

**English Textbooks for P4 & P5  
from East African Educational Publishers  
and Oxford University Press  
and the  
New Competence Based Curriculum**



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## **Textbooks for P4 and P5 and the New Competence Based Curriculum**

The textbooks I have acquired are 'Success English for Rwandan Schools Primary 4' from East African Educational Publishers, and 'Explore English for Rwanda Schools Primary 5' from Oxford University Press.

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### **Context:**

The new competence-based curriculum came into effect in January 2016.

No textbooks were available to schools in support of the new curriculum for the whole of 2016.

In January 2017 textbooks were available for teaching P1 and P4. In early 2017 textbooks for the next phase, being P2 and P5, were available.

Set out below are my observations and comments on the approved textbooks 'Success English for Rwandan Schools', Pupil's Book for Primary 4 from **East African Educational Publishers**, and 'Explore English for Rwanda Schools' Learner's Book and Teacher's Guide for Primary 5 from **Oxford University Press**. The latter books have been produced in South Africa, and it appears to be, in part, an adaptation of a book written previously. These are the textbooks most used currently in the schools according to information from distributors and REB.

The textbooks are, of course, required to follow the curriculum, and so my observations and comments whilst directed at the textbooks are also a commentary on the curriculum.

I have spent 22 years working in the primary education sector in Tanzania, for which I was awarded an MBE. I have now spent over ten months working in government primary schools in Gasabo District. My first career was as a lawyer, and my first degree and post-graduate studies were in law. I have qualifications and many years' experience as a teacher of English as a foreign language. From all of my experience my command of the English language and my ability to analyse it and to teach it is of a high standard.

### **Background:**

#### ***The pupil and the curriculum***

The pupils who use these books for the first three or four years, will not have studied under the new Competence Based Curriculum (CBC) from P1. They will have met the new CBC in, respectively, P4, P3 and P2. However, as the textbooks for P1 and P4 were so late in getting to the schools in 2016, it might be more reasonable to assume that the P4 and P5 pupils in 2017 did not experience the CBC in 2016.

However, the present standard of English attained by the majority of P4 and P5 pupils is woefully low. They are mostly unable to form sentences. There appears to be little difference between the standard of written work and oral work. What is lacking is a firm grasp of the sentence structures that make up the English language. Many of those sentence structures are the tenses. Each tense has its specific use or meaning. Some tenses may overlap in general meaning or use, but each one does have its specific use or meaning. For instance, the two sentences, 'I am meeting Tom tomorrow' (the present continuous) and 'I am going to meet Tom tomorrow' (the 'going to' tense) can seem interchangeable in meaning, but the speaker, in his/her mind at the time of speaking, has a reason why s/he chooses one of the tenses.

Within each tense is its structure or formation. This involves knowing how to form the tense in its positive form, such as 'I am meeting Tom tomorrow'. Once that is grasped then the question form and negative form need to be grasped, as in 'Are you meeting Tom tomorrow?' and 'I am not meeting Tom tomorrow'.

The golden rule in teaching a foreign language to young learners is to introduce one thing at one time, and to practise that item until it is firmly grasped. That means that a new grammar structure should be introduced without any new vocabulary items; just one thing at one time.

***The Competence Based Curriculum for English***, as any curriculum for any subject, but especially for that of a foreign language, is akin to a marathon run. However, if the content is too ambitious then it can be akin to a prolonged sprint.

A fast pace can only be sustained for a limited period, before the breathing is affected and the muscles start to seize. Once that point is reached then there is no way of continuing. In a marathon, a steady pace is kept over a long distance and the breathing sustains. Once the half-way point is reached that success in itself wills the body to keep going, and completing the course is more than possible.

So, a curriculum requires a steady progression with content that is possible to grasp and master. If the content is beyond the level or ability of the pupils then it is as if the pupils are having to run an endured sprint. Once the level goes beyond the pupils' ability to keep up or to learn or understand any part of it, then the learner/runner is bending over gasping for breath and unable to run on. The marathon-sprint cannot be continued and the runner has to drop out. There is no success and no motivation or ability to continue. The problem then is how to re-train and start again, as rejoining the race is not an option.

### ***The teacher***

The concerns of the teacher must also be addressed. The teachers who teach English are, by very definition, primary school teachers. The Primary school maths teacher can only be expected to have ability in mathematics to a level a few grades higher than the level she or he is teaching. The Primary English teacher can, similarly, only be expected to have ability in English up to a certain level. No teacher in Primary can be expected to be the top in her/his subject – not a professor of mathematics and neither a fluent English speaker. However, for the Upper Primary teacher of English expectations do indeed abound that he/she has a fluent command of the English language. As this is not the case for the majority of Upper Primary English teachers, these unrealistic expectations only exacerbate the problems and the failures.

## ANALYSIS: P4

This analysis starts with 'Success English for Rwandan Schools Primary 4' from East African Educational Publishers. The Pupil's Book only has been made available to me, and there seems to be no Teacher's Guide available.

**Unit 1** follows the curriculum, and starts by looking at a school and talking about the pupils' own school, and then looks at a timetable, and there is a bar graph. The bar graph on page 1 uses the names of animals on the horizontal axis. If it is to know how many children have seen each animal then it seems out of context. As that same graph appears on page 90 it might well be an error to have it printed here on page 1.

The unit continues with a dialogue which uses the past simple tense, the present perfect tense, the present simple tense, and a question tag. This is advanced to use so many structures together in a short passage. From my experience the pupils do not understand these structures thoroughly, and I expect many will fail to understand their use in the dialogue.

The Activity A on page 3 has a glaring error. This should have been picked up during the textbook assessment. It is incorrect English. The question asked how many subjects are studied on a particular day. There are 8 lessons or periods on each day, and on that particular day there are two consecutive periods of English, and two consecutive periods of Social Studies. There are, therefore, 6 subjects studied on that day. The book gives the answer, '*We study eight subjects on Monday.*' This is wrong.

There is a similar mistake in Activity B on page 4 when the question is, '*How many lessons of Science do you have in a week? (three)*'. That is incorrect. There are 6 lessons of Science on the timetable. The fact they appear as three 'double lessons' makes no difference; the number of lessons is 6. These are very worrying mistakes as they show a total lack of understanding of the difference between 'subject' and 'lesson'. A quick look at a dictionary would clear up this lack of knowledge.

Activity B is easier than Activity A (as in B the answer is given in brackets) and so Activity B should appear before Activity A.

Towards the bottom of page 5 there is an advanced sentence, 'Why would you like your lessons for the day to be arranged like that?' This has the modal auxiliary 'would', the passive 'to be arranged', and a use of 'like' that is not verbal but is a preposition. Ironically this is followed on page 6 to 8 with very easy exercises using the present simple.

However, on page 7 there are more mistakes. All the children in the table like two subjects, apart from one child who likes only one subject. There is confusion on page 7 with the use of 'only'. Question 3 asks, '*Who likes Science and Maths only?*' which is not a natural use of 'only'. Question 5 is worse, '*Which pupil likes one subject each?*' (which makes no sense at all) and the answer to be completed is given as '           likes one subject only'. This would be better put as 'X likes only one subject'.

Again on page 7 there is another error, '*What subjects doesn't Galeta and Isaro like?*' The verb must be in the plural – 'What subjects don't Galeta and Isaro like?'

More errors occur on pages 8 and 9. On page 8 there is the sentence, *'I want to be a teacher after school.'* This is incorrect. 'After school' has the meaning of immediately after school hours on a particular day, or regularly. This sentence would have to be, 'I want to be a teacher when I leave school'. On page 9 there is the first of many of the same error, *'I would like to go to the university'*. As there is more than one university then 'the' cannot be used. Fluent English is, 'I would like to go to university' with no definite or indefinite adjective.

There is then an activity to read sentences which use 'who' as a relative pronoun.

There then follows a lot of practice of the present simple tense, mostly by gap-fill exercises but also in speaking activities.

On page 13 there is a new structure used, and I expect there is no guidance to the teacher: *'We play there when we are not learning.'* The use of 'when' as a conjunction should be taught. This is, in fact, done very well on page 61 in Unit 4. The introduction of 'when' should not appear here, but wait until it is taught in Unit 4.

The comparative structure is introduced. It is then used in an exercise to find out how long it takes pupils to get to school. However, the structure used is not consistent and leads to difficulty. First the question is *'How long do you take to get to school?'* whereas it would be advisable to repeat the structure learned in the P3 curriculum, and, indeed, the more fluent structure of 'How long does it take you to get to school?' There then follows a very clumsy question, *'Do you know what time other pupils take to get to school?'* Again, the structure should be consistent, as 'Do you know how long it takes other pupils to get to school?'

The table on page 15 is then used to introduce *'many, less, more than'*. However, the superlative is introduced without it being in its clearest form. The structure chosen is *'Pupils who take less than half an hour live closest to the school.'* It would be preferable to have used the usual form of **'the closest'**.

There then follow more confused exercises with errors on pages 16 and 17. The information, which is also represented in a bar graph, shows that 11 pupils take less than half an hour to get to school. All other pupils take longer than that. The sentence given as 'TRUE' is, *'Very few students take less than twenty minutes to get to school.'* Firstly, there is no information about this, and so, apart from knowing that 11 pupils get to school in under half an hour, we cannot know how many take **fewer** than twenty minutes. Secondly, you cannot use 'less' with a 'countable' plural noun. The sentence has to be *'.....take fewer than twenty minutes'*. This grammatical error is repeated.

In section D on *Language structures*, there is gap-fill exercise with no further context given. The correct form of the verb given in brackets must be put into the sentence. Number 4 is, 'They ..... like History. (do). I assume the textbook writer is looking for the negative form, 'they do not like History'. If a pupil writes 'They do like history' then it is not wrong, but will lead the teacher into difficulty, and s/he might not know about the emphatic use of 'do' in the positive form of the present simple tense.

The exercise on page 19 to fill gaps with 'some, much, many, few, a few, a lot of' is difficult, and I wonder if sufficient oral practice will be given before this written exercise. This seems

to be too much at once, and I expect this overload of difficult grammar items will lead to confusion, and that very little understanding and learning will take place. Although these were introduced in Unit 10 in P3, I expect that the pupils will need much more help in order to understand their use.

The reading and reading comprehension questions practise the present simple tense, and the level seems to be pitched suitably for P4 pupils.

Section F on page 20 is a word-search, and is one of three used in the book (the others are in Units 4 and 5). A word-search seems to have limited educational use, and can be very time-consuming. However, if the teacher is guided in helping the pupils to do the task, then it can be an exercise adding to their skills in logic.

Section G on page 21 is headed '*Write on*' and this is a section in every unit of the book. This heading is not helpful for learners of English.

In the Glossary on page 22 there are two typing errors which should have been corrected. In the definition of '*easy*' there is '*...done without **the** much effort*', and in the definition of '*graph*' there is '*....it shows how **to** sets of information are related*'.

**Comment:** My overall comment is that this Unit is intrinsically boring. Most pupils would rather not be at school, and so when they are there to have 28 English lessons focusing on school is not motivating.

The many errors do not help the learning process, and particularly they do nothing to support the teacher.

**Unit 2** unfortunately is not without errors. In the passage on page 25 it states, '*I visit different places during the weekends.*' Correct English is '**on**' or '**at**' the weekends. There is then the use of '*mostly*' in '*I mostly enjoy being in places I have never visited before.*' This is then misunderstood in question 3, '*What does Diane enjoy most?*'. '*Mostly*' is an adverb meaning, in this context, '*usually*' or '*generally*'. It does not mean that Diane '*most*' enjoys being in those places. '*Most*' is also an adverb and it has a different meaning. This is a serious error which will mislead teachers and pupils alike.

The narrative on page 26 contains more errors. In English, meals are not often '*taken*' but are '*had*' or '*eaten*'. So, the passage does not use very fluent English when it states, '*... and took my breakfast..... We took lunch....*'. It would be much better to say '*I had my breakfast*' or '*I ate my breakfast*'. The use of the word '*consisted of*' seems too formal in this context. There is always '*appropriacy*' of language to consider, and this verb is not appropriate here. It could be replaced by '*it was*' or '*I had*'.

In the next paragraph there is use of '*chicken*' when the text tells us that there are 100 chickens. The plural must be used. This is not a typing error, as it appears again on page 55 in Unit 4. There is an error in '*half past noon*'. That structure is rarely used, and most people say '*half past twelve*'. If the former version were to be used it would be '*half noon*'. The final mistake on this page is the use of '*them*' when it has nothing to which to refer; '*We cleaned the chicken house. We fed and watered them*'.

The reading on page 27 is the only really fun bit of text in the book, and I am sure the pupils will enjoy it. It is the telling of a dream about a carrot and a cucumber. There is a misuse of the word 'the', as '*The lady*' is mentioned when we have not read about her before. In this case it is not correct to use 'the', and it should be 'A lady'. The teachers and pupils have received no guidance or instruction on the use and meaning of 'the', and this will confuse them more.

The following exercise revises the expression of the future with the 'going to...' tense. This is a good activity, and yet the gap-fill exercise on page 29 has mistakes. The way the sentences, which are to be completed, are written forces the pupils to write, '*Shema is going to travel to Byumba on next month*' and, '*Ganza is going to visit his cousin on next weekend.*' In both sentences 'on' is incorrect, and the sentence is correct if 'on' is omitted. This error will cause confusion.

In the short text at the bottom of page 29 there is a nonsensical sentence, '*He has a long neck which makes him see far.*' There is another sentence which is judgmental, '*He is left-handed, but he has very good handwriting.*' The use of 'but' implies that being left-handed is disadvantageous for good handwriting.

The introduction of vocabulary to describe personalities is difficult. I wonder how the meaning will be conveyed to the pupils. If there is no guidance for the teachers then I expect some of the meanings might be lost if a direct translation is used.

In the short reading passage on page 31 there is very unnatural English in the sentence, '*She is the last born in her family.*' This phrase is much used in East Africa but it is very rarely used in English-English. The natural construction would be 'She is the youngest in her family.' As Unit 1 introduced the comparative and superlative structures, this could have been a good example of the use of the superlative. The last sentence in the passage is grammatically incorrect; '*I am more confident than her.*' It should be, 'I am more confident than she (is)'.

The substitution table on page 32 is a muddle, as the use of possessive adjectives makes it very hard to work out what is intended. However, all of the combinations could be correct; they might be a bit convoluted but they would be correct. Exercises at this level should be crystal clear, and leave the teacher and pupil in no doubt as to what is correct and incorrect.

An explanation of Comparatives is given on page 33. It also sets out the formation of the comparative forms. This is useful for the teacher and the pupils. However, there is then very little practice of the structures. The structure is used again in later Units, but it would be sound pedagogy to have more practice at this stage, and some practice with real objects or people rather than merely the textbook written activity.

The gap-fill exercise on page 33 using comparatives, has three sentences that are grammatically incorrect. The incorrect use of the object pronoun instead of the subject pronoun is a common mistake in spoken English. Correct English should be set out in a textbook. The incorrect form set out is '*He is taller than me.*' The correct form is 'He is taller than I am'. That sentence can be shortened to, 'He is taller than I', but in a learner's book the full, correct form should be presented and taught.

On page 35, and indeed elsewhere in the book (page 52, page 96, page 106, page 132, and page 147) there is an exercise of forming words from a root word. The words formed from the root word include verb forms and a noun form. For instance, 'walk, walks, walked, walking, walker'. This list would make more sense if there were some headings to guide the pupils. The pupils need to know that they are listing the present simple and/or infinitive form, the present simple third person singular, the present continuous form, the past simple form. The headings could be 'time markers' such as 'everyday, now, yesterday' etc. There ought to be included the past participle form, and the pupils should be aware that the noun form is indeed a noun, and has nothing to do with the verb form. However, in the root words given there is the verb 'attract' which does not have a noun form that tallies with 'walker' 'reader' and 'player'. Also the adjective 'happy' is included in the list of root words. This will lead to great confusion. Some pupils will merely copy from the example of 'walk, walker, walked, walking, walker' and will produce nonsense. Without more guidance this exercise would be a challenge for native speakers of the same age.

In the Glossary on page 36 there is another mistake; '*What one looks on the outside*'. This can either be 'what one looks like on the outside' or 'How one looks on the outside.' This is a common mistake with non-native speakers, and only one form should be introduced at one time. The latter form would be preferable as it avoids the word 'like' which, so far, the pupils know only as a verb.

**Comment:** My overall comment is that there are too many errors in this Unit for it to be a helpful learning tool. These errors should have been noticed before the book was approved for use.

There are too many new structures without sufficient practice in their use. New words are introduced, and again and again the rule of 'one thing at one time' is ignored. The pupils may well not be able to keep up with the load of structures and words.

**Unit 3** opens with attractive pictures and photographs. The first *Practice Activity* is to fill in missing letters in the names of places. However, number 2 is printed as, 'p - - - off-c-' This gives the impression that 'post office' is one word. This is an important point, as there is a great tendency for pupils not to leave sufficient space between words. This mistake will exacerbate that problem.

The dialogue that follows on page 39 uses 'like' in its American form, which is not correct English. Throughout the book this mis-use of 'like' prevails. In this sentence, '*You look like you are all set to travel*' is incorrect. It should be 'as if', and that would also avoid any confusion with the pupils who know 'like' to be a verb. The use of '*all set*' is unnecessary to be introduced, and 'are ready' would be easier for the pupils to understand. Further on in the dialogue the following is written, '*How long is the journey going to take?... I take about 2 hours*'. This is incorrect, and the answer should be, 'It takes about 2 hours'.

In section C '*Language Use*' on page 40 the superlative form is used twice, but each use is not a very clear example of the meaning of the superlative for learners. The first use is '*It is the fourth largest town..*', and the second use is, '*The nearest towns are....*'. The introduction to the use of the superlative should show clearly the meaning of one thing which stands out from the rest.

The *Practice Activity* on page 41 uses 'water body' to mean a body of water. Waterbody (one word) means a body of water. As two separate words it means a living thing in water. This is used many times in the book. As this is a textbook for language learners, it might be better just to use 'lake or river'.

*Talking about population*, on page 41 I have seen taught. The questions, e.g. 'How many people live in Byumba?' invite the giving of the numbers, without full sentences being used. The exercise is then one of saying large numbers in English.

The use of the word 'facilities' on page 41 and in many other instances in this Unit, is a new 'jargon' word. The word 'place' or 'public places' would teach the pupils better English and would have proper meaning.

The same map, used three times, on pages 42, 43 and 45, is too small to be able to see clearly, and the colours hinder the ability to read the words. The questions asked about the map are muddled. For example, 'Where is the petrol station? It is on .....Street' where, in fact, the petrol station is on an unmarked street. On page 46 there is reference to a 'grocery shop' and on page 47 there is reference to 'the library', and neither of those places appears on the map. This will cause great confusion, and this should have been picked up by editors and those assessing the book.

In 'Talking about transport' at the bottom of page 43 there is the use of 'one', 'The fastest one is transport by air'. This is a new structure and should have some special teaching time allotted to it. It is a structure used a lot in English, and it needs to be introduced and taught.

On page 48 there is the heading 'Gerunds' with the explanation, 'A gerund is a word that ends with -ing.' That is a very inaccurate sentence. 'Wing, sing, boring, bring, trifling, harrowing', are all words which end in '-ing' but none of them is a gerund. This is a terrible way to introduce the gerund to learners. If the learners have sufficient grasp of the present continuous tense, then they can understand that a gerund is when a verb form is used as a noun. In fact, they have already seen and used the gerund in sentences such as 'I like swimming' which were introduced in Unit 2 in Primary 2.

'Fun with words' on page 50, where pupils have to de-code anagrams, with an English definition as their clue, is a difficult exercise which might challenge native speakers of the same age.

On page 51 there is another example of unnatural English, which evidences yet again that the book is not written by a native speaker. 'After preparing myself, I took breakfast.' is a non-fluent sentence. English-English would be 'After getting ready, I had breakfast' or, 'After getting ready, I ate breakfast.'

My comments on forming words from a root word given, which is an exercise that appears on page 52, have been noted on page 8 above.

In the *Glossary* on page 52 there is a mis-use of 'like', 'community facilities –things like

*buildings...*' This is incorrect, and also confusing as the pupils know 'like' as a verb. The correct form is 'such as'. This mistake is made many times throughout the book.

**Comment:** My overall comment, again, is that there are too many errors in this Unit for it to be a helpful learning tool. These errors should have been noticed before the book was approved for use.

Again, there are too many new structures without sufficient practice in their use.

**Unit 4** opens with an unnecessarily complex sentence, '*Weather is the condition of the atmosphere in a place*'. Any definition should strive to be simpler than the word it is defining. As there are pictures on page 53, the definition is not needed, as the pupils can see the meaning. However, the picture supposedly depicting '*dry weather*' shows an animal's skeleton in a drought, which is an incorrect depiction. It would have been better to put the contrasting pictures above and below each other; so that '*cold weather*' was below '*hot weather*' and '*windy weather*' below '*calm weather*'. Also if '*rainy weather*' had the additional term '*wet weather*' then '*dry weather*' beneath it would be better understood.

On page 54 there are items of new vocabulary, and I wonder if the teachers will be able to pronounce the words '*floods*' and '*droughts*' correctly?

In the 'gap-fill' exercise on page 55, number 7 contains a grammatical error, '*There is no wind or clouds.*' It is a clumsy sentence. For the learners it should be 'There is no wind, and there are no clouds'. In the dialogue on page 55 there is the Americanism '*Sure*' instead of 'Yes'. Assuming that what is taught in Rwanda is English-English, then the use of '*Sure*' which appears several times in this book, should be excluded.

On page 56 at the top, there is a picture of a man who is very cold, and yet the caption is '*Today it's cool*'. This is incorrect, as the picture depicts that it is very cold.

The activity at the top of page 57 introduces too many new words for the exercise to be effective. The exercise is testing the meaning of the weather terms, 'sunny, cloudy, windy' etc., and yet learners will be impeded from this because of the new vocabulary 'light/warm/heavy clothes, umbrellas, leaves were blown about'. Also the layout of the exercise is cluttered, and it is not easy to follow.

In '*Talking about weather in our district*' on page 57 there are errors. It states, '*The rainy season lasts from March to May. There is another shorter rainy season from September to December.*' The first rainy season is 3 months long, and the so-called 'shorter' rainy season is 4 months long! The passage states that the district does not have a large population because it has a long, dry season. The dry season stated, lasts from June to September. Nothing is stated about the months of January and February. This passage is not clear. In order to be a vehicle of developing language learning any reading passage must be very clear, and it must clearly bring out the meaning in order to help the language learning. The questions on the passage on page 58 are not clear. Number 3, '*Which rainy season has less rain?*' That question has no answer from the information given in the passage. Question 5, '*In which season are people likely to plant crops?*' Not only does this question introduce the new word 'likely', but there is no answer to be found in the passage. We learn later in the

Unit that people would plant crops at the beginning of the rainy season. Therefore, the question *'in which season'* is misleading.

Again on page 58, there is some over-simplification in that *'running water makes electricity'* and the question *'What does moving water make?'* As the pupils know the word 'can' then this needs to be used here.

On page 59, *'Practice Activity E'* would stretch native speakers of the same age, as the language used and the concepts are difficult. For instance, *'What do floods do to the people and animals?'* The error in question 6 should have been corrected, *'Write down three disadvantages of **two** much wind'*.

Section D *'Language Structure'* on pages 59 to 60 has very good definitions of the present continuous tense and the present simple tense, and it would have been very useful if these had come at the beginning of the book as part of revision.

This section continues with very good explanations and exercises for *'when'* and *'more/less/too much'*.

On page 64 the use of the word *'uniform'* will cause confusion, and it could easily be replaced by *'the same'*. On page 65, in the *'Anagrams'* the anagram for March, must have a capital letter so that *'charm'* should be *'charM'*. In section G, *'Write on'*, the use of *'kick off'* is not appropriate in the passage, *'The .... rains kick off at the end of August'*. This is colloquial language that would not be used in such a passage. Later on, in the same passage, the use of *'stays on'* is incorrect, *'(the hot season) stays on until the rains begin..'* This is not natural English, and it should be *'The hot season lasts until the rains begin...'*

In the *'Sounds and spelling'* section on page 66, there is another exercise to write words that can be formed from the root word given. The words given are, *'wind, dry, wet, cold, harvest'*. This exercise would be extremely hard for native speakers of the same age as Primary 4 pupils.

In the *'Glossary'* on page 65 there is a typing error *'the sun is **shinning**'*, and the definition of *'floods'* is very clumsily written: *'large amounts of water covering the ground in places that are usually dry as a result of very heavy rains.'* The final clause needs to be at the beginning, so that the definition could read *'Heavy rains bringing large amounts of water.....'*. Even so the sentence is too long and complicated, and the definition could be easily portrayed in a picture.

**Comment:** This Unit contains some very useful explanations and exercises in the Language structures on pages 59 to 62.

There are mistakes which should have been corrected before the book was approved. These mistakes will adversely affect the pupils' endeavours to learn.

**Unit 5** is concerned with jobs in the home and the community. Some of this has been covered in P2 Unit 6, and in P3 Unit 2. However, pupils now in P4 in 2017 will not have studied from the new curriculum in P2 or P3.

Expecting pupils, as on page 67 and page 68, to name ten jobs, and ten household chores, and eight community work activities is ambitious.

In the dialogue, *'Listening and speaking'* on page 68, there is blasphemy and some not very fluent phrases. *'Oh my God! I had forgotten all about it'*, is not something that would be accepted in a school book in many countries. There are many other ways of expressing surprise, such as, 'Oh my goodness!' or 'Oh no!'. The next line of dialogue is not fluent, *'Well, let me hurry on. I don't want to be late for this important duty'*. 'Hurry on' is not a known co-location of words in English-English. 'hurry along', or 'get on' are used phrases. The use of 'duty' is not quite correct in this context. It would be more natural to say, 'I don't want to be late because this is important work'.

The *'Practice Activity A'* on page 69 in which the pupils have to fill in the missing letters, is too cramped for the pupils to be able to see clearly.

*'Activity 5.2 – Group work'* on page 70 is probably beyond the ability of native speakers of the same age as the P4 learners, in that thinking of ten jobs and being able to ask and answer questions to describe what they do, is too much. Rural children especially would find it difficult to think of ten jobs.

*'Talking about how often you do jobs'* on page 73 contains a grammatical error which is repeated in the book. *'Which jobs do you help in?'* Firstly, the correct preposition is 'with' and not 'in', but more importantly, the correct structure is 'With which jobs do you help'. The pupils should always be taught the grammatically correct structure, and certainly those structures are the only ones which should be written. Less grammatically correct, or informal, English is for speaking, and should not be introduced at this stage.

The *'Practice Activity E'* on page 73, has no definite answers. The answers are given, but the pupils have to match the answers to the questions. Almost any answer could match any question. This then is a mechanical, meaningless exercise:

<i>Ngoga helps in the house.</i>	<i>twice a month</i>
<i>Kundwa waters flowers.</i>	<i>once a month</i>
<i>Gatera collects firewood.</i>	<i>twice a day</i>
<i>Sandra helps in the garden.</i>	<i>every day</i>
<i>Girinka feeds the cow.</i>	<i>once a week</i>

The reading passage on page 74 is difficult as many structures are used: the past perfective tense; the past continuous tense; in order to; from.....to. There are many new words, 'gathered/participate/tools/rakes/spades/drained/stagnant. All of this will make the reading beyond the level of the learner.

In *'Practice Activity G'* on page 75 there is a very contrived dialogue using 'will' for the simple future tense. The pupils have now been exposed to several ways of expressing future time, and each has its own use and meaning. The pupils need to start to understand when each is used. The explanation on page 77, *'We use the future tense to talk about what will happen later. The word 'will' is sometimes used with this tense'*, is woefully inadequate. 'Will' is a modal auxiliary and its use or meaning is twofold; one is to express a spontaneous decision and the other is to express a definite intention. The teachers at least need to be aware of this. As the 'going to' tense is also used to express an intention, it is that tense that tends to be used much more than the future tense using 'will'.

In amongst the dialogue using the future with 'will' and the explanation about it, there is a section on '*Adverbs of frequency*' and then on '*The past simple tense*'. This is all too much, and is haphazard. The learner is going from one thing to another without adequate grounding, practice or activity or anything.

On page 76 in the explanation on 'The past simple tense' there is an extraordinary parenthesis, '*Examples: buy – bought (includes words with 'u')*' I do not know what that means. Certainly, other verbs containing 'u' do not take that form in the past tense (e.g. put, suck).

The passage on page 79 in '*G Write on*' contains new vocabulary and structures, which might make it beyond the scope of the learners, 'neighbours/I happen to know/to protect/includes.'

The '*Glossary*' on page 80, again creates more problems than it solves. A job is defined as a '*piece of work*', whereas as job is a work, and not just a piece of it. '*Household jobs*' are defined as, '*work done regularly in and around the house, for example, cleaning, cooking and washing in the time to come*'. The last words are meaningless.

**Comment:** This Unit not only is concerned with boring subject matter, but the purpose of it is not clear from a language-learning point of view. The structures and vocabulary are muddled, and not one item seems to be given proper introduction and practice. Again, there are mistakes which should have been corrected before the book was approved.

**Unit 6** at last has an interesting subject matter in wild animals. Most, if not all, pupils will be interested in wild animals, and they will particularly like the photographs in the Unit.

The '*Practice Activity A*' on page 82 requires pupils to fill in missing letters. The type is so cramped that it will encourage pupils not to leave a space between the words. The pupils, as noted above, already have a tendency to write without proper spacing between words, and this will not help. The exercise expects pupils to know the names of animals that have not been introduced yet.

The exercise which follows on page 82 would be challenging for native speakers, as it requires knowledge of 24 wild animals, in order to be able to list ten carnivores, ten herbivores and four omnivores.

The next section on '*Compass points*' has two unchecked sentences, '*They give us direction to a place. They give us location of a place.*' In each sentence the word 'the' needs to be inserted so that is 'the direction/the location'. Throughout this book there appears a lack of awareness of when to use 'the'.

The '*Pair work*' on page 86 is an exercise for a biology class or a geography class but not for a language class. The instruction is to '*draw a box with three columns with the following headings. Carnivores, herbivores or omnivores. Write the animals given below in the correct column. ....*' There are so many important structures of the English language that have not yet been mastered or even introduced, that to spend time on a pure classification exercise is

difficult to justify. It is worth noting that hippopotamus should be given its full name, and not be referred to as *'hippo'*.

Section *'C Language use'* on page 86 gives a definition of *'comparatives'* as if it is a new topic. It was given as a definition/explanation on page 33 in Unit 2, and again on page 48 in Unit 3. This begins to look as if this textbook has not undergone any editing, or even perhaps that different Units have come from different sources.

The *'Group work'* at the bottom of page 87 requires the pupils to explain why they think dangerous animals are dangerous. This is challenging, and would stretch native speakers of the same age to be able to explain, and it also requires a knowledge of the animals. The pupils using this book have not had sufficient, if any, practice in the structure of *'why/because'*.

The reading passage on page 88 uses the passive structure *'are found'/were brought'*, present perfect structure *'has greatly decreased'*, and new vocabulary, *'fairly/plenty/greatly/species/to spot/although/'* as well as the names of many animals. All of this will contribute to making this a very difficult task. Also *'rhino'* is introduced and should be given its full name of *'rhinoceros'*. Question 7 on the reading is particularly difficult and I expect native English speakers would be unable to answer it, *'Rhinos and giraffe were brought from other countries. Why do you think this happened?'*

*'Practice Activity F'* on page 89 is quite extraordinary. It refers to a map, and yet there is no map. This is a fundamental error of editing.

Page 91 practises the present perfect tense. This tense has been used quite often in the book so far, and so it seems to be unsound pedagogy to explain its use and meaning only now. The present perfect tense is defined here, and then again on page 129. This is what is stated:

Page 91, *'This tense shows an action that ended some time back. It also shows what began and continues up to now.'*

Page 129, *'This tense expresses an event that started. The event continues up to the present. It also shows an action that has just happened.'* (note the first sentence is incomplete)

Each page then gives a similar example: page 91 *'I have seen a zebra'*, page 129 *'I have seen the Nile'*.

This really is the most muddled and incomprehensible attempt at explaining the tense. It highlights that a tense cannot be conveyed by an explanation alone, but needs to be put in context and the meaning/use of it to be *'seen'*. The use/meaning here is the one for *'general past experience'*. It is not concerned with specific time. For each use/meaning there are *'concept questions'* which can be asked in order to check the understanding of why this tense is being used. All of this really should be brought into play here. The pupils deserve to be able to understand and use the English tenses.

The *'Practice Activity B'* on page 92 has a typing mistake in it which is unhelpful. It is a substitution table set out in three columns. It repeats the word *'many'* on the right-hand side of the substitution table, which means that the pupils will make a sentence *'There are no many monkeys in Vurunga'*:

There are	no	zebras in Nyungwe National Park?
		animals in the park
Are there	any	many monkeys in Virunga
		gorillas in Volcanoes National Park?
	many	

All these mistakes should have been flushed out at an editing stage.

The '*Determiners of quantity*' are explained further, and practised on page 93. However, it is stated, '*The determiner 'any' is used with negatives.*' This is not a true statement, as it is used in questions as well. Also the determiner 'many' is used with negatives.

In 'Practice Activity C' on page 93, there is another incorrect statement, '*Superlatives are words used to compare more than two things*'. This is incorrect; I can stand next to my sister and say, 'I am the tallest'.

The '*Reading comprehension*' on page 94 is difficult with passive structures, and new vocabulary: '*is blessed/they attract/tourists/are found in plenty/economy*'. Again, there is the American use of 'like' which should be 'such as'.

Section '*G Write on*' on page 95 is an exercise to rearrange the sentences into the correct order to make a story. This is a very taxing exercise, and I wonder how native English speakers of the same age would manage. I expect it would take them a long time.

On page 96 there is another exercise to make words from the root words given. Those words are: '*slow, big, eat, live, see*'. This is so confusing to put adjectives and then verbs, and many native English speakers would not know what was expected of them.

The Glossary on page 96 creates new problems with new vocabulary and structures. There is a typing error too in, '*an animal that lives free and looks for **it** own food*'. The new structures and vocabulary are: '*... a group of animals that is similar to/spotted/cat family/instrument/area/is set aside/on land.*'

**Comment:** It is hard to see any progression of learning which is what a good textbook should offer. The mistakes of grammar and of editing continue.

**Unit 7's** very title, '*Rights, responsibilities and needs*' will cause difficulty, as the words are for abstract concepts. This subject matter might be beyond the ability of the pupils in a foreign language, and in any event it should be thoroughly embedded in their native language first.

Just on the first two pages of this Unit the following are new words and structures, '*you are supposed to have/rights/laws/education/security/health/things you are expected to do/responsibilities/honest/kind/respectful/being/everywhere/without*'. This amounts to 'overload' of new material, and not only will this detract from any motivation to read the passage, but it will render it beyond the level of the learner. This is akin to material for native English speakers of the same age as P4.

The 'Listening and speaking' section on page 98 has a very muddled question, 'Which rights are the children not enjoying?' The use of the negative makes this question hard to decipher. The pictures beneath this question, which are there to enable the learner to answer the question, do not make anything any clearer. The pictures are of two children fighting, two children looking as if they are making fun of an elderly woman, and four children playing on and around a pile of bricks.

The next section on 'Language use' starts with 'Talking about our rights' and states the following: 'Things that we **should be given** are our rights. People **around us** must **ensure that we enjoy** these rights. If this **does not happen**, our lives will be **hard**. Which are these rights?' I have highlighted the new words and structures, in order to show just how difficult this short passage is for the learners.

The next passage at the top of page 99 contains the following new vocabulary and structures in just seventeen short sentences: 'Going to school will/will turn us into/useful/if we are educated/treatment/so that we/remain/protection/fear of being attacked/harm/arrested/be cleared/if our rights are respected/Being happy.' This includes uses of the gerund not met before, verbs not met before, and the introduction of conditional clauses.

'Practice Activity A' on page 99 contains very difficult questions which native English speakers of the same age as P4 learners would find very hard to answer. For instance, 'Who should ensure that we enjoy our rights? What will happen if we are not given our rights? What activities give me a clean environment?' The information to the first two of those questions is nowhere in the passage, and the information for the third of those questions would be hard for a learner to extract.

'Activity 7.1 – Group work' on page 100, 'Talking about responsibilities' is a more difficult exercise, and would be challenging for native English speakers of the same age. The new vocabulary and structures are: 'Even as we../should be responsible/lies/never/must respect/apologize/polite/politely/everybody/rude/bad behaviour/will make us lose all our friends/keep ourselves clean'. Again, this is overload of new language, which makes the passage beyond the level of the learners. The questions that follow would be difficult for native English speakers: 'I should not take somebody's ruler without permission. Which responsibility if this?/What will happen if we are rude?' The activity also asks for the 'opposite of rudeness' and the learners do not know the word 'politeness' as they have only just been exposed to 'polite' and 'politely'.

Page 101 is 'Talking about rules' and, again, has English language that is beyond the level of the learners. There are just too many new words and structures for learners to assimilate. This is the beginning of the passage, 'A **rule** is a **statement**. It **says** what **must** or **must not be done**. There **is a set** of rules in every school. **They** guide us on our **day-to-day** behaviour. Every pupil **is expected to observe** all the rules. Here are some of them: we must not make noise in the classroom. Those who do have their names put on a list. **All those** on the list **are punished**.' I have highlighted the new words and structures, as well as the careless writing. For instance, the highlighted 'they' refers back to the 'set of rules' which is a singular item. Instead of 'they', 'The rules' should be used. The underlined sentence is lacking punctuation, and it should be 'Those who do, have their names put on a list'. However, even with the

correct punctuation it is a difficult sentence. For learners, the sentence should be much clearer, and should be 'Those who do make a noise, have their names put on a list'. It is still unsatisfactory for learners at this level. That sentence is followed by 'All those on the list are punished'. This is an unclear sentence as 'all those' refers strictly to the names on the list, and names cannot be punished. All in all, the conclusion is that this passage is unsuitable for learners at this level. It is probably unsuitable for native English speakers of the same age.

On page 102 the passage '*Talking about basic needs*' again has new structures and vocabulary. Examples are: '*basic needs/survive/alive/diseases/if it is dirty it can make us sick/and so on/comfortable **enough**/we cannot do without clothes **either***'. The conditional is used mixed with the structure 'can make us', and the use of 'enough' and 'either' is advanced.

New vocabulary and structures are, of course, essential if learners are to progress. However, the number of the new language items at any one time must be limited if learners are to understand and learn. There must be time for practice and revision before too many other new items are introduced. Again, some items are merely for 'passive use' in that they are only needed to be known for one reading passage, and are not expected to be used or thoroughly learned; those items should be few in any one reading passage. What we see again and again in this Unit, and in others, is that there is too much unknown language for the learners to be able to cope.

On page 103, Section '*D Language structures*' guides the learner in '*must/must not*' and in '*Conditional 'if'*'. It would be pedagogically sound if these had come at the beginning of the Unit, so that the learner had guidance before encountering the structures.

Even so, the '*Conditional 'if'*' introduces what is known as 'the first conditional'. In English language teaching there is the zero conditional, the first, the second and third conditionals, and then a myriad of 'mixed conditionals'. They are categorized as such in order to make learning easier for the learner. Whilst page 104 practises the 'first conditional' (if + present simple, + future with 'will'), and the 'first conditional' is used on page 99 ('*We shall help our families... if we are educated*'), the conditional used on page 102 is a 'mixed conditional' ('*If it is dirty, it can make us sick*'). This is not structured with the learners' needs in mind.

The '*Practice Activity B*' at the bottom of page 104 is not a well thought through exercise. Firstly, questions 3 and 6 are the same, and that should have been noticed in the editing. The exercise is to complete the conditional, as in '*If we don't work hard .....*', and the pupils are to complete each sentence with their own words. However, every question is about a similar situation, and so it will be very hard to find new ways of completing each sentence. Native speakers of English would run out of ways of finishing each sentence.

The '*Reading comprehension*' on page 105 is not well written, and is confusing for learners of English. The passage starts with stating the '*three well-known basic needs*' and then expands upon them. In the next paragraphs it states, '*There are **other** rights that we have*'. I have highlighted 'other' as it is a non-sequitur. The passage has been about basic needs, and not about rights. The passage continues, and these are two sentences from it, '*For us to enjoy our rights, we also have responsibilities, too. All our rights come with responsibilities.*' These are not easy sentences for learners at this level. Indeed, the sentences are not

completely true, as it is quite possible to enjoy rights without exercising any responsibility. For the meaning to be clear the sentences would need to be re-written.

The anagram exercise at the bottom of page 105 would not be able to be done by native English speakers of the same age. *'sened/thslere/sohyent/stum'* to be deciphered to be *'needs/shelter/honesty/must'*, is too difficult. The benefit of the exercise is debatable. On page 106 the exercise *'Form words from these root words'* is certainly beyond the level of native English speakers. The words given are: *'honest, honesty/respect, respected/right, rights/responsible, responsibility/education, educated.'* For each one the pupil is expected to write two or three other words. What three other words come from the root words *'right, rights'*, or what two other words come from the root words, *'honest, honesty'* is very taxing for a native English speaker, and is certainly beyond the level of language learner in P4.

The *'Glossary'* on page 107 has *'responsibility'* entered twice. The first time the word *'responsibility'* appears, it is not on the left-hand side but has become part of the definition, and this is a detail which an editor should have noticed. The next time the word *'responsibility'* appears it has the definition, *'a duty to deal or take care of something'*. Again, this should have been edited. It should be *'deal with'*, but to have a verbal phrase interrupted by *'or'* is too advanced for this level.

**Comment:** The mistakes and typing errors, coupled with the careless and advanced English serve to make this Unit unsuitable for learners at P4 level.

**Unit 8** is concerned with the past tense.

The drawings on page 108 are labelled, *'A hoe/An axe/Machete'*. There should be consistency and it should be *'A machete'* instead of *'Machete'*. The pictures at the bottom of page 108 are labelled *'Cattle/Chicken/Sweet potatoes'*. This has been mentioned above, but *'Chicken'* is not an uncountable noun, the plural is *'chickens'*.

In the *'Listening and speaking'* on page 109, the dialogue has instances of incorrect English. *'It's just on Monday...'* is not good English, and it should be, in this context, *'It is only Monday...'*. Later on, the response to *'You must have played a lot'* of *'Not necessarily'*, is not correct. The response which I think the author is after is *'Not really'*. The next sentence, *'There were four in number'*, again, is not natural English. It should be *'There were four of them.'* On page 110, in the same dialogue, there is *'make sure you sleep early tonight.'* Again, this is not very natural, and should be *'make sure you get to bed early tonight.'*

On this one page (109) the pupils are exposed to the present perfect tense with *'already'*, the present perfect tense with *'must'*, the present simple, the past simple, and a sub-clause with *'that'*, and the future simple with *'will'*, and new words *'look tired/cousins/overnight/no joke/mess'*. My concern is that the pupils have not had sufficient introduction or practice in those structures; each is different and would need its own lesson time for proper teaching and learning to take place. On top of the sentence structures is the new vocabulary.

*'Practice Activity A'* is an informal letter. In it is the sentence, *'I hope you are fine and working hard in school.'* It should be *'at school'* and not *'in school.'* There is some incorrect punctuation which serves to give an incomplete sentence, which will confuse the pupils: *'When I arrived at her home. I was surprised.'* – of course, the full stop in the middle should

not be there. The questions about the letter on page 111 contain the question, *'What was the day of the visit?'* This is clumsy, and should be *'When did Erick visit?'* or *'On which day did Erick visit?'*. In question number 4, Erick's name is spelt incorrectly as *'Eric'*, whereas in three previous places it has been spelt *'Erick'*.

*'Activity 8.1 - Group work'* on page 111, begins, *'In the traditional community, the tools used were simple. They were held and used mainly on farms.'* That last sentence is not clear. It might mean *'They were held by hand...'*, but the sentence reads as if it is a non-sequitur.

New vocabulary in the passage is,

*'traditional/mainly/forks/branches/machines/commontractors/poughs/tea-picking/simple (utensils)/wooden/gourds/containers/storing/*. There are too many new words compared to the number of other words in the passage, and so this passage becomes above the level of the learners. Not only that, but part of it is not clear in meaning; *'An axe was used to cut something heavy. A traditional machete was used to cut things like branches.'* Well, as branches are heavy, then the reader would think that an axe would be used in order to cut branches. Any passage for learners must make the meaning thoroughly clear. In any event, the word *'like'* should be replaced by *'such as'*.

*'Practice Activity B'* on page 112, requires the pupils to match the description given in column A, with one of the items listed in column B. However, the answers are not all found from the previous reading passage, and there are some new items/tools on the list in column B. From this exercise, we find that the author describes a *'machete'* as *'a tool used to cut light objects'*, and this seems at odds with the sentence in the reading passage that a machete is used to cut things such as branches. The new item introduced is *'calabash'*, and from a process of elimination we find that *'People use to eat from them,'* whereas in the reading passage it stated that people used to eat from *'wooden plates'*.

The next section *'Describing traditional and modern farming products'* contains just 13 lines of text. However, within those lines there are these new words,

*'crops/differences/products/sorghum/millet/introduced/horticultural/French beans/exported/kept/breeds/Jersey, Friesian and Guernsey.'* In addition, there is the use of the present perfect passive tense, *'...crops have been introduced'*, the passive *'...flowers are grown'*. There is one sentence that is particularly difficult grammatically, *'The local cattle people kept produced only a little milk.'* That sentence not only needs some punctuation, but, for language learners, it could have a sub-clause, such as, *'The local cattle, which people kept, produced only a little milk'*. Simpler still is to leave out that sub-clause and retain a simple sentence which conveys the same meaning, *'The local cattle produced only a little milk.'*

This passage would be very difficult for the language learner to understand. Indeed, the content and language is probably on the border of being unsuitable, in level of language, for a native English speaker of the same age.

*'Describing traditional and modern household objects'* is the next section on page 113, and is a difficult passage. There is a grammatical error in the middle of the text, *'People made pots out of clay. It was used....'* The *'It'* presumably refers to *'pots'* and so it should be *'they'*. In any event, as this is a text for language learners it would be preferable to be clear and to write *'Pots'*. That sentence continues, *'(Pots were) used to carry water, store water and also*

*cook.* This is careless English which leads to a nonsense. The use of 'cook' in the context implies that the pots were cooked. What would make the meaning clear is to write, 'and also for cooking'. However, as this is a passage for learners, and clarity is key, it could be clarified by writing 'and also to put on the fire to cook food.' The last word of the passage should be 'saucepans' as one word, and not as two words as printed, 'sauce pans'. This passage has 15 sentences, and new vocabulary as follows, 'best-known/clay/store/three-legged/stool/woven/sisal/reeds/jewellery/horns/bones/skin/necklaces/bangles/saucepans.'

New vocabulary in the next reading passage on page 114 is. '*clear/user/One (a person)/cultivate/acre/cereals/wheat*'. Also in that passage, the author's misuse of 'like' is now highlighted. One of the sentences reads, '*Today, we use machines like tractors and ploughs*'. The author means, 'We use machines **such as** tractors and ploughs'. By using 'like' it has the meaning of 'in the same way as'. For example, 'I hold my pen like a pencil', which means 'I hold my pen in the same way as I hold my pencil'. The author's sentence means, 'Today, we use machines in the same way as we use tractors and ploughs' – which means that the machines we use today are for digging and ploughing. This is not a pedantic point; this goes to the precision of the language, and why it is important to teach learners **correct English**.

The exercise on page 115, which is a gap-fill exercise with a list of words given, is not good as in sentences 2, 3 and 5 there is more than one correct answer, as follows:

'*There weren't **alot of/many** tools in the past/Today, we grow **many/a lot of** crops for export/We cultivate **much/a lot of** larger pieces of land in modern farming.*' It is not known if the teacher is made aware of these correct answers. As no Teacher's Book seems to be available then it seems that the teacher is not guided in this.

On page 116 '*Practice Activity B*' which is concerned with 'Determiners of quantity' very worryingly contains incorrect English, which demonstrates that the author does not know the rule of grammar. This has been noted above. The author does not know the use of '**less**' and '**fewer**'. This is at the heart of the rules concerning 'countable' and 'uncountable' nouns. 'Uncountable' nouns use 'less', and 'countable' nouns use 'fewer'. So the author here, as his only examples of use, has '*Fewer people*' and '*less potatoes*'. He has chosen two countable nouns, and so each should use 'fewer'. **This is an unforgiveable error, and should have been noticed and corrected in the editing, or certainly, in the textbook approval stage.**

The exercise that follows on page 116, in order to practise the 'determiners of quality', contains a sentence which conflicts with information given in the previous reading passage. In that passage the learners are told that the farmers now grow a lot of crops for export. In this exercise number 5 is '*Farmers grew ..... crops for export (a lot of, much)*'. This is confusing.

The 'Reading comprehension' on page 117 has more mistakes. Throughout the passage the misuse of 'like' continues, and in each case it should be 'such as'. In the second paragraph it states, '*.....grew **less** crops*' which should be '*... grew fewer crops.*' There is a careless construction: '*The people also used fewer tools. Examples are hoes, machetes and axes.*' The second sentence does not follow on well from the first sentence which uses the comparative form.

The Questions below also contain mistakes. Question 2, is '*Traditional farmers grew.... crops (less, more)*' It cannot be 'less' and should be 'fewer'. Question 5 lacks punctuation, '*What is to export?*' and it should be 'What is 'to export'?' Question 7 lacks a capital letter, '*Divide the items below into traditional and modern. friesian, axes, hoes.....*' The breed of cow, Friesian, must have a capital letter. This is important, as there is a strong tendency in the schools, from both teachers and pupils, to disregard the rules about capital letters.

The exercise at the top of page 118, which is to fill in the missing letters of words, gives one dash for each letter missing in all boxes 1 to 7, but not in number 8.

The reading passage on page 118 has some unnatural English and an error. The unnatural sentence, '*Then I prepared myself*', which appeared on page 51, appears again. It should be, 'Then I got ready'. In the last sentence of the passage it is stated, '*As I waited I heard Grandmother's cows mowing in their sheds outside.*' The verb 'to mow' means to cut grass. The noise of cows is 'to moo' and so the word in the sentence should be 'mooing'.

On page 119 there is another exercise to form words from a root word provided. This is difficult, and would lead native English speakers into mistakes of words, as they would create words which do not exist. Native English speakers' knowledge of words and extent of vocabulary would not be sufficient at their age to carry out this exercise.

The '*Glossary*' on page 119-120 is, as with Glossaries in other Units, misleading. For instance, '*Furniture*' is stated to be '*things made from wood*', and '*jewellery*' is said to be '*ornaments such as rings and necklaces.*' The use of pictures would be so much better here. **Comment:** The mistakes and typing errors abound. However, the grammatical mistakes are unacceptable for a textbook. The careless and misleading English just underlines the need for native speakers to be involved in the writing, or at the very least, the checking of the textbooks. Not only are P4 learners exposed to a level of language that is above their cognitive ability, but they are exposed to serious mistakes of grammar and phrasing.

**Unit 9** is a series of geography lessons. It is beyond the ability of native speakers of English of the age of P4 learners.

The '*Vocabulary*' section on page 121 shows a map which is too small to be read easily. The colours on the map also make it difficult to depict the black writing, and that writing is in such small type that there will be pupils unable to read it at all.

The pupils are tasked to locate countries which are not shown on the map, and then to list their capital cities, and to find five rivers. This is beyond the scope of many adults – worldwide!! The authors have forgotten that they are writing a textbook for language learning.

The '*Language use*' section on pages 122 to 123 contains a paragraph each about four countries. The vocabulary is hard, '*northern hemisphere/over one billion/eastern part/50 states in America/Western Europe/of the countries named above*'. There are also geographical mistakes which are beyond the scope of the language learner, but as the author is writing a geography text it should be factually correct. For instance, '*The islands of Zanzibar and Pemba are part of it.*' Zanzibar and Pemba are not two islands; Zanzibar is the name given to the two islands of Pemba and Unguja. There are more mistakes of geography on page 126, and see below in '*Describing cities*'.

On page 123 the present perfect passive tense is used as part of relative clause. This is probably above the reading level of many native English speakers of this age, *'Do you have relatives who have been to other countries?'*

The dialogue in *'Practice Activity B'* on pages 123 to 124, states that Ahmend and Munira are in Paris. However, the dialogue continues as if they are not in France. For instance, *'My cousin lives in France/I have seen a picture of the Eiffel Tower. What is that?'*

In *'Describing rivers'* on pages 124 to 125, there are more mistakes. The first sentence is, *'There is a number of big rivers...'* 'A number' here is used as a 'determiner' and the verb following should agree with the noun, 'rivers'. The sentence should be, 'There are a number of big rivers...'. We are told that the table on page 125 gives information about 'the largest rivers' in the world, but in that table information is only given about the lengths of the rivers and their importance. The first question on page 125 is, *'Which is the largest river in the world?'* This question cannot be answered from the information in the table.

*'Describing cities'* on page 126 contains a mistake in geography which is fundamental, and should have been corrected in the editing stage, and should not have passed the textbook approval stage. In the text and in the table on page 126, it shows, and states that Glasgow and Belfast are in the country of England! Glasgow is in Scotland, and Belfast is in Northern Ireland. Those three countries (England, Scotland and Northern Ireland) are part of the United Kingdom. The author should not write about geography if s/he is unqualified to do so.

In *'Describing buildings'* on page 126, the first sentence is, *'There are structures around the world that are quite unique.'* The use of 'quite unique' is a tautology; if something is unique then that is an absolute which cannot be modified.

*'Language structures'* on page 128 repeats some misleading information which has appeared earlier in the book. It states, *'We use superlatives to compare more than two things.'* That is incorrect. The superlative is not comparing but finding an absolute. There could be only two things involved or many. It can correctly be said, looking at two things, 'The one on the right is the tallest'.

On page 129 a definition of the 'Present Perfect Tense' is given. This is different from the one we saw on page 91 in Unit 6. Here it states, *'This tense expresses an event that started. The event continues up to the present. It also shows an action that has just ended.'* The definitions given are not clear. However, two examples are given, *'I have seen the Nile/She has gone to London.'* Those examples are of, firstly, 'indefinite past' and then 'unfinished past'. So, the definition misses the important concepts of the meaning/use of this tense, and seems to have stated them in the wrong order, or the examples are set out in the wrong order. It appears from the layout that the first definition applies to the first example given, and the second part of the definition to the second example given – whereas it is the other way round.

'I have seen the Nile' is an example of general, indefinite past. Something that happened in the past, and we do not know when, and 'when' is not important. So, the definition or explanation to say '... an action that has just ended' is incorrect.

'She has gone to London' is an unfinished activity. 'Gone' tells us that she has not yet returned, and so, in that sense, the activity has some 'present' connection.

The next part of page 129 is misleading and totally incorrect, and will confuse teacher and pupil unnecessarily. It states,

*Examples:*

- *I **have seen** the Nile*
- *She **has gone** to London.*

*'Has' is used with singular subjects. Look at the first example above.*

*'Have' is used with plural subjects as in the second example above. It is also used with 'I', 'they' 'we' and 'you'.*

Not only are the examples the wrong way round, but the convoluted explanation of 'have' and 'has' is utterly confusing. The situation is simply put 'Have' is used for all subjects except the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular. The 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular (she, he, it) uses 'Has'.

Indeed, if the pupils do not know the present tense of the verb 'to have' by now, then they are not ready to learn the present perfect tense.

The '*Reading comprehension*' on page 130 is about cities, rivers and buildings. There are many names of places, rivers and buildings with which it is quite unnecessary to burden pupils in an English class.

An activity on page 131 is to draw a map of Africa. Again, this has nothing to do with language learning.

The '*Write on*' section contains this instruction, '*Imagine that you travelled outside your country. Write a short story on your travel. Use these guidelines.....*'

'Travel' should be 'travels' but is an advanced word for this level.

The guidelines include, '*What did you go to do there?*' This is a poorly constructed question, and especially so for language learners. It is really asking 'why did you go there?'

Page 132 has another exercise on forming words from root words listed. Again, this is beyond the level of many native English speakers of the same age.

The '*Glossary*' contains a long sentence with no punctuation, and one with a typing error:

'City - The most important and usually the largest city in a country and where the government operates from for example Kigali, Nairobi and Beijing'

'Map - Representation **on** the earth's surface or part of it...'

**Comment:** This Unit is a geography unit which would be beyond the ability of native English speakers of the same age as P4 learners.

**Unit 10** is on climate change. The Unit opens with some very interesting drawings and photographs. This will attract the attention of the learners.

In the '*Group work*' on page 135 the learners are instructed, '*In a group talk about the effects of cutting down of trees. What happens when people depend on firewood for cooking?*'

The first sentence is incorrect, and should read '...the effects of cutting down trees' or '...the effects of the cutting down of trees'. The pupils additionally have to, '*Discuss how floods are brought about by the cutting down of trees*'.

This is very difficult, and requires not only a high level of language use but also some knowledge of science/geography. I would doubt the ability of P4 pupils to carry out this discussion in Kinyarwanda, let alone in English. Native English speaking children of the same age as P4 would find this task challenging, and many would not be able to participate.

The *'Listening and speaking'* is a written dialogue with some questions at the end. Within the dialogue is *'It always rained up those hills. Why did water move so fast this time?'* There are mistakes here, and it should read, *'It always rained up in those hills. Why did the water move so fast this time?'*

*'Language use'* on pages 135 to 136 comprises a text with questions on it. This is beyond the language level and content level of native English speaking children of the same age as P4 learners. This is really a science level. The language used now has no regard to the task of teaching children English. The text is a factual task on a scientific topic. The questions on the text would probably not be able to be answered by many native speaking English children of the same age as P4, *'What is happening to the ice in the Arctic?/Why are sea levels rising?/The result of higher sea level is...../What has happened to rain?'*

*'Activity 10.2 – Group work'* on page 137 contains this piece at the end, *'Trees reduce the harmful gases in the atmosphere. The gases come from vehicles, burning of rubbish and factories. Without trees, the gases will make world temperature rise.'*

Firstly, without the proper punctuation it reads as if the gases come from the burning of factories. Therefore, a comma is needed after 'burning of rubbish'.

Secondly, the passage is extremely hard to understand. Why or how do trees reduce the harmful gases? Why will the gases make the world temperature rise? This shows that this content is not suitable for pupils of this age, and especially not learners of English as a foreign language. Without the explanations the passage is meaningless. Coupled with containing such difficult language and concepts, the learners will learn nothing from it.

*'Describing our responsibilities'* on page 139 is a very difficult passage. *'It is clear that climate change has negative effects. It is making life harder and harder for us. Is there anything we can do about it? Yes, there is. What are our responsibilities in the fight against climate change?'*

*'Since rainfall has reduced, we mustn't waste water.....'*

*'Negative effects'* is a concept that will be hard for learners to understand.

*'..making life harder and harder for us'* is a use of the comparative form that the pupils do not know.

*'...the fight against'* is a phrase the pupils will not know, and is an abstract concept, which will make it difficult for pupils of this age to understand.

*'Since rainfall has reduced..'* is a confusing and ambiguous use of 'since'. 'Since' is best used as a temporal phrase. So, the beginning of the sentence would mean, 'in the time that the rainfall has reduced'. What would be better here is 'As a result of'.

Towards the end of the passage there is *'We must look for other sources of fuel.'* It would be helpful to suggest some of those other sources. However, this is already beyond the scope of the learners; ability.

The '*Language structures*' on page 142 goes back to look at the present continuous tense, with an exercise in using the tense. This is now back to the level of language ability for these learners.

At the top of page 144 is an explanation of '*must and mustn't*'. This stresses the necessity of something. However, the use of 'must' also carries a sense of 'importance' to the speaker. Whilst 'have to' is not being taught, the meaning of 'have to' should be borne in mind when giving the explanation of the use of 'must'. 'Have to' denotes outside pressure or influence to do something, whereas 'must' denotes the personal importance to the speaker.

The 'Write on' activity on page 146 is beyond the ability of the P4 language learner. It is a gap-fill exercise with the words to use set out in a box. Many native English speaking children of the same age as P4 learners would not be able to complete this exercise successfully.

### **Conclusion**

The number of mistakes in this book make it very unreliable as a source of learning. The errors of English grammar are the most serious. All the errors should have been corrected in the editing stage. The errors of English grammar should not have gone unnoticed in the text book approval process.

The overload of information, vocabulary and new structures is the most worrying aspect of the book. The language structures are not given sufficient, if any, attention. Each separate structure needs to be taught and practiced so that its meaning and use is understood. This is the way the learners will progress in English. The topic-based, over-prescribed curriculum has its part to play in these shortcomings.

## **ANALYSIS: P5 The Teacher's Guide**

The book, on the cover, is stated to be 'Property of the Government of Rwanda'. In order to become such property it is supposed that it should have been subject to some scrutiny. From my analysis it seems that any such scrutiny was not as thorough as it perhaps should have been.

My first comment is that it is not easy to find where you are. In the Learner's Book, each page has a 'header' telling the reader which Unit s/he is in. The Teacher's Guide should have such a 'header' so that the teacher can easily find his/her page.

### ***Introduction –language level and some misguided assumptions***

The introduction is 17 pages long. It has some very useful content. I wonder, though, how many teachers of P5 are sufficiently fluent in English to be able to read such dense text, or at the very least will be able to find the time to struggle to read it.

The authors seem to assume that each school is very well-resourced, and this is not the case for the majority of schools. For instance, on page 9 in the section on '*Managing the social dynamics of the classroom*' it is stated:

*'Some teachers like to break up large classes for the first few weeks, working only with a small group of learners at a time to begin with. This is a helpful technique because it allows you to understand how each learner learns best.'*

This is not possible in the majority of primary schools. Teachers have over 45 pupils in each class, several classes in the morning and then again in the afternoon. It is far from clear how this suggestion could work in practice.

Then on page 11, in the section '*Inclusive education*' it is stated:

*'Special education needs can be emotional, physical, sensory and intellectual learning challenges. Teachers now need to consider these special needs while developing lesson plans and teaching strategies. Remedial education specialists will be able to assist your school in making decisions, based on professional assessments of the learners concerned.'*

Are such remedial education specialists available to each school and teacher?

On page 7, I find the mention of Bloom's taxonomy unnecessary and misguided. It is controversial and with some criticism, and the very basis of the hierarchical structure is open to debate. My view is that primary school teachers do not need to know about this. After all, a good text book should be doing that sort of categorizing of work, and the teachers should be able to use the text books as their ultimate guide.

In terms of language, there are some instances of unnecessarily confusing terms. On page 7 it states that the pupils are to '*present orals*'. The word 'oral' is an adjective, and so to try to make it into a noun is incorrect. Language in a Teacher's Guide should be simplified and not made more complicated. What this odd phrase means is that the pupils are to 'speak to the class' or 'prepare spoken work'. Again, on page 15 there is mention of the pupils participating in appropriate '*extra-murals*' such as discussion. This is either incorrect or is jargon. A mural is a wall painting. I can guess that what is meant is 'activities outside the classroom'.

There are at least three examples in the Teacher's Guide where the answers given to questions posed in the Learner's Book are not correct. In one example, the questions in the Learner's book are from a. to e. In the Teacher's Guide the answers are from a. to f. – again this suggests amendment from another book. This is of great importance, as not all teachers of English to P5 will be sufficiently fluent as to be able to work out the correct answers.

## UNIT ANALYSIS

### Unit 1 pages 1-14 Learner's Book – Past and future events

This is revision of the past and future tenses.

However, of great concern is the very misleading, and, in fact, totally erroneous explanation of the present tense on page 3 of the Learner's Book. It states, '*If the action is happening now, it is called the present tense*', and gives an example, '*Today, the bird sits in the tree.*' If something is happening now then the tense used is the present continuous tense, and the sentence would be, '*Today, the bird is sitting in the tree.*'. The present simple tense, often has very little to do with present time, and it is a tense used for things which the speaker, at the time of speaking, sees as fact. It is not enough for a textbook to call a tense 'the present tense' or 'the past tense' or 'the future tense'. In each of those categories we have the 'simple' form, the 'continuous' form, the 'active' form and the 'passive' form.

In P5 the learners need to be guided thoroughly in the real meaning, use and form of each verb.

The mistake is exacerbated in the table at the bottom of page 3, which, under the heading of '*This is happening now*' has, '*I walk to school./I am 11.*'

'*Activity 4 Listening and speaking*' on page 4 is encouraging pupils to use the past simple tense. However, one of the suggestions given to help the pupils is, '*Something you have done with your family.*' This is the present perfect tense, and would encourage using that tense, and not the past simple tense.

'*1.5 Note on reading and writing*' gives an example of an informal letter. We saw an informal letter in Unit 8 in P4. This letter for P5 on page 5 contains the sentence, '*No matter what I did, I could not close the button.*' 'No matter what I did' is a subordinating conjunction and will be new to the pupils, and will need some pre-teaching before they read the letter. 'To close' a button is not proper English. When talking about buttons the verbs 'to do up' and 'to undo' are always used. In this letter, it should be 'I could not do up the button.'

The letter ends with the complex structure of the present perfect continuous tense '*...what you have been doing.*' Each tense needs to be taught so that its formation or structure is known, and, more importantly, so that the pupils know what it means and when and how it should be used. This fundamental part of teaching the English language seems to be missing from all the textbooks I have analysed, and that is because the curriculum pays little regard to this aspect.

'*Activity 13: Use new words*' on page 10 is a matching activity, in that the pupils have to match words in a list with others given in a box. From the instruction to find a '*matching word*' that implies that there is one that has the same meaning. However, the outcome of the exercise is that the following words are 'matched', '*aeroplane/jet; family/relatives;*

*university/college; job/career; plan/idea; marriage/wedding.* This is a misleading exercise as these pairs of words are not interchangeable.

On page 11 '*1.13 Writing*' there is an instruction to '*Position your paper lengthways (the long side must be at the top and bottom)*'. What is described is 'sideways' and not 'lengthways'. 'Lengthways' demands that the long sides are at the side, and the short sides are top and bottom. Also this section contains an example of a '*mind map*'. This is to help the pupils to plan a piece of writing on watching a live football match. The 'picture' shows a football in the centre, with 5 coloured lines coming out from it in different directions. Each of those lines points to a question (What? Where? When? Who? How?) with some notes beneath them.

This might be the first time the learners have seen anything like this, and it will need careful explanation. Also, the 'picture' is cramped and the type so small that it will not be easy for the pupils to use, and especially so if they are sharing books.

'*1.14 Writing*' sets out a sample piece of writing showing what Joe would like to happen in the future. To express Joe's future hopes, the following verbs are used: '*I would like to/I am going to watch/I will go/I will be there/I want to/I might.*' Each of these structures would need special teaching as to their intrinsic meaning and use. They are not just used randomly 'any old how'! The use depends on the speaker's level of intention, the level of possibility of the event happening, among other things. With this in mind, the opening sentences of the passage are not what a speaker of English would say, '*I would like to watch Rayon Sports play football against Isonga. I am going to watch the match at Amahoro in Kigali. I will go on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March.*' The first sentence using 'would' denotes a level of possibility without certainty. However, in the next sentence we find that Joe is going to the match, and so there is certainty and no doubt. The use of the 'going to' tense in the second sentence is correctly used for an arrangement and an intention. However, the next sentence would be more fluent in the present simple tense, 'I go on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March', as it is a firm 'timetabled' event.

The sentence, '*I want to go watch football because it is my favourite sport*' should start, 'I want to go to watch...'. Without that 'to' it is American English. The last sentence in the passage uses unnatural English, '*I might travel in the bus, or my uncle will take us.*' Unless there is a special bus (which is not mentioned, and so we can assume there is not) the usual English would be, 'I might go by bus....'.

'*Activity 16: Prepare a reading passage*' is again a passage using ways of expressing future time. The passage uses a mixture of the 'going to' tense, and the future with 'will'. There is another awkward phrase in, '*We will use a bus or taxi to get to Rubavu*', as natural English would be, 'We are going to go by bus or taxi.....' From this passage the pupils would be none the wiser about when or why to use 'going to' as opposed to 'will'. What the pupils need is the clear explanation of the meaning/use of each tense, and then they can assess for themselves which one to use.

## **Unit 2 pages 15-28 Learner's Book – The language of study subjects**

In '2.2 Reading' on page 16, there is one of very many references to '*use your dictionary*'. In most schools, especially rural ones, there are no dictionaries for the pupils to use. With other such expectations expressed in this book, which will be referred to as they arise, it becomes clear that this book was probably originally written for another readership, and was adapted for use in Rwanda.

In '2.3 Using language' it states that '**Command verbs** are used in imperatives. *Command verbs tell us what we must do*'. I am not sure it is useful to talk about 'command verbs'. Most verbs can be used in their infinitive form, to become imperatives (or a command). It seems unnecessary to talk about 'command verbs' as if there is a special category.

'2.4 Using language' on page 17 seeks to teach the meaning of five new verbs which are used in school work, or more particularly examinations, '*define/contrast/compare/explain/list*.' The layout is quite cramped, and the text is dense. Native speakers of English the same age as P5 would find this difficult to understand and retain.

The exercise that follows at the bottom of page 17, is certainly beyond the level of these language learners. They are to use dictionaries or encyclopaedia (which are not available in the vast majority of schools) to answer the following, '*Define the word vertebrate/Give one contrast between a dog and a cat/Compare a rhinoceros and an elephant/Explain why you think a lion has sharp teeth/List five animals you have seen in your life*.'

The 'Activity 6: Find question words' on page 19 is a helpful exercise. The pupils are to note the question words used in each of five questions.

However, '2.7 Reading' is not a very helpful exercise. It attempts to set out rules for group work to be successful. It makes 'Groups' an acronym for various instructions. The language used is hard and might well be new to the learners, for example, '*Be kind to one another/task/Make sure you do your part*.'

On pages 20 to 21 the pupils have to study a table which has columns headed '*Person/Definition/Tasks assigned*'. Not only is the table filled with type that is too small to read easily, but the language is quite hard, and the content is actually very dull. Some of the language which I expect will be above the level of many P5 learners is, '*Make sure the group is **using the time well**/Report **back** what the group has done/make sure the materials are correctly used and **well looked after**/Pack away any materials **once** the group **is finished** with them.*' I have highlighted words which may well cause difficulty.

'2.8 Listening and speaking' on page 21 is beyond the level of many P5 language learners. They are to be put into groups and are to '*find information*' on one of four topics, '*mammals/sport/weather/reptiles*.' The pupils have to '*describe the topic*' (e.g. what mammals are), and '*give two examples from the topic*.' Without reference materials this will be very difficult. In any event, some native child speakers of English at this age would find this difficult.

'2.9 Reading and writing' continues to be above the level of many P5 learners. In the explanation, beneath the heading, the following language is used, '*Different topics may need different **writing styles**. A list of instructions needs to be **commanding**. A **dialogue** with your*

friend is **relaxed and informal**. A letter to stop animal **poaching** needs to be persuasive.’ Only the words ‘topics’ and ‘persuasive’ are defined in the ‘dictionary’ at the foot of the page. I have highlighted other difficult words.

The ‘Activity 9: Read instructions’ is an extraordinary example to choose. The authors could have chosen something about which every pupil would know, so that the vocabulary used is all familiar to the pupils, and then the task of noticing how to set out instructions can be concentrated on. However, the authors have chosen something with new vocabulary, and so the task in hand is detracted from by the all the new words. The instructions are for ‘How to make a volcano in a sandpit’. The new words include, ‘sandpit/plastic/vinegar/bicarbonate of soda/baking soda/food colouring/hole/drops/erupt.’ The next task is for pupils to ‘write down the rules for writing instructions’. Native child speakers of English, the same age as P5, would find this very difficult, and I expect would not be able to do it well.

‘Activity 11: Read a text and answer questions’ sets out the questions before the pupils read the passage. One of the questions is, ‘What were the steps they needed to do for the experiment?’ This is not good English. ‘Steps’ are not ‘done’ but they are ‘taken’. But even if ‘take’ is inserted instead of ‘do’, the question is still not very good English. What the question really means is, ‘What steps did they follow during the experiment?’ Then in the passage about the experiment is the following sentence, ‘Today’s important rule was to not light a match until the teacher told us to.’ This is appallingly constructed, and as such will not help learners with its meaning. As P4 English had an emphasis on ‘must’ and ‘must not’ it would be good pedagogy to recycle that language in this sentence. Something such as, ‘It was important that we must only light a match when the teacher tells us to light it’, or ‘Today’s rule was that we must not light a match until the teacher told us to light it’ might suffice. Another sentence is, ‘Before long, my candle was out’. This is not natural English, and it should be ‘...my candle **went** out’. All in all, it seems pedagogically unsound to use a topic with so much new language. The new language is, ‘experiment/candle/air/matches/metal lid/lit/oxygen.’ This opportunity to teach a bit of science is not pedagogically sound, as the English language development of the pupils is hindered by it.

‘2.10 Reading and writing’ on pages 24 and 25, includes a newspaper report with questions on it. The report is about a sporting event won by pupils of a primary school. The report mentions ‘sprints event’ and ‘shot put event’. The ‘sprint’ could easily have been replaced by ‘running’ and ‘shot put’ will not be known or understood by the majority of P5 pupils. Within the report is the sentence, ‘It was the first time the school won the event.’ This is not correct in the context. It should be ‘It was the first time the school **had won** the event’. The sentence, as it is in the report, carries the meaning that there was another time that the school won the event.

The pupils are then to write a newspaper report of their own, on a school football match, a winner of an interschools’ science quiz, or on a school play. For many P5 pupils, they will not have been involved in any such activities. The pupils are asked to write a draft newspaper report, and then to evaluate their work with the use of the table on page 26. One of the check-lists in that table is, ‘Have you set up your report correctly, including the headline,

reporter's name, place and date.' 'Set up' is not quite the right word, it should be 'set out' or 'laid out'. Having seen classes of P5 pupils at several schools, I doubt their ability to carry out this task well.

The next stage, on page 26, is for pupils to assess each other's work. This seems ambitious to expect other learners to be able to advise on mistakes made etc. The 'Peer assessment' notes suggest that one pupil should 'answer the following' on his/her friend's work, 'I liked..... because.../Next time, I think you could...../My best part was.....' The instruction to 'answer the following' does not fit, as the three suggestions are not questions. It should say that the pupils should use the following sentences. Also, the last sentence is not correct. The pupil who is reading his/her friend's work, cannot say 'my best part was.....', it should be 'your best part was.....'

'2.11 Using language' on page 27 has a difficult activity. The pupils are to fill the blanks in five sentences using seven words which appear in a box. The first sentence, with the inserted words highlighted, is 'The teacher says she is happy.' This is not a very natural sentence, as the use of 'the' is not fluent. It might be 'my/our/your' but not 'the'. It is hard to think of a situation in which this would be a natural sentence. The third sentence, again with the inserted word highlighted, 'I have to go to sport on Wednesday afternoon.' The sentence is, again, unnatural as 'to go to sport' is not correct. Perhaps it should be 'to go to play sport', but even that is unnatural. However, the structure of 'have to' has not been introduced, and this should have its own teaching time, with time to practise the use, and to understand when it is used.

In the explanation box for this section, on page 27, 'function words' are introduced as ones which help 'to connect important information' and 'to make the sentence make sense.' It then gives examples to be 'but/that/you/so/is'. It is hard to understand what the authors mean by 'function words'. The exercise at the bottom of page 27 is for the pupils to complete sentences using 'function words' without giving the words to be used.

The sentences, with the 'function words' inserted and highlighted, are:

'I went **to** school/I think Science and Elementary Technology **is/are** fun/Geography **is** about maps/Marcelle paints in Art **but** she likes drawing more.' Some of these 'function words' are verbs, and it is very doubtful pedagogy to try to classify them as something else. The pupils need to understand the verb tenses, and their use and meanings. They do not need to see part of a verb, for example 'is', classified as something else, when they need to know that it is the present simple tense of the verb 'to be'.

The 'Revision' on page 28 is that each pupil is to prepare a talk, of one or two minutes, to give to the class. The topic is 'What I enjoy about school'. There are guidelines set out to help the pupils. One of these is 'to think of activities you enjoy doing in the classroom' (e.g. reading, writing, group work) and then to say 'why do you enjoy doing those activities'. This is very difficult, and some native English speakers of this age would find this difficult. Another guideline states, 'What school activities do you enjoy outside of the classroom?' This is not sound grammar, as 'outside of' is tautology. 'Outside' itself conveys the full meaning and the 'of' is redundant, and it is incorrect to include it.

### Unit 3 pages 29-41 Learner's Book – Reading

This Unit is ambitious, and would be a challenge for native English speakers of the same age as P5 learners.

'Activity 1: Talk about reading' asks pupils to read 'quotes' set out in a box below. This is grammatically incorrect; the noun is 'quotations'. Any textbook should teach grammatically correct English, and not sloppy English found spoken on the streets.

The pupils are then tasked to 'Discuss what you think each quote means.' This is very challenging exercise, and would tax native English speakers of this age. Even if the P5 learners can think what each quotation might mean, I doubt they have sufficient English to be able to express themselves. The Teacher's Guide gives no help at all to the teacher about the meaning of the quotations. It is very likely that many teachers will not be aware of the meaning. Examples from the quotations are, '*...the more that you learn, the more places you'll go/Reading gives us someplace to go when we have to stay where we are.*'

'3.2 Reading' on page 30, lists different reasons for reading. In the list there are some structures and phrases that the learners might find difficult, '*to be entertained/to keep up-to-date with what is happening in the world/to spark your imagination.*' Again there is no help to the teacher in the Guide.

'Activity 2: Explore different text types' is a very hard task. Many native speakers of the same age as P5 learners would not be able to complete this task successfully. The task gives a list of printed items in one column

(e.g. *menu/recipe/comic strip/website/newsletter/map/pamphlet/advert*) and the pupils are to match those with the definitions given in the column on the right. The word 'advert' is a shortened form of the noun, and it should be given in full as 'advertisement.'

The definitions are, for example, '*a set of drawings that tell a story/a small leaflet giving you information/a picture showing an area of land or sea/a digital page linked to the internet/a notice encouraging you to buy something to go somewhere.*'

Firstly, to be able to attempt this exercise requires a knowledge of the text items listed. It is highly doubtful that most of Rwanda's P5 pupils will have seen a menu, a comic strip, a pamphlet or website page. Even if they might have seen these items, it is then doubtful that they would know the English words for them. Secondly, the matching is a hard exercise to do; it requires a lot of reading coupled with retention of what you have read. On top of this the font is small, and will cause difficulty if pupils have to share books.

This is one of the first indications, of many, that this book is written with children in well-equipped urban schools in mind. This is brought out again at the top of page 31 where it is stated, '*For homework, collect as many different text types as you can find. Bring them to school. You will add them to the classroom display.*' Many primary pupils come from homes where no books exist, apart from perhaps the Bible and hymn book. Many teachers do not have their own books, and even newspapers are not conspicuous in the areas where I visit schools.

'Activity 3: Read about different topics' has topics in a box, which are the different subject matters about which people like to read. The first exercise is to put those topics in a list in alphabetical order. This would be a good exercise, were there far fewer items. There are 19 different topics. Many pupils will not be used to putting things in alphabetical order and this could take them a long time. Once they have gone wrong with 19 items it will be difficult to

mark and to correct. If there were a few items, then pupils could enjoy the exercise and see their errors.

The next exercise is to fill in the gaps, using the topic items from the box, in seven sentences. This is difficult and would pose a challenge for native English children of the same age as P5. Some examples, with the topic word highlighted, are: *'Grandmother likes to knit and draw, she buys books about **arts and crafts**/Grandfather likes working in his garden, he reads books about **plants**/Solange loves travelling. She likes books about **different places**.'*

*'Activity 4: Explore reasons for reading'* on page 32 continues with different text types in one column and the reason(s) for reading them in another column, and the two are to be matched correctly. This is, again, difficult for the learner level. There is also a typing error, as *'busses'* does not have double 's'.

The pupils then have to complete sentences in their own words, and this is probably something the pupils can do mechanically by repeating the topic word in the answer, as it will be difficult for them to express themselves more fluently. *'Patricia is reading a recipe book because she ..../The learners are reading a textbook because they...../Lucas is reading a book called 'Big Animals in Africa' because he.....'* Etc

The following exercise is to match three captions when there are five pictures. The pupils then have to write captions for the remaining two pictures. One picture is of a girl reading a letter, and the other is of a girl sitting reading a book with an expressionless face. The Teacher's Guide suggests a caption for the latter to be, *'Garuka never knew her book would be so scary.'* This does not match the picture at all. I expect this will confuse teachers. In any event the phrase *'so scary'* is advanced for this learner level.

*'Activity 5: Talk about reading materials'* instructs pupils to work in groups to discuss the different type of texts they have collected. One sentence reads, *'Look back at Unit 2 to remind **yourselves** how to work in a group.'* This is not the first time the 'reflexive' pronoun (highlighted) has appeared in an English textbook. However, I am not aware of any teaching note to teach this new structure. It is a structure that needs teaching, and, indeed, it is a structure often misused by native English speakers.

*'3.4 Writing'* is on page 34, and requires the pupils to read a book of their choice and then write a review of it. This could be an exercise for native English speakers of this age, but it is beyond the ability of P5 learners. Firstly, many schools have no books for the pupils to read. Perhaps they will adapt by using stories instead of books, but even so there are often not enough books for each pupil to have his/her own copy. I expect that this activity will be missed out by many teachers.

*'3.5 Reading'* on page 35, looks at *'skimming'* and *'scanning'* and is good for pupils to know about. However, it is advanced for their language level, and might even be advanced for their cognitive level of learning. *'Activity 7: Skim and scan'* gives the pupils practice in doing each. There is a short story written in the first person, in which Mrs Mugabo, Joseph and Albert appear. The storyteller's name is mentioned once. The pupils are to scan the story to find the name of the main character. This is difficult and I expect native English speaking

children would find this hard. The final task is to write down what the story is about. This is the art of summarizing or writing a precis. It is an advanced skill, and native English speaking children of this age would find this hard to do.

'3.6 Reading' on page 36 is a very useful section, and is so important that I feel it should be taught in the mother-tongue Kinyarwanda in order to ensure that all pupils really do understand it. It is about using a Table of Contents and an Index in books. As this is in a foreign language it may well be above the language ability of the learners. This is partly because there have already been many new words in this Unit and this section introduces yet more new words. The questions which the teacher asks the pupils, so that they can show their understanding of using the tables of contents and the index, are challenging. Native English speaking children of this age would find this difficult. It will be beyond the level of many P5 learners. It would be a challenging and worthwhile exercise in Kinyarwanda. For instance, the Contents Page for Chapter 2 on The Five Senses shows, '*Smell and taste/Listen up/Sight and seeing/Touch.*' The pupils are asked to list the five senses, and the Teacher's Guide gives the answer as '*smell, taste, hearing, sight, sound*'. It will take an advanced pupil to be able to convert '*Listen up*' into '*hearing*'.

Another question is, '*Think of a synonym for spit. What page would we find information about this?*' Most native English speaking children of this age would not know what a synonym is, and would not be able to find one for '*spit*'. The question requires the learners to know the meaning of '*synonym*' and to know the word '*saliva*'. This is advanced English, and beyond the ability of native English children of the same age as P5.

There is a further question, '*Why do authors include contents pages and indexes in books?*' This is not answered in the Teacher's Guide, and I expect teacher and pupil might struggle for the correct English to answer the question. The answer really requires the structure 'so that' or 'in order to/that/for' and these structures have not been specifically taught. The answer is '*They include contents pages and indexes so that readers can find their way around the book*'. Simplified, it could be, '*They include contents pages and indexes because they want readers to know where to find information.*' Even the latter is a complex structure for P5 learners.

All of this is new vocabulary on top of important new concepts. It is overloading the learners.

'3.7 Using language' at the bottom of page 37 looks at adverbs of frequency. The examples given are, '*I **always** brush my teeth in the morning and evening/I **never** read.*' Any example should show immediately the full meaning of the word or phrase. The example for 'always' is good. However, the example for 'never' is terrible. Not only does it give the wrong message about reading, but it does not get to the heart of the meaning of the word. An example such as 'I never eat stones' or 'I never carry twenty bags to school' would give the pupils the meaning of 'never'.

'Activity 10: Design a questionnaire' on page 39 is not particularly suitable for many pupils in Rwanda. The pupils have to design a questionnaire about the reading habits of pupils in the class, and what topics they like to read about. As many schools, and homes, lack reading materials, and the only books to which pupils are exposed are textbooks, this exercise will have very limited scope and possibly even less interest.

The story to be read by the teacher to the class in the *'Listening and writing'* activity on page 39, is about a visit to a zoo. A zoo is a place about which very few, if any, pupils will have any concept. Also it is just another word with which the pupils have to cope. There is an error in the story, on page 71 of the Teacher's Guide, which will not help the teachers, *'The crocodiles were resting in the sun or the pond.'* Perhaps that is meant to be 'by the pond'? In the story three new words are highlighted and the teacher is instructed to *'discuss the meanings of the words'* The words are, *'excited/scared/worried'*. These are not easy to show the meaning of, and I expect teachers will just translate.

*'3.10 Reading'* is about a shopping trip, and includes the sentence, *'It is a recipe for a tasty orange sauce to put over ham.'* This is unnecessary new vocabulary for the pupils, when there is already so much to overload them in this Unit.

### **Unit 4 pages 42-57 Learner's Book – The environment**

The aim of this Unit is to learn vocabulary about animals, the use of prepositions, and to know the difference between the active and passive voice.

The passive voice has already been used in at least two places, on pages 30 and 36 (*'when something is meant .../The topics are written...'*). In the P4 book, analysed above, the passive voice was used a lot.

In the Teacher's Guide on page 73, it lists the teaching materials needed *'examples of wall maps and map books/pictures of different animals/a number of different posters, non-fiction books about landforms, encyclopaedias/examples of postcards'*, and it is likely that many schools will not have these.

In the first activity, the teacher reads a story from page 75 in the Teacher's Guide. The teacher is told to *'Discuss the meaning of the words in bold'*. Those words are, *'disturbing/trumpeting/hopscotch/roaring'*. Those words will be difficult for the teacher to teach or *'discuss'*, and some guidance should have been provided. I doubt the purpose of the pupils knowing the word *'hopscotch'*.

*'4.3 Reading'* on page 44, asks the pupils to read each *'point'*. This refers to the bullet points which list information on page 44. This word would need to be explained. In part 2 of this activity is the question, *'The word 'compass' can also have more than one meaning. Look at the pictures alongside. Do you know what each of these compasses is used for?'* In fact, the word *'compass'* is quite distinct from *'a pair of compasses'*, and so the two items do not share the same name.

*'Activity 4: Read a map'* on page 45 has a colourful map of a zoo. In various coloured boxes the names of animals are written. One box has *'Bunnies, Chickens'*. This should be *'rabbits'* and not *'bunnies'* if the pupils are going to learn proper English. The map also uses the term *'Restrooms'* which is American-English.

*'4.4 Speaking'* on page 46 states, *'Each colour shows the cages of animals from a particular continent. Do you know the names of the seven continents?'* On the map there are six colours, (brown, yellow, orange, purple, blue and green) and in the Teacher's Guide only six continents are named. The continent not represented on the map, and not named in the

Teacher's Guide is North America. This is now a geography lesson, and not a language lesson, and the teachers of English may well find this difficult.

'4.5 Using language' on page 47 concentrates on the use of prepositions of place. However, 'Activity 6: Use prepositions' has a box containing 27 prepositions, and they are to be used to fill in the gaps in 8 sentences on page 48. The Teacher's Guide gives the answers on page 78 of that Guide. However, some of the answers are incorrect, and some of the sentences have more than one correct answer. For instance, sentence 'e', 'The fish eagle flew **across** the water-hole' This is not correct. The preposition should be 'over' or 'above'. 'Across' means from one side to the other, and so if you are above something you cannot go across it. Sentence 'c', 'The sun is **above** the African grasslands', could be 'the sun is over the African grasslands'. Sentence 'f', 'The giraffe is eating the leaves **on** the tree', is incorrect. This has the meaning that the leaves are on the tree, whereas the preposition actually describes the place of eating and not the place of the leaves. So, 'the giraffe is eating the leaves from the tree' or, 'the giraffe is eating the leaves off the tree' would be correct. Sentence 'g', 'The monkeys are **on top of** the safari car', could also be 'the monkeys are on the safari car'.

In order to be a good exercise for language learners, the meaning must be absolutely clear, and so there must be only one correct answer. This is not the case with this exercise. Also to give a choice of 27 prepositions for 8 sentences is too many. Many pupils will just guess, and that will make assessment and marking very difficult. I doubt that many teachers will be equipped to explain why some of the pupils' answers are not correct, and, in line with the above, pupils may well have the correct answer but it would be marked as incorrect according to the information given in the Teacher's Guide. In any event, this exercise would not be easy for native English speaking children of the same age as P5. Some would make mistakes.

'4.6 Reading, Activity 7: Understand physical features' on page 48 is a careless piece of writing. 'Physical features are important. Some act as boundaries between two countries. Others, like rivers, are necessary for living....Hiking, trail running and bird watching are possible because of mountains. Waterfalls look pretty and therefore bring tourists. They can also be used to make electricity.' There are many incorrect statements in this passage. Rivers are not necessary for living; water is necessary for living but many people live without a river. Hiking, trail running and birdwatching (which, note is all one word) are activities which are possible without mountains; hills would help the enjoyment, but all can be done on plains and flats. Not all waterfalls look 'pretty', for instance the Victoria Falls and Niagara Falls are impressive, spectacular, marvellous and awesome but not 'pretty'. Not all waterfalls can be used to make electricity.

This begs the question whether the teacher is teaching geography or language. This is a textbook for English, and the geography should not 'wag the tail' of the English teacher.

The table on page 49 has *physical features* listed on the left, and *definitions* written on the right, and the pupils are to match the feature with the definition. There is no pre-teaching for this exercise provided in the Teacher's Guide. If the pupils do not know the vocabulary of the 'physical features' then they cannot possibly complete the exercise successfully. If they do know the vocabulary from their geography studies (which are now in English) then this

exercise is not needed. However, even many native English speaking children of the same age as P5 would not be able to complete this exercise successfully.

The map on page 49 is not very clear. There is light blue font on top of green shaded colour, and it is very difficult to read the words. The names of lakes are in light blue font and some are written over the blue colour of the lake, and again are difficult to read. *'Activity 8: Identify physical features of Rwanda'* is a geography lesson, with very little, if any, language in-put. Question 'h' requires knowledge from elsewhere, as nothing is written in this book with the information needed to answer that question, *'What makes this mountain range (Virunga) different from a normal mountain range?'*

Question 4 on page 51 requires the pupils to *'Talk about why each of the physical features may be useful. Report back to the rest of the class'*. In the Teacher's Guide on page 79 all the guidance given is, *'Answers may vary. Uses of physical features will range from water sources, to tourist attractions, use of land for sustainable living, hydroelectric power, etc.'* This is beyond the cognitive ability, and indeed language ability, of many native English speaking children of the same age as P5.

*'4.7 Writing'* on page 51 requires the pupils to create posters. They are told, *'You will have to do some research. Use an encyclopaedia, a book or the Internet to help you.'* This is unrealistic for many, many primary schools in Rwanda.

*'Activity 10: Read a flora and fauna map'* on pages 52 to 53 is a difficult exercise. For instance, one of the questions is, *'What physical feature attracts the plants and birds to the area south of Kigali?'* The Teacher's Guide provides the answer, *'It is a swampy area and therefore wet. Lake Cyohoha-North is also in that area.'* I think that from both the map on page 49 and the one provided on page 52 the pupils will be unlikely to answer that question.

*'4.10 Using language'* on page 54 gives examples of the active and passive voice. If learning about the passive voice is one of the aims of this Unit, then this explanation with examples would have been much more useful coming at the beginning of the Unit. In any case, the section starts with the most unnatural example, *'The children jumped into Lake Kivu. ... Lake Kivu was jumped into by the children,'*

The first example set out in the boxes at the foot of page 54 is misleading, and grammatically incorrect. The first example of the Active Voice is in the present simple active voice, and yet the corresponding example of the Passive Voice is in the past simple passive voice, *'Mohammed writes a postcard/a postcard was written by Mohammed'*. This error should not have slipped the notice of the editor or of the textbook approval panel. It is imperative that the example of a grammar structure is correct and clear. This one is not.

The exercises that follow are not pedagogically sound. The first exercise requires the active voice to be changed into the passive voice. It mixes present simple tenses with past simple tenses. Any teaching of new language should deal with one thing at one time. This may be too much at once for the pupils.

The second exercise is for pupils to correct sentences which are incorrect. It is doubtful that reading incorrect English is a helpful device for pupils at this level.

The third exercise comprises sentences in which the words are in the wrong order. The pupils have to put the words in the correct order. This is not only difficult and time-consuming, but the learning taking place may be minimal. It would be pedagogically sound if the teachers were guided to get pupils to carry out some actions, and then the pupils could retell what happened using the passive voice. The learners would then 'see' the meaning of the structure.

'Activity 13: Label a map' on page 55, is based on a story read to the pupils by the teacher, using page 80 of the Teacher's Guide. The teacher is instructed to, 'Discuss the meaning of the words in bold.' There are no words in bold. The pupils are to draw a map, note the physical features mentioned in the story, and note those features correctly on their map. Is this furthering the pupils' learning of English?

'4.11 Writing' on page 56 is about how to write a postcard. The picture of the postcard on page 56 is not clear as the font is small, and the labelling affects the reading even further. One of the labels is, 'You don't have to use full sentences' and yet that labels a full sentence, whereas the two opening non-full sentences are not labelled. Also the word 'travelling' is used twice in the introduction on page 56, but the second time it is used it only has one 'l'.

The 'Revision' on page 52, gives a difficult exercise of matching half a sentence in column A with the rest of the sentence in column B. This could not be done successfully by many native English speaking children of the same age as P5. For instance, 'Forests are useful because...' 'Deserts are useful because...' The answers respectively, are, 'they provide trees that can be used for wood/they provide big spaces for armies to test their aeroplanes'.

This Unit is recommended to fill 25 lessons, which is 16.7 hours. In that time, it may be worth noting, that the pupils will have come across the following new words and structures, 'identifying/labelling/physical features/amazing/landforms/game reserve/normally/cross/disturbing/peace/water-hole/trumpeting/squirting/to roll/mud/flamingoes/hopscotch/skipping/shallow/roaring/had had enough/shade/acacia tree/swinging competitions/for poor crocodile/riddles/feathers/baby chicks/bumpy/not a friendly guy/how about that?/rhyme/point/life skill/symbols/key/compass/cardinal points/north/south/east/west/intermediate/alongside/a collection/penguins/polar bears/alligator/llamas/McCaws/bunnies/petting zoo/tiger/panda bear/seals/yak/camel/emu/koala bears/kangaroo/café/restrooms/particular/continent/pathways/passage/walkway/parade/avenue/pigs 'pen/further/head to/fish eagle/landscapes/plains/forest/waterfalls/boundaries/hiking/trailrunning/valley/desert/swamp/ocean/raised area/mound/height/formation/a large base/crater/lava/gas/ash/undergrowth/sandy/vegetation/neighbouring/mountain range/to comment/useful/attention/research/irrigation/hydro-electric power/famous/specific/flora/fauna/black mamba/cranes/storks/orchids/bush viper/hornbills/eucalyptus/catfish/minnows/bamboo/spotted hyena/postcard/poach/hunter/right below/dam/scenic/canoeing/heron/snipe/space/informal.'

This is without the use of prepositions and the passive voice.

## Unit 5 pages 58-71 Learner's Book – Measurement

The initial part of this Unit is concerned with mathematical terminology such as numbers/counting/adding/subtracting/dividing/multiplying.

In the mathematics lessons in P5 the pupils are dealing with integers/conversion of fractions/equivalent fractions/decimals/parallel lines/perpendicular lines/lowest common multipliers/corresponding angles etc.

Therefore, the English taught in this unit will not assist the pupils with their P5 mathematics studies. The language in this unit was either needed in P3 English, in order to prepare the pupils for mathematics to be taught in English in P4, or, was, preferably, needed in their mathematics lessons from P3 onwards.

'5.1 *Listening and speaking*' on page 58 comprises a good exercise in counting, counting in twos (e.g. 2,4,6,8), threes, fives and tens, and counting backwards. The teacher in large classes may well have difficulty in monitoring the correctness of the counting, which is to be done as a class, in groups and in pairs. There might well be some teachers who cannot 'count backwards from 36', and who cannot 'count in threes up to 69'. It would have been advisable for the Teacher's Guide to contain the answers.

New words, 'to solve' and 'function' appear on page 59. 'Activity 2: Match words and symbols' has the suggestion 'You may use your dictionary and thesaurus to help you.' This is unrealistic in the majority of government primary schools.

'Activity 3: Spell number words' on page 60 sets out three columns of numbers written in words. The Teacher's Guide on page 85 states, 'Get the learners to work in pairs and read the words in the text boxes.' There are no text boxes. The words are merely written in three columns.

'Activity 5: Answer mathematical questions' on page 61, is work that should have been done at the beginning of P4 in mathematics. The exercise comprises, '3 times 2 equals?/what is 25 minus 10?' etc. This, however, brings about a point that ought to be noted. '3 times 2' in English means three lots of two: II II II. The Kinyarwanda direct translations means two lots of three: III III. Whilst the answer is the same, it is worth noting the difference, but it is something about which mathematics teachers should be aware more than the teachers of English.

'5.4 *Using language*' gives a definition of an adjective with some examples. Pupils have been using adjectives since P1 when they started learning colours, possessive adjectives etc. It is odd to be revising adjectives at this stage. The activity on page 61 is for the teacher to show various pictures, and each group to think of as many adjectives as possible with which to describe each picture. This is unlikely to be very successful without some prior revision. In any event with a variety of textbooks having been used in each school, and with no single course for the teaching of English, it is doubtful if the teacher has a list of the adjectives which have been taught to the pupils over the years. The pupils will probably be limited in this activity by the lack of adjectives they know. Also the exercise is merely to write down the adjectives, and not to use them in sentences. Without using the adjectives in sentences, the teacher will not know if the meaning of the adjective is understood. The exercise could well have no learning purpose at all.

'Activity 7: Fill in the missing adjectives' on page 62 is in two parts. The first part requires the pupils to fill in adjectives using any one of those provided. The second part requires the pupil to think of his/her own adjective for the sentences. There is difficulty with this, in that many teachers will not be able to check the accuracy of the answers. For instance, 'Lake Kivu is a .... place to visit' - what if pupils use 'large/big/sunny' – are they correct? 'Elephants are .....animals' – what if pupils use 'slow' – is that factually correct?

'5.5 Using language' on pages 62 to 63 looks at comparatives and superlatives. Page 63 provides a good and clear guide to the formation of comparatives and superlatives. However, the pupils have looked at these structures quite extensively in P4, and these clear guidelines would have been helpful in P4.

'5.6 Using language. Activity 9: Find the measurement words' There is a word-search chart on page 65 and the pupils have to find 15 words. They are not told which words, but that they are 'measurement words'. This will be time-consuming, and will probably not be well done as the pupils do not know for which words they are looking. The final task is to take 10 of the words found in the word-search grid and to write a sentence with each word. Therefore, the pupils must write ten sentences, and the teacher is instructed to take the work in to be marked to check the correct use of each word. This is a difficult exercise, and might not be done successfully by some native English speaking children of the same age as P5. The words are, 'large/length/width/wide/height/high/long/tiny/small/little/big/huge/area/tall/short.' It is difficult to differentiate between 'tiny/small', 'small/little', 'huge/big', 'high/tall', 'long/length', 'wide/width', 'high/height' for language learners. It is doubtful whether their own sentences will be a sufficient test of their understanding of the meaning of the words. It would be more helpful to have a text which shows the correct use and meaning.

'5.7 Speaking' on page 65 sets out some initial questions, for which there are no answers, and they are difficult for this learner level, and would be difficult for native English speaking children of the same age as P5. 'What instruments do we use to measure things?/What units do we use in measurement?' These are difficult questions, and the learners might not have enough vocabulary to be able to answer them. There is no guide given to the teacher as to what the answers might be.

In 'Activity 10: Measuring your classmates' each pupil is to measure another pupil. As most pupils will only have rulers available to them, this exercise is going to be problematic. As the aim is to talk using the comparative and superlative forms, this could be done by sight and approximation rather than by measuring.

In 'Activity 11: Measure objects' on page 66 the pupils are to measure objects and, in exercise 5, they are to put their own adjectives in sentences in the comparative or superlative forms. There are no answers given in the Teacher's Guide. One sentence is, 'The classroom door is..... than me.' This sentence is grammatically incorrect, as it should use be 'The classroom door is ... than I am.' Also this sentence might cause problems, as it could invite the difficulty with the difference between 'tall' and 'high'.

'Activity 12: Label a map' on page 67 is an exercise to redraw a map from the textbook, and to 'fill in the measurements for the following....' All the measurements are given in a text box

above. This is not an exercise that helps to develop the learners' English, but is an exercise that might be given in a geography class.

'Activity 13: Describe the geography of Rwanda' on pages 67 to 68 asks questions, and the answers to some of those questions are not given in this textbook. The textbook states that the pupils can use 'books, encyclopaedias, an atlas or maps to help you.' This is unrealistic in many government primary schools. One of the questions is 'Which is the tallest building in Rwanda?', and there will be many learners who do not know of the building, and, indeed, who have not been to Kigali. As this is a book from which to learn English, it would help if there was a picture and the learners could work out the answer, and 'see' the meaning of the language. In fact, there is a picture on page 71, and this would have been much better used here.

'5.9 Listening and speaking' on pages 68 to 69 is based on another map, which is appallingly labelled. For instance, it shows Mount Kilimanjaro sitting in the sea with an arrow pointing to where it actually is in Tanzania. This is very confusing, and may well not be clear to learners of this age. Questions are asked, and question 2 is, 'Identify the lakes. How many lakes can you see in Asia and North America?' The answer provided in the Teacher's Guide is, 'The map shows two lakes in Asia, Lake Baikal and the Caspian Sea.' That answer is not complete as it does not mention the lake shown for North America. However, the example is unfortunate as it involves the Caspian Sea, which is called a 'sea', but which is, in fact, a lake. Some pupils may ask about this, and the English teacher will be ill-equipped to answer. Question 5 is, 'Are there any buildings on the map? Where are the buildings? Which is the tallest in the world?'. The answer in the Teacher's Guide is, 'One World Trade Centre Makkah Royal Clock Tower and Burj Khalifa.' This does not provide the answer to the last question. Also, the One World Trade Center is in America, and so the 'center' adopts the American spelling and not the English spelling. For that reason, it is a bad example to have chosen. The overriding point is that this is an English lesson, and not a geography lesson, and so only examples should be given which assist the language learning.

'Activity 15: Listen to information' on page 69 contains a table of information. The instructions say 'The names of the places are in the box on the right.' The table itself is positioned below that sentence, and within the table the names of places are in the column on the left. The sentence will, therefore, confuse the pupils. This should have been corrected by the editor.

On page 70 '5.10 Writing' states, 'You are going to compare places in Rwanda to those in the rest of the world'. In 'Activity 16: Write a paragraph' it states, 'Choose three of these features to compare: rivers, seas, lakes, cities, buildings.' The Teacher's Guide offers nothing further. These instructions are not clear. The example given in step 3 is of more help, as it shows the comparison of the highest mountain in the world to the highest mountain in Rwanda.

'5.11 Revision on page 71', starts with the following exercise, '1. Answer the following in writing. A. Count from 12 to 25' as counting is normally an oral, or at least, silent exercise, and is not an instruction to write. The answer given in the Teacher's Guide is '12, 13, 14, 15' etc. This has no language content whatsoever, and is an exercise in writing numbers.

## Unit 6 pages 72-85 Learner's Book – Transport

The aims of this unit are to be able to:

*'Identify and compare different means of transport/sort the means of transport into air, land and water transport/read and write a text about the uses of transport/talk about the places you have visited in Rwanda.'* This is another example of the topic taking importance over the language learning.

*'Activity 1: Match the words to the pictures'* on page 72, shows a box with 14 words in it. Each word is a type of transport. The Teacher's Guide tells the teacher to read all the words out loud, and then to let the pupils read them, *'Each learner must read all the words at least once.'* This is pedagogically unsound, in that learners are reading words the meaning of which they do not know. This has no language benefit at all.

In the next exercise they match those words to pictures, and so only here does meaning start to be attached to the words. The pictures are not all clear, especially picture K which is a *'speedboat or motorboat'* but the background is so dark that no water can be made out. Another picture shows a donkey with a cart behind it. The Teacher's Guide just says that this is a *'cart'*. As the learners, and possibly the teacher, might not be familiar with a donkey, the Teacher's Guide should name both the donkey and the cart.

*'6.4 Listening and speaking'* requests the pupils to *'collect data about how learners get to school.'* This will be a limited and boring activity in many schools, as most learners walk to school. *'Activity 5: Talk about the purpose of transport'* is an opportunity for learners so use some different sentence structures, and yet the Teacher's Guide is silent about any language purpose of this exercise. For instance, question 1.e. *'What are some of the purposes for travelling in your district? How many can your group think of?'* This should provide practice of the infinitive of purpose, 'so that', and 'in order to', and yet no guidance is given. (travelling by bus in order to get to work/using a motorbike to get to a place quickly/using a boat so that you can cross the river, etc.).

*'Activity 6: Discuss air pollution'* on pages 77 to 78 introduces new vocabulary, and poses some difficult questions. There is no help in the Teacher's Guide to assist teachers with those difficult questions. *'Why do you think it is important to protect the environment?/Name two other ways humans damage the environment?'*

*'Activity 8: Role play a story'* on page 79 requires the learners to take the role of one of the characters in the text which the teacher read to the class. The text merely tells of each character, how they travel to school, and whether it is comfortable. I cannot see much scope for a role play. The language to be used, if any, would be limited.

*'Activity 9: Practise reading'* on pages 79 to 80, uses a structure which might be new to the learners and which should have specific teaching time, *'There are trains which can go **as fast as** 300km per hour.'* I have highlighted the structure, and it would need teaching with some practice given so that the meaning is understood. The passage also uses *'Over 800 people..'* and this might be a new meaning of 'over' which should be taught and explained.

*'6.6 Using language'*, on page 80, provides further practice of the comparative and superlative forms, and is good revision.

*'Activity 11: Read about the uses of transport'*, on page 81, has a short passage. However, there are new words, and one sentence of sloppy writing, *'People like fishermen need water transport.'* This would be helped by punctuation, but it would be greatly helped by omitting the informal use of 'like' and replacing it with 'such as'. The sentence would read, *'People, such as fishermen, need water transport.'* Learners need as much help as possible in their language learning, and textbook writers have duty of care to write clearly and correctly. The new words in the passage are, *'dock/cargo/crop duster aeroplanes/pesticide/substance/bacteria.'*

*'Activity 12: Write sentences'* is a matching exercise, to match different means of transport with their use. This is a hard exercise. It is not helped by including *'post office bicycle'* which *'helps the postal worker to deliver the post.'* The learners will have no concept of post office workers delivering post. 'Post' is a new word. In the column on the right is the wording, *'helps people to travel from london to paris.'* There must be capital letters for each of London and Paris, and this should have been corrected by the editor.

*'Activity 13: Write about the uses of transport'* on pages 82 to 83, sets out an example 'mind map' to assist the learners in preparing their writing. The learners are to choose three means of transport and to write about the uses of each one. The book states, *'Each type of transport should be a branch of your mind map. Then each sub-topic branch should have information about the different uses.'* This is difficult language which would not be understood easily by many native English speaking children of the same age as P5.

*'Activity 14: Talk about travelling'* on page 84 requests the learners to work in pairs and to talk about where they have been in Rwanda. This provides good practice of the present perfect tense, but only if the learners are encouraged to use full sentences.

*'Activity 15: Take part in a dialogue'* on page 84 is ambitious. The learners are *'to put together a dialogue in pairs... Your dialogue should be about your favourite place you have visited in Rwanda.'* Many native English speaking children of the same age as P5 would find this difficult to make into a dialogue.

The new language in this Unit is *'beep/all aboard/transport/means/to sort/motorboat/canoe/helicopter/truck/ambulance/dream/space rocket/popular/data/tally table/purpose/pollution/impacts/a club/breathe/sick/as...as/overseas/tunnel/speeding/over 800/to pause/expression/dock/crop duster/to spray/pesticide/substance/bacteria/cargo/oil/stuck/evaluate'*

## **Unit 7 pages 86-99 Learner's Book – Hygiene and health**

The aim of this Unit is to *'Learn about living a healthy life and staying well/Find out about the five food groups/Understand why nutrients are important in our diets/Read about and role play a visit to the doctor/Design an information brochure/Learn many new words and language concepts.'* Again we have the biology lesson wagging the tail of the language lesson. What happens is that the mass of subject-specific words overloads the learner with the result that any development in the important structures of the language is impeded. The only language structure that is specifically mentioned is the 'first conditional'.

The Unit opens with six quotations (referred to as 'quotes' in the book). Each quotation is a single sentence. Within those six sentences, new words are '*wealth/medicine/neglects/wastes/rest/exercise* (meaning activity with physical effort). These are too many new words for the activity to be beneficial.

The thought becomes stronger that this Unit may well have been adapted from a book, or sections from several books, written for different readers. It is certainly not culturally aligned to the learners in Rwanda. It mentions sun-bathing and getting burnt by the sun, which is not a concept for black Africans, and it mentions food that will be unknown by the majority of Rwanda learners, such as peanut butter, sausage, tinned peas, tinned corn, bacon.

'Activity 2: Understand the five food groups' on page 87 is an activity at, or slightly above, the level of native English speaking children of the same age as P5, and is, therefore, above the level of the language learner because of the vocabulary used.

The textbook divides food into five groups, '*fruits/vegetables/grains/dairy/protein.*' This in itself seems an odd way to group, as 'protein' is part of the group of nutrients. Indeed, dairy products contain protein. So, not only is the Unit above the level of the language learner, but it is misleading and muddling in the information it is providing. Additionally, the book lists those five food groups using '*fruits*' but in the diagram below is the label '*fruit*'. This highlights difficulty with countable and uncountable nouns, and there should be some explanation for the teacher, but the Teacher's Guide is silent. The subject-content overrides and ignores the language content.

The text on page 87 states, '*The plate below shows the five food groups.*' Firstly, it is not clear that the circles with coloured pictures within are supposed to be plates, and, secondly, there are two circles/plates.

The pupils are then to write down the names of each food which is shown on the 'plates'. This includes '*tinned peaches, popcorn, pasta, sausage, peanut butter, tinned peas, tinned corn, yoghurt*' which are foods not very familiar to many of the country's P5 pupils. This is unnecessary vocabulary, and is adding nothing to the learners' ability to read, write or speak English.

One question follows, '*Look at the diagram on the right (which shows the five food groups). Which two food groups should you eat most?*' The pupils, and even native English speaking children of the same age as P5, would not be able to answer this without prior knowledge and information. The Teacher's Guide gives the answer, '*vegetables and carbohydrates (grains).*' This ignores the need for protein.

Another question is, '*Which group would a tin of tuna fish fit into?*' This again is not in the cultural context of the majority of P5 learners.

Then the pupils are instructed to, '*Redraw two pictures of the plates shown above. Use the correct colours.*' For this the pupils need green, blue, red, purple and pink crayons. For the majority of P5 pupils these are not available.

There is then a picture of two girls with different foods on their plates. The pupils are to name the foods and put them in the correct category. Eggs have been shown in the '*protein*' category, but one girl here is eating a fried egg. Whatever protein there is in an egg is

negated by the fat of the cooking method. A fried egg is not a healthy food. Again, this is misleading information.

'7.3 Reading' on page 89, is beyond the level of native English speaking children of the same age as P5, as the vocabulary and the concepts are beyond their cognitive level. This is, therefore, unsuitable for language learners in P5. The section is about six nutrients, with an explanation of the 'function or job' of each one. The new words, apart from the nutrients themselves, are '*muscles/glow/Vitamin C/cuts and scratches/calcium/butter/salad dressing.*' At the top of page 90 the pupils are asked to, '*List all the nutrients that you will find in a tomato and cheese sandwich, with bread that has been buttered.*' This is beyond the P5 learner in language, knowledge, and cultural suitability, and one is tempted to ask, 'What is the point of this?' Again, it adds to my suspicion that this book was hastily adapted from another book which was not designed for East African use.

'7.4 Writing' on page 90 asks the learners to write down what they eat for '*breakfast/lunch/supper/snack*' and I wonder if the authors, or the textbook approval people, are aware that many pupils do not have regular meals, and some have one meal a day. Also the American phrase is used, as in '*Sometimes I **snack on** ....*' The pupils then have to place the foods they have listed in their meals into categories. Question 5 asks, '*Were there any foods that you weren't able to place in a food group? What were they?*' If there are such foods, I wonder how well equipped the P5 English teacher is going to be to help with categorizing them?

'7.5 Reading and talking. Activity 5: Sequence events' on page 91 contains a short passage to read which is a list of things to do. The pupils must put them in the correct order. Within that list is, '*Put sun cream on at the beach on Sunday/Go for a jog in the park on Saturday.*' Again, the cultural suitability is questionable.

'Activity 7: Learn and use new words' on page 92 adds to the vocabulary overload. First, the learners are to unscramble anagrams, with only the use of an explanation, and all the words are new to them. Native English speaking children of the same age as P5 learners would find this very difficult. For example, '*gazer (a scrape of your skin)/vtimo (to be sick)/rsha (an area of red skin, usually with spots)/agyllre (an allergic reaction to something that leaves you feeling unwell).*' The native child speaker would struggle, and the P5 learner has the additional burden of new language in the explanations, such as 'to be sick', 'an allergic reaction', and the use of 'to leave' having the meaning of 'cause to remain.'

Other new words introduced in this section are '*thermometer/syringe/plaster/bandage*' The pupils are given each new word with a picture of that word, but they then have to match that to a definition of that object. This is extremely difficult if, to start with, you don't know the use of the item. The definitions for '*thermometer*' and '*syringe*', and then for '*plaster*' and '*bandage*' will easily be muddled by learners who do not know what these things are.

'7.6 Using language' on page 93 is the first piece of useful language work in this Unit. It contains an explanation with examples of the 'first conditional'. However, the examples and practice sentences are based on the 'hygiene and health' material. This breaks the golden rule in language teaching of 'one thing at one time'. So, instead of concentrating on the 'first

conditional' the learner is having to grapple with new vocabulary and new concepts at the same time. This will lessen the ability to understand the use and meaning of the 'first conditional'.

The learners have to write sentence choosing the best option to use to complete the sentence. For example, *'I will get sunburnt ..... if I am wearing a hat/if I stay under the umbrella/if I lie in the sun too long'* The concept of sunburn will be alien to the majority of P5 learners, the use of 'umbrella' in this context is new, and the structure 'too long' in this meaning/use has not been thoroughly taught before.

*'I will get a sore tummy .... If I eat a balanced diet/if I eat too many sweets/if I drink very cold water.'* The vocabulary of 'sore tummy' is new, and drinking very cold water can leave you feeling unwell. The answer given in the Teacher's Books is *'if I eat too many sweets.'*

*'....., you will get holes in your teeth, .. if you brush your teeth/if you eat carrots/if you only drink fizzy drinks.'* Many learners will never have been to the dentist and so the concept of holes and fillings is alien. The word 'fizzy' is new.

Then the learners have to complete the sentence, *'I will pick up germs if.....'* In order to complete this, the learners have to understand 'pick up germs' which is new vocabulary.

The intention of the learners learning to use the 'first conditional' has been severely impeded by the use of the unfamiliar context and vocabulary.

The Unit continues with more new words, and then in '7.8 Using language' on pages 95 to 96, an explanation of the modal verb 'should' and 'should not.' However, from the outset the latter is introduced as 'shouldn't' which is incorrect, as learners must always see and learn the full form before any short form is introduced. This section is mis-placed, as the book so far has used 'should' in many, many places. This explanation of its use would have been beneficial many units before.

In '7.11 Revision' on page 99 the pupils are introduced to yet more new words, most of which lack cultural meaning for the learner, *'toast/lamb chop/mince patty/ice cream/veg'*.

In the 25 periods allocated to this Unit, the learner has been bombarded with the following new language,

*'hygiene/nutrients/diets/informative/concepts/wealth/medicine/wastes/exercise/balanced diet/grains/proteins/dairy/tuna fish/peanut butter/tinned peas/tinned peaches/tinned corn/sausage/muscles/glow/butter/salad dressings/VitaminC/cuts/scratches/calcium/carbohydrates/fats and oils/minerals/seeds/fizzy/sandwich/buttered/snack/sun cream/sun burn/jog/pharmacy/dentist/filling/gums/breath/checkup/graze/vomit/cough/rash/burn/allergy/diarrhea/thermometer/syringe/plaster/bandage/symptoms/tube/sore tummy/tonsils/swollen/prescription/antibiotics/appointment/cigarettes/X-rays/knots/visuals/bullets or numbers/toast/bacon/lamb chop/gravy/mince patty/ice cream/veg/a bath.'*

I think there should be serious questions about whether this is the most beneficial language to be teaching P5 learners. Much of it is outside the vocabulary of native English speaking children of the same age as P5 learners.

## Unit 8 pages 100-112 Learner's Book – Crafts in Rwanda

The aims of this unit are to: *'Learn about crafts made in Rwanda long ago and today/Talk about the tools used by craftsmen and craftswomen/Describe the materials used to make different products/Understand why crafts are useful and their role in Rwanda/Label a map showing where crafts can be found in Rwanda/Practise using the passive voice.'*

This looks more akin to a general knowledge book for native English speakers than a language learning textbook. The only language structure specifically brought out is the passive voice.

The passive voice has already been specifically mentioned in Unit 4.

'8.1 Reading' has many new words, and ends with this sentence, *'Creating crafts together is a peaceful way to fix some of the mistakes made in the past.'* That sentence has no clear meaning. It is nonsensical to native English speakers, and so will be baffling to teachers and learners alike.

The Teacher's Guide on page 112, has the heading *'8.2 Introduction'* and states, *'Read through the list of activities.'* In the Learner's Book the heading is *'8.2 Speaking'* and there is no list of activities, but instead a short narrative passage. This again makes me think that this is an adaptation of another book, which has not been thoroughly adapted for use in Rwanda.

In this *Speaking* section is the sentence, *'Some crafts have been done for thousands of years.'* This is confusing as in the previous *Reading* it states, *'Arts and crafts describe different things made by hand.'* We have *'crafts'* which are *'made'* and then *'crafts'* which are *'done'*. These are two different meanings. The Teacher's Guide states that, *'Craft means any activity done with your hands...'* So we have *'crafts'* as activities and as products. This should be explained, but it is not.

The Teacher's Guide also states, *'Discuss .....how the craft objects are affected by the natural resources or landforms found in the area?'* This is beyond the capability of native English speaking children of the same age as P5. This could be a topic on an O'level paper.

In *'Activity 1: Talk about different crafts'*, there is the sentence, *'Their pictures showed us what their lives were like.'* This is a new use or meaning of *'like'* and this will need to be specifically taught, and yet no mention of this is made in the Teacher's Guide.

What the Teacher's Guide does suggest is that the teacher sees *'if the learners can name any other crafts – traditional or modern (pottery, glass blowing, mosaic, quilting, knitting, crochet, rug making, flower arranging, leather work, beadwork, basket making, scrapbooking, ....origami, calligraphy....)'* This is now beyond the level of native English speaking children of the same age as P5. I wonder how many teachers of P5 English know what half of these crafts are. This can only be a book originally written for native English speakers and badly adapted for use for P5 in Rwanda. If it is not an adaptation of another book, then I question the authors understanding of language learning, of the cognitive level of child learners, or of the Rwandan context.

'8.3 Reading' on page 103 opens with, *'Crafters need different materials and tools to make their products. Many crafters use objects found in nature. These are called raw materials. Some examples of raw materials are wood, bones, shells and stone. Glass, metal and clean*

*litter are found materials.*' This is very hard for P5 learners, as there are not only new words but difficult language such as '*clean litter*' and '*found materials.*'

'*Activity 2: Learn new words*' on page 103 gives nine new words for which the learners are to find the meaning in their dictionaries. Then the four names of raw materials listed, and the five tools listed, have to be matched with the eight pictures on page 104.. This is very hard, particularly as there is no picture of one of the tools listed. One of the pictures shows several unknown tools, which the Teacher's Guide says are '*pottery tools.*' The activity continues with the pupils having to put a raw material with a tool and show the product or craft item which might result. This is very difficult as it requires sound knowledge of how craft items are made. This entire activity would be beyond the ability of native English speaking children of the same age as P5. For P5 learners the educational value of this has to be questioned. The aim seems to be to teach P5 learners about crafts, and even without the overload of new vocabulary, this should not be the aim in their English lessons. The main aim of their English lessons should be to give the learners practice and confidence in the use and meaning of the English sentence patterns and structures, which form the 'backbone' of the English language. If this is done thoroughly, sequentially and progressively then those learners would be equipped to understand texts written in English at a level suitable to their stage of cognitive development.

'*Activity 3: Match raw materials, tools and products*' on page 105 is an exercise that could be done mechanically without understanding the meaning. The exercise is to match the first part of sentences, with their second parts. A careful use of matching key words will enable this exercise to be done without any meaning being understood.

'*Activity 4: Read about the traditional uses of crafts*' on page 106 uses several structures which are difficult, and should be the subject of specific teaching. '*People wear jewellery to dress themselves up.*' This involves the 'infinitive of purpose' with a 'phrasal or multi-word verb' as well as the use of the 'reflexive pronoun. It is a very complex sentence.

'*Some masks are used in religious rituals and others are given as gifts.*' This sentence has two examples of the passive voice, a complex concept in 'religious rituals' and the structure 'are given as gifts' which is a new use of 'as'.

'*The money helps families buy what they need*' This is a shortened form of the structure 'help + infinitive' – help to buy. As this is a language learning book the full form of the infinitive should be used.

This is, or should be, a language learning book, and, as such, the authors have a duty to make sure that the language structures are presented properly and taught.

'*8.5 Writing*' at the bottom of page 107 is a good exercise in properly guided writing.

'*Activity 7: Write instructions*' on page 108 is step by step guide to making a clay pot. However, those steps are in the wrong order and pupils have to put them into the correct order. This is extremely difficult, not only because it introduces new words, but because the reader has no experience in making a clay pot. This is well beyond the level of P5 learners. In fact, I would defy the people who approved this textbook to be able to complete the task correctly in under ten minutes. The Teacher's Guide does not give the correct answer, as it

puts 9 steps in order, whereas the exercise comprises ten steps! The Teacher's Guide also states that you decorate your pot before you dry it. This, surely, depends whether you are decorating it by knife cuts, or by painting it. Some of the clay pots shown in the picture on page 102 appear to have been decorated with paint.

'8.6 Using language' looks at the present continuous passive tense. The Teacher's Guide does not assist the teacher with the formation of the tense. The teacher and P5 pupils need to know the rules of the formation or structure of the tense. It is the present simple of the verb 'to be' plus 'being' plus the past participle. Without knowing this the learners will not be able to form the tense. Here, they see the positive form of the tense. In time the question form and negative form needs to be taught.

'8.7 Listening' on page 110 is an exercise based on a passage the teacher will read from page 116 of the Teacher's Guide. There are new words and structures in the passage to which no teaching attention is given, 'right near the falls' is a new use of 'right' (as in, 'exactly or directly'). 'We travelled right across the country' is another use or meaning of 'right' (as in, to the furthest extent).

There is sloppy grammar, '*Like in Huye, many beautiful crafts are.....*' 'Like' should be replaced by 'As' or 'The same as'.

'8.8 Revision' on page 112 includes a reflection on group work. This is beyond the level of native English speaking children of the same age, as they would lack the vocabulary and thought processes to answer the questions with any real meaning. '*What I liked most about my group was...../What I liked least about my group was...../My group didn't work well because...../The things that I did that helped the group were...../The types of people that I like to work with are.....*'.

The new words and structures introduced in this Unit are, '*craftsmen/craftswomen/art and crafts/handcrafts/crafting/tribes/to fix some of the mistakes made in the past/ancient/embroidery/knitting/inventions/carved/cave/what their lives were like/religious/nature/metals/hammers/clubs/crafters/cleanlitter/foundmaterials/needles/scissors/chisels/clay/dung/reeds or sisal/pottery knife/paintbrush/chop/moulded/details/bark/masks/softened/trimming/decoration/ritual/to dress themselves up/given as gifts/woven/aluminium/patterns/coil technique/fibres/symbolizes/edges/flatten/base/wedge/knead/air bubbles/threaded/hand-crafted.*'

It is difficult to know if, after the 25 periods or 16.6 hours of studying this Unit, the pupils will have progressed in their language learning. There is a risk, that with such overload of vocabulary, and introduction of new structures which are not taught, that language ability can regress, as confusion sets in. Also the motivation to learn reduces considerably when there is no, or extremely little, chance of success.

## **Unit 9 pages 113-125 Learner's Book – Traditional and modern agriculture in Rwanda**

The aims of this Unit are to, '*Match pictures with new farming words/Listen to a text and describe farming in the past/Write a text about agriculture in the past/Interpret a table*

*showing Rwanda's exports/Read a text about modern agriculture/Write sentences using the past, present and future tenses.'*

From reading those aims, we see, yet again, that the language items, which actually are somewhat elementary for P5 level and have been revised many times, are subsidiary to the desire to teach the pupils about farming, and exports. Not only that, but the topic of past farming methods and tools used, and exports was in P4, in Unit 8. See above for my comments on that.

'Activity 1: Match the picture with the description' on page 114, is difficult because the learners have to match a new word, and a picture of that new word, with a description. So, for instance, there is a picture of a hoe and next to that is the word 'weeding' and the pupils have to find the description 'Remove weeds from the fields. Weeds are wild plants that grow where they are not wanted.' I am doubtful of the pedagogical benefit of this method of trying to learn new words.

There is some American grammar in, 'Gather the crops **off** the plants.' English-English is to 'gather the crops from the plants.'

'Activity 2: Name the tools' on page 116, is matching of a picture to a name. Three of these tools appeared in Unit 8 in P4. However, here the picture of the 'long-handled hoe' and of the 'short-handled hoe' look fairly similar in length.

'Activity 3: Learn about farming tools' on page 117 is a 'mind map' and the font is very small. There are notes written below each item which use incomplete sentences. The learners then have to answer questions by gathering their information from the 'mind map'. The questions are hard, 'The mind map says that Ndutiye uses manure to fertilize his crops. What is fertilizing? Use your dictionary to help you./The reed basket is used at the same time as another tool. Which tool is used with a reed basket?' Firstly, many pupils do not have access to dictionaries, and this vocabulary is beyond the needs of P5 pupils. The answer given to the second question is given in the Teacher's Guide on page 121, as 'the hand-held hoe.' However, as evidenced by the pictures on pages 114 and 115, ploughing is a separate activity from sowing, and so the tools of the hand-held hoe and the reed basket are not used at the same time.

The pupils are then instructed 'Work in groups. Pretend you are farmers. Act out the different farming processes, using the farming tools. Present your role play to the class.' I cannot see any language content in that. In fact, it seems to be an invitation to 'mime' actions. Not only is this a very dull activity but it serves no purpose in a language lesson.

'9.4 Listening and speaking' on page 118 is based on a passage read by the teacher from the Teacher's Guide on page 122. The passage is intense, and requires a knowledge of history, and also of the meaning of 'centuries' and 'AD'. It requires knowledge of the World Wars and their place in the historical time-line. There is also no guide given to the teachers as to how to pronounce '1800s' or '10<sup>th</sup> century' – it cannot be assumed that the teacher will know this.

It is worth writing out the passage in full, and I have highlighted the new words and structures. It is important to remember that the learners only hear this, and do not have the advantage of seeing it.

*'Between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, the first farmers arrived in Rwanda. These farmers settled and began to **cultivate** the land. They were **subsistence** farmers. Between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries AD, the next group of farmers arrived. These farmers were **herders**. They kept cattle. **The more** cattle a person had, **the richer** they were. In the **late 1800s**, the Germans arrived in Rwanda. They brought with them crops such as coffee. After World War 1, Belgium **took control of** Rwanda. They **made** farmers grow more crops, like sweet potatoes, coffee, cassava, and Irish potatoes. The Belgians also wanted meat. The chiefs and **sub-chiefs had to** sell their cattle at the markets. After World War 11, crops such as tea, sugar cane and rice were planted.'*

The new structures of 'the more... the richer', and the new meaning of 'made' and the structure of 'had to' need to be taught and practised.

This passage is beyond the level of native English speaking children of the same age as P5. It is beyond their level as a reading, and as a listening exercise it is still beyond their level.

The passage itself is hard enough, but there then follow comprehension questions in 'Activity 5: Talk about farming in the past' which are at O'level standard for native English speaking children: *Why were cattle important to early farmers?/What do you think the farmers needed to do to keep their cattle alive?/Why did the early farmers start selling their cattle?/What crops do you think the first farmers grew?/How do you think farmers changed their farms to make them coffee farms?'* Even if the language ability is not in doubt, this remains cognitively challenging to this age of children.

'9.5 Writing' and '9.6 Reading and speaking' on pages 119 to 120 introduce some new structures without any notes in the Teacher's Guide to teach them, '*How **do you feel about** ....'/I work hard **to make sure**....'/...is not good **for growing** crops/...start my farm by giving me.'* Also there is an incomplete comparative, which is not advisable for this level of learner, '*My harvest is much better.*' (than what?)

'9.7 Using language' on page 121 looks again at the past simple tense. However, it sets out a purely mechanical exercise which requires no understanding of any use of meaning. It is to change sentences in the past tense to be in the present tense, and to change others in the present tense into the past tense. This requires a knowledge (or a guess) at the past form of the verb, but can be done without understanding the meaning of the sentences.

In '9.8 Reading' on pages 121 to 122, the pupils are to write their own true and false sentences based on the 'Listening' passage from '9.4 Activity 4'. This presents problems with evaluation of the work, as it may not be clear that a sentence was intentionally false. The present perfect tense in the passive form is used here, '*Some....have been written for you*'. This tense has not been taught or studied.

'Activity 10: Learn about Rwanda's exports' on pages 122 to 123 introduces yet more technical vocabulary. The pupils are to work from a table which shows certain items which are exported, and to the right-hand side of those items is set out a list of the countries into which those items are exported. The answers to the questions do not demand any language work, but they do demand an understanding of the table. The answers can be given by naming certain countries or crops.

'9.9 Using language' on page 123 looks at the future tense. However, it seems to suggest that 'will' is used exclusively to express future time. Some of the examples given are not natural uses of the future using 'will'. However, in '9.10 Reading and writing' it states, 'People can predict what they think will happen'. This should have been 9.9, as it is indeed one of the two main uses or meanings of 'will'. The reading passage in 'Activity 12: Read as story and write sentences' on page 124, gives good examples of the correct uses of the future with 'will'.

The new language in the 25 periods of this Unit is,  
'subsistence/commercial/processes/harvesting/sowing/weeding/grazing/furrows/manure/fertilizer/undergrowth/prune/century/AD/late 1800s/World War/take control of/they made them grow more crops/sub-chiefs/How do you feel?/to make sure/rear/for growing/by giving/to lay/tin ore/pyrethrum/bedbugs/lice/ticks/export/As time goes by/plantations/all the time/irrigation systems.'

### **Unit 10 pages 126-139 Learner's Book – Geography of the world**

The aims of this Unit are to, 'Locate continents, countries and capital cities on a world map/Describe the position of countries in the world/Describe the geography of a country called South Africa/Produce a travel programme about South Africa/Create and answer true and false questions/Make a brochure about a country.'

There is no specific language structure that is noted. The P5 learners have yet to learn many sentence patterns and structures, and already their education is given through the medium of English, and 25 periods are assigned to, essentially, geography lessons. In the curriculum for this Unit, the only language items mentioned are 'You can/there is, are/prepositions of place: in, on, west of.' All of these have been covered in other Units, and in earlier years of study. If the learners do not know these structures by now, then there is something awry.

'10.1 Reading' on page 126 contains an extra-ordinary sentence, 'Islands are small pieces of land in the ocean, seas and lakes.' Australia is an island! This is misleading information for the learners.

'Activity 1: Use a dictionary' on page 127, is an exercise with geography-specific words in Column A on the left, and Meanings in Column B on the right. The Meanings are not next to their corresponding word, and so the learners have to match them to the correct words. They are advised to use dictionaries, and yet very many P5 learners do not have access to dictionaries. These words are so subject-specific that they should not be in a language course.

'Activity 2: Identify continents' on page 127, contains anagrams of the seven continents, and the learners have to decipher them. This has no real language benefit as these seven words are real names, and so to spend time deciphering them has limited, if any, educational benefit.

'Activity 3: Locate countries and capital cities' on pages 128 and 129, is an exercise in filling in real names in a table, with the use of the world map reproduced on page 128. As with the map on page 68 of the Learner's book, some of the arrows make it confusing to see where places are. This exercise has no language content.

'Activity 4: Play a game' on page 130, and page 130 in the Teacher's Guide, again has no language content. The teacher reads out a place, the pupils find it on the world map and decide whether it is a continent, country or capital city.

'Activity 5: Talk about the world map' begins with the following, 'Talk about these questions in your group. Which countries have you visited in the world?/Which capital cities have you visited in the world?' The authors seem to have little regard for the many, many primary school children in Rwanda who come to school in plastic sandals, do not have regular meals, and whose parents live in poverty. They probably have not been to Kigali, let alone travelled abroad. Questions such as these could be noted in the Teacher's Guide as additional exercises if his/her pupils are in a different social bracket.

The other questions in this section are geography questions, and the answers they demand are to name countries, cities and continents etc. There is no requirement for the learners to say a sentence in English.

'10.3 Reading and writing' on page 131, is concerned with true and false sentences. All of these are in the present simple tense, and nearly all of those use the verb 'to be'. This is not sufficient language practice for P5 English learners.

'Activity 7: Fill in the missing prepositions' on page 132, uses prepositions learned in P1 and P2, 'near to/on/below/above/under'. The exercise then uses these in the most unnatural way, for example, 'Russia is above China/The United States of America is under Canada.' This language is never used in this way, and especially as this Unit is concerned with geography the correct terms should be used, 'Russia is north of China' etc. However, there are only five sentences in 'Activity 7' 1a to 1e. The Teacher's Guide on page 131 gives answers for 'a to f'. As a result, the answer to 1e in the Learner's Book is the answer 'f' in the Teacher's Guide. This is very confusing for the teachers, and is a mistake which should have been picked up by the editor. This might further suggest that this book is a hasty adaptation of another book.

'Activity 8: Fill in a map' on page 132 opens with some unnecessary new words, 'You are detective. A detective is a person who uses clues to solve a problem or a crime. Solve the problem of the missing countries on the world map.' The teacher then reads some descriptions and the pupils are to point to where that place is on the world map on page 128. For example, 'This country is in Asia. It is a landlocked country. This country is north of China. It is between China and Russia....' The answer is Mongolia, although the learners are not expected to name the country. With many pupils in a class, and a few pupils sharing each book, I am not sure how the success of this exercise is going to be monitored. The only language here is the use of 'north/west/south/east' and the use of the present simple of the verb 'to be'.

After an activity, all in the present simple tense, about geographical features of South Africa, there is 'Activity 11: Describe South Africa' and the learners read the 'brochure' reproduced on page 135. The initial instruction to the learners is, 'Take turns to read something on the brochure. Make sure that everyone understands what **is read**.' The use of 'is read' is not immediately clear. As the book has already used the present perfect passive voice, that is

the structure which would be the clearest one here, 'Make sure that everyone understands what has been read.'

The exercise of reading that brochure leads into the exercise on page 136, using 'you can'. This is the modal verb, expressing in this context, ability. For example, 'What can you do on the oceans and beaches of South Africa?'

'Activity 12: Produce a travel programme' on page 136 will give rise to the use of the present simple tense.

'10.8 Writing. Activity 13: Design a simple travel brochure' requires the learners to read notes about three different countries, France, Egypt and China. They then choose one of these countries as the subject of their travel brochure. However, many new words are introduced, which seem unnecessary.

In the 25 periods of the Unit the following new language has appeared, 'island/hemisphere/PrimeMeridian/Equator/border/imaginary/eastern/western/northern/southern/government/laws/completely surrounded by/government... **to run** the country/landlocked/neighbouring/detective/clues/crime/coastline/rainbow/mining industry/valuable metals/platinum/gold/surfing/whale watching/props/flag/famous artists/art gallery/French Alps/snow-skiing/cycle race/pyramids/impressive/official language/experiences/natural disasters/typhoons/earthquakes/tsunamis/giant panda.'

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is difficult to know what to say about this book for P5 English. An American expression springs to mind: "You cannot be serious?"

The book could be a general knowledge book for native English children, and yet, even then, parts of it might be beyond the language level and cognitive ability of native English speakers of the same age as P5. The authors have had little regard for the cultural context of Rwanda, nor for the importance of teaching the sentence patterns and structures. The mistakes in the books should have been corrected at the editing stage, and should have been allowed to be in the final version for the pupils.

## CONCLUSION

It is difficult to know if, after two years of studying in P4 and P5, the pupils will have progressed in their language learning. There is a risk, that with such overload of vocabulary, and introduction of new structures which are not taught, that language ability can regress, as confusion sets in. Also the motivation to learn reduces considerably when there is no, or extremely little, chance of success.

Each tense needs to be taught so that its formation or structure is known, and, more importantly, so that the pupils know what it means and when and how it should be used. This fundamental part of teaching the English language seems to be missing from all the textbooks I have analysed, and that is because the curriculum pays little regard to this aspect of language learning.

Each unit attempts to provide and develop practice in the language for the learners. However, rather than follow the rule of one thing at one time, there are too many new items of language or new structures introduced at every stage. They are introduced, but not acknowledged and not taught. This results in overload for the learners, and results in few, if any, structures being mastered.

Without the structure of the language, the learner will not master the language. Even if all the new vocabulary is learned, without any firm structure on which to hang it, the learner will not be able to make herself/himself understood, nor will s/he be able to understand the meaning of what is read or heard.

Learners of any age thrive on success. If they can master the structures and the sentence patterns, then they can speak English with meaning. They will enjoy this achievement, and that success will motivate each learner to learn more in order to be successful again. Success can only come if the learner really understands the meaning, and that meaning has to be seen to be understood, by using pictures, real objects, situations and actions.

The Teacher's Guide for the P5 book, is lacking full support for the teachers, and, particularly there is no help for the teachers in the use or meaning of tenses, and their formation. In addition, the language used in the Teacher's Guide is advanced, contains mistakes, and is, overall, not used with the level of the majority of Primary English teachers in mind.

In these two years, learners have all their schooling through the medium of English. I have sat in classes, and I have seen how much Kinyarwanda has to be used so that the learners can get some education. It is evident that their English language training is not sufficient. It is also evident that the content they are expected to learn is too ambitious, and rather than furthering their education it is impeding it.

The curriculum plays the overriding part in this. The curriculum is topic-based. It, therefore, concentrates on topic-specific vocabulary at the expense of working through the sentence patterns and structures of the English language. There is no sequential development of the learning of those structures. As the pupils move from topic to topic there is, also, very little revising of vocabulary. The 'proof of the pudding is in the eating'. The majority of P4 and P5 learners are struggling with even elementary English.

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