

EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES AND THE SOCIAL ACTION-ORIENTED APPROACH: WHAT FUTURE FOR LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS?

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Summary

This article is the long version of an article published pp. 122-130 under the same title in issue 54, July 2013, of the special issue "Recherches et applications" of the journal *Le Français dans le monde* (Paris: CLE international, 179 p.), entitled "Mutations technologiques, nouvelles pratiques sociales et didactique des langues", and coordinated by Christian Ollivier and Laurent Puren. Language textbooks have sometimes been criticized in the past: in particular, they would

prevent "learner-centeredness", would generate repetitive practices for the teacher, and would even become useless at a time when teachers, thanks to the Internet, can have access to authentic documents themselves. However, one cannot help but notice the resistance of textbooks in language teaching, and I explain the reason for this through the various very useful didactic functions that they provide. Furthermore, there is "a whole series of convergences between the implementation of the social action-oriented approach (SAOA) in language textbooks and educational technologies". Nevertheless, two new problems created by this SAOA must be taken into account: (1) the demand for a certain degree of autonomy on the part of the students, contrary to the pre-programming of contents and activities, which is precisely one of the functions of textbooks; (2) the demand for a longer time than that of the classic didactic unit, so that the students have time to become involved in their action. I cite the French as a foreign language textbook *Original Version 4* (level B2), which I directed, as proposing a compromise solution, namely the conception of didactic units as "mini-projects" of which the students can propose variants in groups: the margin of autonomy left to the students thus makes it possible to implement, in addition to project-based pedagogy, another type of pedagogy that is very rarely taken into account in textbooks, namely "differentiated pedagogy". Original French version:

1. Textbooks are under attack...

Language textbooks have been criticized for almost half a century. The best known in the didactics of French as a foreign language are undoubtedly, more than twenty years apart, those of Francis DEBYSER and Robert GALISSON.

–Francis DEBYSER announced their disappearance in 1973 in an article with the explicit title: "The death of the textbook and the decline of the methodological illusion". According to him, the textbook is revealed as:

–irreconcilable with true active methods, since the activities are programmed in advance and leave the learner with practically no initiative;

–incompatible with the individualization of teaching towards which general pedagogy tends;

–prohibiting all dynamics of the group-class insofar as [it] structures in advance the contents, the nature and the modalities of the exchanges. (pp. 65-66)

–This article by F. Debyser is quoted by Robert GALISSON, in support of his ideas, in a 1995 article entitled "À enseignants nouveaux, outils nouveaux. Les outils de la modernité ("New teachers, new tools. The tools of modernity"). For him, "the success of eclecticism" and the "massive increase in training" inevitably imply "the decline of the ready-to-teach"; and he calls for "a tool [that helps the new teacher], without hindrance, to take on all his responsibilities", and that for this purpose proposes "fewer job instructions" and "more raw materials" on the model of computer databases available on servers.

Beyond these public criticisms, it is the whole communicative approach –dominant during the decades 1970-1990, if not in the classroom, then at least in the writings of didacticians– which generally led to the discrediting of the language textbook: the concept of "learner-centeredness" was indeed opposed to the very idea of a collective teaching-learning tool wise, and the priority given to "authentic documents" led to supplementing or even replacing the documents proposed in the textbooks by others selected by the teachers and learners according to their topicality, their interests and/or their needs

Since the 1990s, the *convergence* of these two didactic factors on the one hand, and of these two factors with a technological factor on the other hand, namely the Web –which makes available to all a huge and constantly renewed documentation–, could only reinforce an otherwise constant tendency in the didactics of language-cultures: For at least a century, since the appearance in school didactics of textbooks implementing official constituted methodologies, many teachers, claiming their professionalism and the necessary flexibility and adaptation of their practices, have refused to be, as they sometimes said, "slaves" of their textbook, and have asserted their right to adapt it, to subvert it, or even not to use it.

There is a "convergence" between several factors when together they reinforce their effects in favour of an innovation. The invention in the USA, in the 1950s and 1960s, of "teaching machines" consisting solely of batteries of structural exercises, can thus be explained by a historical conjunction between the structural need to acquire automatisms in order to progress in the mastery of a language, behavioural psychology, distributional linguistics, the tape recorder, technological ideology, and finally the Fordist model of industrial productivity (the assembly line). Conversely, "divergence" occurs when negative factors oppose an innovation. Thus, language laboratories were gradually abandoned in French secondary schools during the 1970s and 1980s because the structural exercises for which they were almost exclusively used had fallen into disuse, because their maintenance was very poor, because they could not accommodate entire classes and their use, therefore, posed administrative management problems, and finally, because teachers feared, in the event of a breakdown, that they would be left powerless in front of their students. I present these two concepts of *convergence* and *divergence*, with these same examples, in my article 2009e (see bibliography), where I apply them to a reflection on all the convergences that seem to me to be able to be exploited at present between the action-oriented approach (SAOA) and educational technologies, while taking into account all the divergences that are always present and active.

In an article published in the same issue of *Recherches et Applications* as the one by R. Galisson cited above, I pointed out that the contemporary crisis of the constituted methodologies - according to which the textbooks had been conceived until then - should lead authors and publishers to reflect on the necessary evolution of this tool, so as to propose to teachers means of rationally managing an eclecticism that is now unavoidable. To this end, I made three concrete proposals:

- 1) integrating in each didactic unit "modules" explicitly designed according to different methodologies;
- 2) constructing units that use different approaches from one to the next (after a cultural dossier composed of authentic documents, for example, the textbook would propose a unit of a playful type, then a global simulation, etc.);
- 3) including in the textbook "metamethodological" activities, i.e. "designed to experiment with diversified procedures, approaches and methods, to test them and to evaluate them collectively in class" (PUREN 1995b).

I must confess that since then my proposals have had no more success than the criticisms of F. Debyser and R. Galisson; I have not even been able to implement them in the textbooks I have collaborated on...¹

¹ These are the school collection of Spanish as a foreign language *¿Qué Pasa?* (classes from 4^e to terminale, Nathan, 1991-1995), and levels 3 and 4 of the French as a foreign language textbook *Version Originale* (Éditions Maison des Langues, 2010-2011).

2. ... but are resisting

If language textbooks have so far resisted all criticism and attempts at radical innovation, it is because they provide, as currently conceived, a coherent set of essential didactic functions:

- defining the contents and the progression of the collective teaching-learning according to predefined objectives;
- regularly dividing the teaching-learning flow into a series of didactic units built strictly on the same model² ;
- ensuring, within each of these units, the synergy of the different areas of activity (written and oral comprehension, written and oral production, grammar, vocabulary, phonetics, culture) and the gradation of content from one unit to another;
- finally, providing the supports, aids and guides that lead teachers and learners to implement coherent teaching-learning methods.

Even if it can allow for various articulations between different modules within its didactic units, and even if some of its components (grammatical annex, final lexicon, training for certification tests and other methodological sheets) can be used more freely as autonomous resources, the textbook is fundamentally *a tool for organizing and programming* the joint processes of teaching, learning and evaluation in their contents, materials, tasks and methods. It offers "ready-to-teach-learn-evaluate", certainly, but in teaching as in clothing, "tailor-made" has very high requirements and costs that the vast majority of not only teachers, but also learners, do not have the means, energy and/or desire to assume over time, and moreover in the various parallel courses or classes they have to manage.³ It is perfectly understandable that publishers do not want to take the risk of colliding head-on with such strong and massive expectations and demands from their customers...

Nor should we look elsewhere, it seems to me, for the primary reason for the resistance of many teachers to the introduction of new technologies, whatever they may be, into their lessons, since their permanent use alongside the textbook disrupts all the functions that the latter assumes, obliging them to constantly reorganize and reprogram their teaching: this is where a very strong phenomenon of *divergence* is produced mechanically. This is also enough to explain the limits of an innovation approach conceived as the implementation of the particular "potential" of this or that technology. It is in fact relatively easy to carry out innovations within the framework of experiments in a restricted field, in a limited time and with a small number of teachers, as is, to my knowledge, always the case in field research devoted to new technologies. On the other hand, it is impossible for these innovations to become generalized and established in the long term, because their experimental development is not carried out in the conditions that would have been necessary for this. The same criticism can be made of the strategy of "disseminating good practices" –inspired by the managerial technique of *benchmarking* which has been proposed for the last ten years in certain texts of the Council of Europe, the European Commission and the French Ministry of Education.⁴ I am convinced that, for the time being at least, whether one regrets it or not, this objective of "sustainable generalization" - which should ultimately be the

² This single requirement, which all publishers impose on themselves and which can be found in all language textbooks (each unit must have the same number of pages, with the same types of modules on each page, from one unit to another, with the same types of materials and activities), is enough in itself to block all the proposals I made in my 1995 article...

³ What applies to the language teacher in the different classes he or she teaches also applies to the different courses that learners in the school system must take in different subjects.

⁴ See my 2007(a) very critical article on this subject.

ultimate goal of all didactic research - can only be achieved if the new technologies are integrated into teaching materials whose coherence is built around a textbook.⁵

3. Types of resources available in language and culture teaching

Hence the priority that should be given, in my opinion, in cultural language teaching to new technologies that can be integrated into the design of new language textbooks, by organizing the strongest convergences between technological resources and other types of available resources:

3.1. Technological resources

They are currently, since the advent of the computer age, of a very great richness, power and flexibility, both in terms of:

- equipment*: computers, tablets, smartphones, video projectors, cameras, interactive digital boards, USB keys, etc.;
- programs* for communication, sharing, word and image processing, audio and video editing, creation of websites, multimedia works and exercises, text and voice recognition, translation, pronunciation, etc.;
- online work and/or communication *environments*: digital work environments, groupware, etc.;
- online services (communication, information, research...);
- data* on the Web, in incalculable numbers and immediately available.

The potential of these technological resources is enormous, both for education in general and for language teaching and learning, and they have been a source of innumerable innovative experiments for years, which the constant flow of technological developments is constantly replenishing. This experimental stage can only be surpassed, however –in other words, innovation can only spread and take root– if, in spaces larger than the sole fields of experimentation and over a longer period of time than that required to write a research report, stable and lasting relationships between these technological resources and others can be established and maintained. What experience shows over and over again (which is to be taken into account in our discipline at least as much as experimentation...), is that innovations, whether technological or otherwise, do not spread, any more than "good practices", by their intrinsic virtues alone. Yet the textbook has always been the most powerful vector for the generalization and perpetuation of innovations, and it still remains so today: the new world that Robert GALISSON considered in 1995 to have arrived, in which the disappearance of established methodologies and the rise in the level of teacher training have made textbooks definitively obsolete and useless, this world is still a utopia.

3.2. Didactic resources

They are made up of all the theoretical and practical tools for managing the teaching-learning relationship that the history of our discipline has bequeathed to us, with all the richness created by the diversity of audiences, cultures, objectives and environments. These tools can be found in all the fields involved (teaching-learning methodology, the pedagogical relationship, linguistic description, the relationship between the languages and cultures involved, the psychology of learning - to limit myself to the main ones -); and from the most micro level, the "methods"⁶,

⁵ In their article entitled "Manuels de FLE et numérique" published in this same issue 54 of *Recherches et applications* (pp. 131-142), Nicolas GUICHON and Thierry SOUBRIÉ deal precisely with the question of technologies added to textbooks, showing the current limits of their integration and their uses.

⁶ In the sense of "minimum units of methodological coherence". Cf. The semantic field of method", <http://www.christianpuren.com/bibliothèque-de-travail/004/>.

to the most macro level, the "didactic configurations"⁷. The didactic resources are also very numerous and varied, and they are all available since we left the era of exclusive methodologies and the ideology of progress by substitution;⁸ since the last few years, they are also in constant reorganization and renewal, with in particular the diversification of the "didactics of plurilingualism"⁹ and the emergence of SAOA.

In the space of the classroom and the duration of a lesson, however, all the teaching resources must be mobilized, for reasons of economy and efficiency, in a coherent and stable manner. This is precisely what the regular use of a textbook mechanically provides: even if the collective teaching-learning strategy finally decided upon in the classroom introduces modifications in relation to that of the textbook's authors and publisher, the latter will at least have provided an initial common external basis which will have made it possible to avoid direct confrontation between teaching cultures and strategies on the one hand, and learning cultures and strategies on the other. It is also this whole compromise, which is essential to the smooth functioning of the common teaching-learning process, that can be called into question by occasional didactic innovations introduced suddenly by the teacher for the sole and simple reason that they correspond to the "potential" of this or that new technology.

3.3. Human resources

Unlike the two previous ones, human resources are, as an economist would say, "scarce and expensive", both among teachers and learners. One of the structural problems of experiments in relation to the dissemination and sustainability of the innovation that should follow is that they are generally carried out not only by/with volunteer, motivated and even passionate teachers, but often in exceptional conditions of preparation and implementation. Since the 1920s, sociologists have been familiar with the "Hawthorne effect": the results of any experimentation are likely to be affected by a bias due to the fact that the experimental situation itself creates an additional motivation for all the actors. In such a way that we can affirm, without cultivating a paradox, that the more successful the experiments are, the less generalizable they are *a priori*. The same is true of "good practices", which are not necessarily linked to exceptional conditions of experimentation, but which are nevertheless strongly linked to particular conditions linked to the personality and quality of the practitioners, to their environment... and their learners: we can just as easily affirm that the more practical the innovations are, the less generalizable they are *a priori*. As I wrote in my cited article 2007a:

I can imagine the reactions of my French colleagues who would be offered as models the "good practices" of the teachers at the Lycée Louis Le Grand in Paris or La Bruyère in Versailles on the pretext that their students' results in the European test would be the best in France! There are certainly good practices (without quotation marks) at the Collège Karl Marx in Villejuif or Jean Moulin in Le Havre, but this is also because they are adapted to their students, and they are therefore no more likely to serve as models for the rest of France and the whole of Europe. (p. 10)

The success of textbooks with teachers also comes from the fact that they permanently ensure a substantial saving of time and energy. The ease they provide can certainly become an "easy solution" for some, who will be content with limited and fossilized practices, dispensing with the

⁷ See "Historical evolution of didactic configurations",
<http://www.christianpuren.com/bibliothèque-de-travail/029/>.

⁸ For a development of these ideas, see my 2007c article.

⁹ For a reference bibliography, see CANDELIER Michel 2008. For a list of corresponding didactic devices and orientations, see the list, a little bit like the Prévart, of "learning approaches and activities that can promote the implementation of a plurilingual and intercultural education", COUNCIL OF EUROPE 2010, pp. 105-109.

need to evaluate, evolve and adapt. But we should not underestimate the human cost of change, and the risks it may entail. In the French national education system, the disastrous effects produced on the current state of mind of many French language teachers by successive official reforms that were as poorly prepared as they were poorly accompanied (evaluation by competencies, groups of competencies, etc.), are, if one may say, a "good" example.

3.4. Institutional resources

By this I mean everything that can help or, on the contrary, hinder the use of other resources in the professional environment - material and psychological - of teachers: availability and maintenance of materials; flexibility in the management of rooms and timetables and in the constitution of groups of learners; recognition and facilitation of the work of didactic design and teamwork on the part of teachers, etc. Experimentation generally takes place in conditions of institutional resources that are much more favorable than those that could be offered for the generalization of the innovation. In the context of a new and limited experimentation, the concentration of certain resources to the benefit of a given discipline (a foreign language, for example) is acceptable because it is understandable; but *in the long term*, it can only be felt by teachers of other disciplines (in the same school, or in the whole country in the case of a national experimentation) as a misappropriation and an injustice. In all fields, the passage from the inchoative (the action begins) and the punctual (the action lasts a short time) to the durable changes all the data of the problem, as is the case between the initial encounter for which the communicative approach prepares, and the life and work in a multilingual and multicultural society, for which SAOA must now prepare¹⁰.

4. Convergences to be exploited between technological resources and social action-oriented approach in language textbooks...

One can easily identify a whole series of convergences existing between the implementation of SAOA in language textbooks and educational technologies. I presented a number of them schematically in my 2011 article(g); I repeat and complete them below in the form of a table that I do not claim to be exhaustive. Since the educational technologies mentioned can often be used simultaneously in the service of several of the characteristics of SAOA, I have grouped them all in a single box, the right-hand column.

SOCIAL ACTION-ORIENTED APPROACH (SAOA) (characteristics in relation to the communicative approach)	CONVERGENT EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGIES
1. We move from communicative competence to informational competence. ¹¹	-Tools for research, processing and digital storage of information -Internet and the Web, allowing learners themselves to access a mass of authentic documents -Page layout software, book and textbook publishing software (paper and digital) - <i>Groupware</i> tools: wikis, shared documents, forums, Web 2.0
2. We move from a "support logic" (documents, authentic or fabricated, are offered to learners for their language training and from a "document logic" (tasks are put at the service of authentic documents offered to learners) to a "documentary logic": documents are resources put at the service of the learners' action, as in documentary research in order to prepare a file or a presentation ¹²	
3. We move from an inter-individual orientation (cf. the privilege given to the group of two in the communicative approach) to a collective orientation (taking into account the class-group), from communicative interaction to collective action with a collective dimension (the "co-action").	

¹⁰ I have constantly taken up and developed this idea in my proposals for the development of the actional perspective (see bibliography), because it seems to me to be truly fundamental, in the strong sense of the term.

¹¹ See my article 2008b.

¹² On these different "documentary logics", see Chapter 4 of my 2012(j) article.

4. We go from the perfective (supporting dialogues, activities of information exchange between learners and didactic units are closed on themselves) to the imperfective (in the management of time, to which the learners are henceforth trained, dialogues and activities remain open to a possible resumption or continuation).	-Technologies for the reproduction, distribution and collective use of documents in the classroom: video projection, interactive digital boards, etc. -digital textbooks and "companion sites" allowing the enrichment of the digital textbook or the publication of the results of the students' research and production -Project management software, shared calendars.
5. The aim is to give the learners' actions a real (and not just simulated) projection into the society outside the classroom. Thus, a "social logic" (the second documentary logic characteristic of SAOA) is applied to literary documents, with learners becoming literary agents in the social field of literature. ¹³	
6. Learner-generated "working papers" (bibliographies, work plans, notes, partial papers, drafts, etc.) are considered learning documents in their own right.	
7. The reference action is no longer the simulated communication situation, but the project.	

If we want, as I proposed above, to give priority to educational technologies that can immediately be integrated into the very design of new language textbooks that propose to implement SAOA, we can see that the choice must be made for "e-textbooks" (or "digital textbooks"), and for the use of material supports that allow them to be used both collectively and individually, such as interactive digital boards and USB keys. It is no coincidence that all publishers (and not only for languages) are now starting to offer this product and these materials, even if for the moment - and we understand their prudence... - they are only doing so as a complement to paper textbooks.

5. ... and divergences to be reduced.

Even in this case, the most favorable *a priori* to the generalization and perpetuation of technological innovations, strong divergences are at work, as the author of an article published in 2010 in the online journal *Éducation Magazine*, where he reports on the results of a survey conducted among a representative number (500) of school teachers of different disciplines using a digital textbook. Excerpts:

The survey reveals that the "e-textbook" does not replace the traditional book. The two media have very specific uses. Digital books are preferred for studying images, photos, maps and diagrams. On the contrary, paper is preferred for individual exercises, studying texts, learning lessons and evaluations. Teachers choose the tool best suited to their needs. 88% of them consider the complementarity of the two media satisfactory. [...]

In the end, 80% of the teachers said they were comfortable with the digital textbook, although they did experience some difficulties. They mention first and foremost technical problems and a lack of equipment and maintenance. Fear of breakdown is also cited by 27% of them.

But whatever its strengths and weaknesses, digital textbooks are still not widely used in schools. In 2008, only 0.4% of middle school teachers had digital textbooks; today, 4% do. The Syndicat National de l'Édition (SNE) recommends a number of measures to encourage the development of digital textbooks. In particular, it calls for a proactive policy on the part of the State and a clarification of financial responsibilities between the Ministry and local authorities. The investment is indeed substantial: 500 million euros would be needed to provide all secondary school students with digital textbooks. To this amount, we would have to add the costs of purchasing computer equipment. These figures seem difficult to reconcile with the announced budget cuts.

As is often the case when it comes to school education in France, the first problem highlighted is the management of what I called "institutional resources" above...

¹³ See my articles 2012d and 2012j.

6. Two new problems...

SAOA logically implies that the didactic sequence begins with the most autonomous possible conception, by the group-class, of its final activity, so that the learners get involved collectively; only then, a certain directivity can be imposed by the teacher according to the constraints created by/the needs required for the realization of this final action. However, the canonical model of the didactic unit has been for more than a century (since the direct methodology of the beginning of the XXth century), all methodologies taken together, exactly the opposite in all the textbooks: the didactic unit begins with the resumption of language models (provided by one or more "basic supports": fabricated dialogues and/or authentic documents) and ends with free re-use. The cognitive model of learning by taking over language models - and this is certainly one of the relevant models: one also learns by imitating - has converged with a constraint inherent in textbooks: the margin of autonomy in the initial conception of the final action to be carried out by learners must necessarily be limited, since the greater this margin of autonomy is, the less the contents and activities of the didactic unit can be pre-programmed.

This is the first and formidable problem: the contradiction being structural, there is no solution, but only possible compromises, such as "action scenarios" (the autonomy of the learners is framed, during the design of their action, by a series of predetermined choices that are offered to them) and "generic action variants" which I will discuss further.

The second problem that I have identified in my analyses of textbooks and in my participation in the development of the *Version Originale* textbook is another contradiction, also structural. In language and culture didactics, the duration of the didactic unit (the number of hours of work devoted to it) corresponds to the time scale considered optimal so that the activities carried out in the different domains can enter into synergy with each other: work in oral comprehension, for example, will then be used for work in grammar and then in written expression.¹⁴ This is another reason why the teaching units are always constructed as self-contained units: if the reminders from one didactic unit to another are sometimes made in the pedagogical guide, I do not remember any example of resumption in a unit of an activity initiated in a previous unit, which leads me to think that if such resumptions exist, they are part of these necessary exceptions to any rule...¹⁵ If we want, as I wrote above, that the learners get involved in a collective action which is at least partly theirs, as is the case in the pedagogical projects, it is generally necessary to leave them a time longer than the duration of a didactic unit, and also - because it is part of the recursive logic of any project management- to encourage them not to wait for the end of the project to evaluate the activities already carried out, so as to possibly start again or to add some others which they had not thought of. This is a far cry from the pre-programming logic of the textbook: the *project* was invented to be a tool for *action* in a complex environment, to be used precisely when the *activities* cannot be predefined entirely and with certainty, in other words when there is no possible *procedure*.¹⁶

¹⁴ The "basic support" -a single text or dialogue at the very beginning of the unit- had the function of not only allowing the implementation of the cognitive model of imitation, but also of facilitating this synergy, the same language contents of the single document being necessarily taken up in these various fields of activity.

¹⁵ The first reason, which I mentioned earlier, is the construction of the different didactic units in a strictly identical way from one to the other. There is at least a third reason, and that is the need to break down the evaluation process, just as it is necessary to break down the teaching-learning process, and therefore to take stock of the new skills at the end of each didactic unit.

¹⁶ On the various concepts italicized in this sentence, one can refer to my proposals for the reorganization of the semantic set to which they belong: "The semantic field of 'acting'", <http://www.christianpuren.com/bibliothèque-de-travail/013/>. Note of April 18, 2023: the compromise solution that I proposed and implemented to make the didactic unity of the textbooks as compatible as

7. and an old solution to reactivate.

Even if this is not the miracle solution (we know that there is none...), it seems to me that the time has come for authors and publishers of school textbooks to integrate into the textbooks, as is done in other countries, what is called in France the "pédagogie différenciée" (the name is centered on the teacher: It is the "pedagogue" who differentiates his teaching) and what is called in the northern European countries *open learning*, *offenes lernen* (the appellation is on the contrary centered on the learner, who is supposed to be the only one able to differentiate his own learning). It is undoubtedly necessary to combine the two orientations in the didactics of language-cultures, at least in schools, where one cannot envisage a general and sustainable differentiation of learning in the classroom without differentiation of teaching. In any case, the problem of differentiation –of teaching and/or learning– has been practically absent from French research and publications in French as a foreign language didactics since its emergence half a century ago, in the 1960s: here again, I do not have any example in memory.¹⁷

However, it seems to me that pedagogical differentiation is the only way to best combine the need for pre-programming of content and collective progression, on the one hand, and on the other hand the degree of individual and collective autonomy that is essential both to the implementation of SAOA and to its educational aim of training social actors. However, it is precisely because differentiation is very cumbersome and costly to implement from the outset in paper textbooks (this is undoubtedly, along with the principle of identical structuring of each of the didactic units, the main reason for its exclusion from textbooks), that all the "convergent" educational technologies mentioned in my table *above* can be put at the service of this differentiation of teaching and learning.

It would be the subject of another article to develop the forms of implementation of didactic differentiation in SAOA, such as they could be supported in textbooks integrating new technological resources. I will limit myself here to two examples, but concerning the aspects that are undoubtedly the most important, since they are 1) the differentiation of the "final" action, which is proposed at the end of the didactic unit, and 2) the differentiation of the teaching-learning action.

7.1. Differentiation of the final action

I will take a concrete example that I know well, that of the FFL textbook *Version Originale 4*¹⁸, because I actively participated in its didactic conception. The theme of each of its didactic units is a very general social action among those that any democratic society should encourage, such as "managing one's image", "making connections", "being able to say it", "getting involved", "creating", "circulating". I call this type of action a "generic social action" because it can give rise to multiple variants, on the basis of the domains proposed in the *CEFR* (in this case the personal, public, educational and professional domains) and/or on the basis of different uses of language, such as the "playful", "aesthetic or poetic" use of language cited in the same Council

possible with the requirements of social action was the "mini-projects": see below the reference to the textbook *Original Version 4 (B2)*, and in the section "Bibliographies - Perspective actionnelle" of my site (<https://www.christianpuren.com/bibliographies/perspective-actionnelle/>), the works cited by Ahmet Acar and myself.

¹⁷ I think that this is a perverse effect of this ideological and incantatory concept of "learner-centeredness", if we think that during the whole period of domination of the communicative approach, we have been preoccupied only with "individual learning strategies", while simply forgetting that the most important and urgent strategic issue in a language classroom is to define a *collective teaching-learning strategy*. For a systematic critique of the concept of "learner-centeredness", see my 1995a article.

¹⁸ Note of April 18, 2023: The preface and two instructional units of this textbook are available online, courtesy of the publisher:

of Europe document (pp. 54-55). This is what is proposed in this textbook, but learners and teachers can choose other criteria for differentiation, which may or may not be combined with the first ones: simulation or reality, different textual genres for the final production, different length of time for completion, different types of resources needed, different media and/or end-users, etc. Within the same didactic unit, different variants of the same action can be chosen, designed and prepared in groups to be carried out in class and/or in the outside company.

7.2. Differentiation of the teaching-learning action

There are layout, book and even textbook editing programs that allow learners, with the help of a scanner, to construct variants of the proposed units. The most convenient thing, however - and the most respectful of copyright... - would be for the publisher's digital textbook to be open enough to allow for various reorganizations and modifications of the units as they were designed by the authors and the publisher. Even if this is only done once a year, it would be a good opportunity to bring out the different cultures and learning strategies, to have the teacher test different didactic approaches and methodologies... and to have them discussed collectively in class to reflect on a common teaching-learning strategy.

My attentive readers will have recognized, in this second type of differentiation, the same proposals that I already made in my 1995b article (see *above*) ... The years to come will tell us if the entry into the convergence of new technological resources will allow them to be realized this time. SAOA, in any case, as much as the textbooks, have every interest in seizing these resources, the first to live, the second to survive.

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