist

Textbook Evaluation Checklist		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
		4	3	2	1	0
<b>A. Methodology</b>						
i.	The textbook contents fit the syllabus.		X			
ii.	The aims of the textbook correspond closely with the aims of the teaching programme.		X			
iii.	The aims of the teaching programme correspond with the needs of the learners.				X	
iv.	There are specific communicative aims or objectives indicated, either generally or in connection with individual units.				X	
v.	There is reference to communicative methodology.		X			
vi.	The textbook claims to be communicative in its aims.	X				
<b>B. Speaking activities</b>						
i.	There are interactive and task-based activities that require students to use new vocabulary to communicate.	X				
ii.	There are realistic activities that can promote the learning of communicative skills and strategies which are transferable to real-life communication.		X			
iii.	The speaking activities mirror real-life situations, through conversation, debate, discussion, and story-telling.		X			
iv.	There are elements of genuine communication:				X	
	- unpredictability;					
	- opportunities to express real information, feelings, opinions;		X			
	- opportunities for learners to structure their own discourse;		X			
	- need to formulate and use communication strategies;		X			
	- emphasis on co-operation between speakers in communicative interaction.		X			
v.	There is emphasis on spoken English in the textbook.	X				
vi.	There are specific strategies for conversation or other spoken activities, e.g. debating, giving talks.		X			
vii.	There is material for speaking in the textbook, such as oral presentation and practice of language items; dialogues; and role-plays.		X			
viii.	The material for spoken English (dialogues, role-plays, etc.) is well designed to prepare learners for real-life interactions.		X			
ix.	The textbook presents authentic material at an appropriate level.		X			
x.	The activities are balanced between individual response, pair work and group work.		X			

Designed by the author

xi.	The activities are developed to initiate meaningful communication.	P-33				
xii.	There are conversational strategies for the students to use in real-life situations (repair, turn-taking, discourse markers).	P-27				

Designed by the author

## Annex C: Teacher 2 Checklist

### My Checklist

Textbook Evaluation Checklist		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
		4	3	2	1	0
<b>A. Methodology</b>						
i.	The textbook contents fit the syllabus.		X			
ii.	The aims of the textbook correspond closely with the aims of the teaching programme.		X			
iii.	The aims of the teaching programme correspond with the needs of the learners.					X
iv.	There are specific communicative aims or objectives indicated, either generally or in connection with individual units.		X			
v.	There is reference to communicative methodology.				X	
vi.	The textbook claims to be communicative in its aims.				X	
<b>B. Speaking activities</b>						
i.	There are interactive and task-based activities that require students to use new vocabulary to communicate.				X	
ii.	There are realistic activities that can promote the learning of communicative skills and strategies which are transferable to real-life communication.				X	
iii.	The speaking activities mirror real-life situations, through conversation, debate, discussion, and story-telling.		X			
iv.	There are elements of genuine communication:					
	- unpredictability;			X		
	- opportunities to express real information, feelings, opinions;		X			
	- opportunities for learners to structure their own discourse;		X			
	- need to formulate and use communication strategies;		X			
	- emphasis on co-operation between speakers in communicative interaction.		X			
v.	There is emphasis on spoken English in the textbook.	X				
vi.	There are specific strategies for conversation or other spoken activities, e.g. debating, giving talks.		X			
vii.	There is material for speaking in the textbook, such as oral presentation and practice of language items; dialogues; and role-plays.		X			
viii.	The material for spoken English (dialogues, role-plays, etc.) is well designed to prepare learners for real-life interactions.					X
ix.	The textbook presents authentic material at an appropriate level.				X	
x.	The activities are balanced between individual response, pair work and group work.	X				

Designed by the author

xi. The activities are developed to initiate meaningful communication.		X			
xii. There are conversational strategies for the students to use in real-life situations (repair, turn-taking, discourse markers).					X

Designed by the author

## Annex D: Answers to the questionnaire

Questionnaire: Teachers' Perceptions toward English Textbooks (from Srakang & Jansem)

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	4	3	2	1	0
<b>Roles of textbook</b>					
1. The textbook serves as a syllabus.		X			
2. The textbook helps planning daily instruction.		X			
3. The textbook serves as a source of assessment items.		X			
4. The textbook serves as a source of homework.			X		
5. The textbook serves as an essential source for teachers.		X			
6. The textbook serves as an essential source for learners.		X			
7. The textbook helps teachers to teach English effectively.	X				
<b>Teachers' perceptions towards textbook</b>					
8. I follow the sequences of contents provided in the textbook.			X		
9. I teach exclusively from the textbook.				X	
10. I rely on the textbook when teaching.			X		
11. I use the textbook as the only source for teaching materials.				X	
12. I fully understand the content presented in the textbook.				X	
13. I fully understand cultural issues presented in the textbooks.			X		

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<b>Teachers' perceptions towards textbook</b>					
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