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Promoting Writing Skills in French Classrooms: A Critical Analysis of 6th-Grade Elementary School Textbooks in Morocco

Mohamed BOUFOUS

Associate Professor, Faculty of Languages, Arts, and Humanities, Ibnou Zohr University, Morocco

m.boufous@uiz.ac.ma

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ABSTRACT

This article is set in a context where the written production skills of Moroccan sixth-grade students are considered weak, according to various national reports, notably those published by the Higher Council for Education, Training, and Scientific Research (2019). The textbook, a central resource in the teaching-learning process, plays a critical role in developing writing skills. This study, therefore, presents a comparative analysis of written production activities in three textbooks approved by the Ministry of National Education: **Mes apprentissages en français** (M.A.F.), **Le Français pratique** (F.P.), and **Parcours français** (P.f.).

The methodology employed is based on a critical analysis of the types and nature of written production activities contained in these textbooks. Evaluation criteria include the diversity and progression of the proposed activities, as well as the distinction between comprehension and written production. The exercises were also examined in terms of their potential to develop textual coherence through sentence grammar and textual grammar.

The results show that, although these textbooks incorporate written production activities, many of these exercises focus more on reading comprehension than on actual writing. Moreover, the emphasis on sentence grammar limits textual cohesion, hindering students' development of fluent and coherent writing. This analysis concludes by urging textbook designers and educational engineers to review and enhance production activities, particularly by integrating textual grammar to better meet learners' needs.

Keywords: writing skills; written production; textbook; French class.

1. INTRODUCTION

Written production, as an essential skill in learning the French language, poses a significant challenge for Moroccan elementary school students. According to national learning assessment reports, such as those published by the Higher Council for Education, Training, and Scientific Research (CSEFRS, 2019) and surveys conducted by the Ministry of National Education (PNEA, 2009), sixth-gradeth grade exhibit significant weaknesses in their writing skills. These reports highlight the gap between the objectives set by the national curriculum and students' actual levels of written production, calling for an in-depth reflection on the instructional resources used, particularly textbooks.

Textbooks play a central role in the teaching-learning process, as they guide not only the content of lessons but also the methods used to acquire skills. In this regard, the writing activities proposed in textbooks can play a decisive role in strengthening students' writing skills. However, a critical and comparative analysis of the content and approach d in these textbooks remains rare in the current literature, despite its importance for the development of teaching practices.

This article therefore aims to fill this gap by conducting a critical analysis of the writing activities in three 6th-grade elementary school textbooks approved by the Ministry of National Education: **Mes apprentissages en français** (now **M.A.F.**), **Le Français pratique** (now **F.P.**), and **Parcours français** (now **P.f.**). From an analytical perspective, this study examines the pedagogical approaches, as well as the diversity and progression of the writing exercises presented in these textbooks. The objective is to identify the strengths and limitations of each textbook in terms of their potential to develop students' writing skills, and to highlight areas for improvement.

Since these three textbooks share the same entry and exit profiles, the same skills and subskills, the same annual and sequential progressions, and the same thematic areas, we will begin by presenting them before moving on to a separate analysis of each textbook.

1.1 Entry and Exit Profiles

Table 1: Entry and Exit Profiles for Sixth-Grade Elementary Students.

ENTRY PROFILE FOR THE SIXTH GRADE OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	THE OUTCOME PROFILE
By applying the required knowledge, skills, and attitudes in communication situations related to oneself and one's local, regional, national, and global environments, the learner must be able to understand and produce, both orally and in writing, a variety of short statements and texts.	By the end of the sixth year of elementary school, by applying the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes in communication situations related to oneself and one's local, regional, national, and global environments, the learner must be able to understand and produce, both orally and in writing, a variety of statements and texts.

1.2 The Annual Competency and Sub-Competencies to Be Developed During the Six Units

Table 2: The annual competency and subcompetencies to be developed in 6th-grade elementary students.

THE ANNUAL COMPETENCY	
By the end of the sixth year of elementary school, by applying the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes in communication situations related to themselves and their local, regional, national, and global environments, learners will be able to: - understand and produce, orally, a variety of statements that are informative, narrative, descriptive, imperative, explanatory, and argumentative; - read short texts that are informative, narrative, descriptive, imperative, explanatory, and argumentative; - produce a text of at least seven lines that is narrative, descriptive, informative, imperative, explanatory, and/or argumentative.	
SUB-SKILLS TO BE DEVELOPED	
The sub-skill to be developed during Unit 1	By the end of Unit 1, by applying the required knowledge, skills, and attitudes in a communication situation related to oneself and one's local, regional, national, and global environment, the learner will be able to: - understand and produce, orally, based on visual, graphic, audio, and/or audiovisual materials, a variety of narrative and descriptive statements; - read a variety of narrative and descriptive texts; - write, under dictation, a short text (four sentences); - put a narrative text about world civilizations in the correct order; - produce, in at least five lines, a narrative/descriptive text.

The sub-skill to be developed during Unit 2	By the end of Unit 2, by applying the required knowledge, skills, and attitudes in a communication context related to oneself and one's local, regional, national, and global environment, the learner will be able to: - understand and produce, orally, based on visual, graphic, audio, and/or audiovisual materials, a variety of narrative and argumentative statements; - read narrative and argumentative texts; - write a short text (four sentences) from dictation; - fill in the speech bubbles of a narrative comic strip related to the unit's theme; - complete an argumentative interview by formulating questions and/or answers.
The sub-skill to be developed during Unit 3	By the end of Unit 3, by applying the required knowledge, skills, and attitudes in a communication situation related to oneself and one's local, regional, national, and global environment, the learner will be able to: - understand and produce, orally, based on visual, graphic, audio, and/or audiovisual materials, a variety of informative and argumentative statements; - read informative and argumentative texts; - write a short text (four sentences) from dictation; - put an informative text related to science and technology in the correct order; - produce, in at least six lines, an argumentative text related to science and technology (two or three arguments).
The sub-skill to be developed during Unit 4	By the end of Unit 4, by applying the required knowledge, skills, and attitudes in a communication situation related to oneself and one's local, regional, national, and global environment, the learner will be able to: - understand and produce, orally and using visual, graphic, audio, and/or audiovisual materials, a variety of explanatory and directive statements; - read explanatory and directive texts; - write a short text (five sentences) from dictation; - complete an explanatory text related to energy in our lives; - write at least three slogans for an awareness-raising poster related to energy conservation;
The sub-skill to be developed during Unit 5	By the end of Unit 5, by applying the required knowledge, skills, and attitudes in a communication situation related to oneself and one's local, regional, national, and global environment, the learner will be able to: - understand and produce, orally, using visual, graphic, audio, and/or audiovisual materials, a variety of narrative and informative statements; - read narrative and informative texts; - write a short text (five sentences) from dictation; - write, in at least six lines, a narrative (personal experience, memory, or event); - write, in at least seven lines, an informative newspaper article.
The sub-skill to be developed during Unit 6	By the end of Unit 6, by applying the required knowledge, skills, and attitudes in a communication situation related to oneself and one's local, regional, national, and global environment, the learner will be able to: - understand and produce, orally, based on visual, graphic, audio, and/or audiovisual materials, a variety of descriptive statements (portraits; descriptions of places); - read descriptive texts (portraits; descriptions of places); - write, under dictation, a short text (five sentences); - produce, in at least seven lines, a descriptive text (portrait); - produce, in at least seven lines, a descriptive text (description of a place: movie theater, theater, art club, etc.).

It should be noted that the same learning structure used in the5thgrade remains valid for the6thgrade of elementary school. However, with regard to writing activities—and based on the annual competency development—it is evident that they are focused on three main categories, namely:

– Completion activities, which invite students to complete a comic strip, an interview, or an explanatory text;

– Sequencing activities;

– And activities involving the production of narrative, descriptive, informative, and argumentative texts; as well as the writing of slogans or an informative newspaper article.

An analysis of the writing activities contained in each of the three aforementioned textbooks will allow us to examine the nature of these activities and the proportion devoted to writing activities proper (i.e., activities in the third category).

2. STUDY OF THE TEXTBOOK "MES APPRENTISSAGES EN FRANÇAIS"

Presentation Sheet 1: The "Mes apprentissages en français" Textbook for the 6th Grade

TITLE	My French Lessons
AUTHORS	A. Benjelloun, A. Farhani, R. Marrakchi, R. Boukhris, Z. Waahibi, S. Zaki, K. Chaabi
PUBLISHER	Librairie Papeterie Nationale - Mohammedia
ISBN	978-9920-760-07-2
NUMBER OF PAGES	208
ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENT(S)	Teacher's Guide
RETAIL PRICE	21.80 MAD

The 6th-grade M.A.F. program was developed by four former elementary school inspectors, two school principals, and a language and communication teacher.

This educational resource consists of a student workbook, a teacher's guide, and oral communication posters included in the guide.

The content of the "Annual Plan" is organized by units, weeks, and subject areas, namely: communication and speech acts, reading comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, verb conjugation, spelling, reading and pronunciation, class projects, and writing. Excluding the pages devoted to assessment and reinforcement, writing activities occupy 12 pages, or 5.8% of the textbook's total volume. It should also be noted that the learning objectives assigned to these activities are distributed among the categories listed above as follows: fill-in-the-blank activities (3 learning objectives), sequencing activities (2 learning objectives), and writing activities (7 learning objectives). This means that of these twelve pages, only seven are actually dedicated to writing production, leaving just 3.4%. This percentage is still very low.

This study will focus on analyzing the content of the activities in the "Written Production" section.

The following table summarizes the content of these activities as follows:

Table 3: Activities Related to "Written Production" Included in the M.A.F. for the 6th Grade of Elementary School

UNITS	WEEKS	ACTIVITIES BY WRITING DOMAINS (Section: WRITING SKILLS)
DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT	S1	Assess prerequisites.
UNIT 1	S2	→ Put a narrative text in the correct order
	S3	- Examine a text with an image and answer these questions; - Put the sentences of a narrative text in order by numbering them; - Copy a text in the correct order.
	S4	→ Write a narrative or descriptive text
	S5	- Look at a text with a photo and answer these questions; - Write a narrative or descriptive text following a given model; - Write a text of your choice (without guidance).
	S6	**Assessment Week**
UNIT 2	S7	→ Fill in the speech bubbles of a narrative comic strip
	S8	- Look at a comic strip and answer these questions; - Fill in speech bubbles with the provided lines; - Fill in speech bubbles with lines you come up with.
	S9	→ Complete an interview designed to present an argument
	S10	- Observe an interview with a photo and answer these questions; - Write down the responses from an interview in order; - Answer questions from an interview, providing supporting arguments.
	S11	**Assessment Week**
UNIT 3	S12	→ Put an informative text in the correct order
	S13	- Examine two texts and answer the questions related to them; - Put sentences in order by numbering them; - Put a text in the correct order.
	S14	→ Write an argumentative essay

	S15	- Examine a text accompanied by a photo and answer the related questions; - Write an argumentative text based on a photo; - Write an argumentative essay (without guidance).
	S16	**Assessment, Support, and Reinforcement**
END OF SEMESTER 1	S17	**Semester 1 Assessment**
UNIT 4	S18	→ Complete an explanatory text
	S19	- Look at a fill-in-the-blank text (with a photo) and answer the related questions; - Read a text and fill in the blanks with the given words; - Read a text and fill in the blanks with the given words.
	S20	→ Write slogans for a poster
	S21	- Look at a poster and answer questions about it; - Look at a photo and write a slogan; - Write three slogans using a word bank.
	S22	**Assessment Week**
UNIT 5	S23	→ Complete an explanatory text
	S24	- Examine a text with a photo and answer the related questions; - Tell a story based on a situation; - Tell a story based on a situation; - Describe a visit to a fair.
	S25	→ Write an informative newspaper article
	S26	- Examine a text with a photo caption and answer the related questions; - Write a short newspaper article based on a drawing; - Write a newspaper article (without guidance).
	S27	**Assessment Week**
UNIT 6	S28	→ Create a portrait
	S29	- Read a text accompanied by a photo and answer the related questions; - Describe a favorite singer.
	S30	→ Write a descriptive text
	S31	- Examine a text accompanied by a photo and answer the questions related to it; - Describe the city's theater.
	S32	**Assessment Week**
END OF SEMESTER 2	S33	**Semester 2 Assessment**

A review of the writing activities in the M.A.F. textbook and an analysis of this table allow us to draw the following conclusions:

– The structure of all the writing lessons is organized into four stages: "I Observe and Discover," "I Experiment and Reflect," "I Practice," and "I Produce";

– The first two stages are entirely related to the text (the initial situation). Indeed, they include comprehension questions designed to help learners identify the type of text or product to be created in the "I produce" stage;

– The activities are not accompanied by guidelines to help learners structure their writing;

– The textbook does not provide any rubrics for proofreading, checking, or self-assessment.

The following table shows the breakdown of activities related to the components of writing presented in the "Written Production" section of M.A.F.:

Table 4: Breakdown of activities related to the components of writing presented in the "Written Production" section of the M.A.F. textbook for the^{6th}grade

Writing components proposed by the textbook	Targeted aspects	Number of activities
Sentence comprehension	- Fill in speech bubbles with given dialogue; - Put sentences in order by numbering them	02
Text Comprehension	- Read a text with an illustration and answer the questions; - Put the sentences of a narrative text in order by ing them and numbering them; - Copy a text in the correct order; - Copy the lines from an interview in order; - Read a text and fill in the blanks with the given words	17

Sentence Construction	- Fill in speech bubbles with dialogue; - Answer questions from an interview by providing reasons; - Look at a photo and write a slogan; - Write three slogans using a word bank.	03
Text Production	- Write a narrative or descriptive text following a given model; - Write a text of your choice (without guidance); - Write a short newspaper article based on a drawing; - Write a newspaper article (without guidance). - Tell a story based on a situation; - Write a text based on a photo	10
Total activities		32

Based on this table, we see that text comprehension accounts for a significant portion of the curriculum, with 17 activities. Text production—which is a key focus of the 6th-grade annual competency—is actually represented by only ten activities, or 31.2% of the total.

It goes without saying that, despite this being a certification level that also marks the culmination of an entire learning cycle, writing activities remain few in number and simply repeat the same skills that students have already encountered repeatedly in previous grade levels, namely: reordering sentences, reconstructing a text, or filling in the blanks. Yet learners must move beyond this stage to enter a new phase of generating and developing ideas while adhering to the rules governing each type of writing. In other words, this means freeing the learner's thinking and equipping them with writing techniques that enable them to produce texts capable of solving a problem related to a communicative situation, because writing is not strictly an academic exercise. It is a matter of solving communicative problems drawn from the learner's own life experiences.

3. ANALYSIS OF THE TEXTBOOK "LE FRANÇAIS PRATIQUE"

Presentation Sheet 2: The "Le français pratique" textbook for 6th grade

TITLE	Le Français pratique
AUTHORS	R. Mansoum, A. Bouchikhi, L. Okhaya, My. S. Rabbaj, A. Islah.
PUBLISHER	Edition El Atlassi - Casablanca
ISBN	978-9954-685-34-1
NUMBER OF PAGES	208
ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENT(S)	Teacher's Guide
RETAIL PRICE	21.80 MAD

The F.P. is the educational product of a team comprising a senior inspector of vocational secondary education, an inspector of lower secondary education who also serves as the team coordinator, a primary school teacher, a teaching assistant at the École Normale Supérieure, and a vocational education teacher.

It should also be noted that the F.P. textbook is used exclusively in the sixth grade of elementary school.

In the "Foreword," the authors address the student while explaining the structure and content of the workbook. Regarding writing, they note that *"writing activities are closely linked to real life. Situations, accompanied by clear and motivating instructions, will gradually guide you toward writing narrative, descriptive, informative, and directive texts, by imagining contexts in which they take on their full* meaning";

In the "annual breakdown," writing activities occupy 12 pages out of the total number of pages in the workbook, or 5.76%.

The following table presents the content of these activities:

Table 5: Activities Related to "Writing" Included in the Curriculum Guide for the 6th Grade of Elementary School

UNITS	WEEKS	ACTIVITIES BY WRITING DOMAIN (Section: WRITING)
DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT	S1	Assess prerequisites.

UNIT 1	S2	→ Identify time markers; put the events of a narrative in order.
	S3	- Examine a text with an image and answer these questions; - Put the parts of a text in order to create a coherent text by writing the numbers in the appropriate boxes.
	S4	→ Write a narrative-descriptive newspaper article
	S5	- Examine a document with photos and answer these questions; - Write a short story about world civilizations (using a self-assessment rubric).
	S6	**Assessment Week**
UNIT 2	S7	→ Fill in the speech bubbles of a narrative comic strip
	S8	- Look at a comic strip and answer these questions; - Fill in the narrative text and speech bubbles of a comic strip (using a self-assessment grid).
	S9	→ Complete an interview by formulating questions or answers
	S10	- Observe an interview and answer these questions; - Complete an interview by writing answers and/or questions (with a self-assessment rubric).
	S11	**Assessment Week**
UNIT 3	S12	→ Organize an informative text related to science and technology.
	S13	- Examine a document and answer questions about it; - Put the parts of a text in the correct order to form a coherent text, numbering them as you go; - Rewrite a text in the correct order.
	S14	→ Write an argumentative essay related to science and technology.
	S15	- Examine two texts and answer the questions related to them; - Write an argumentative essay on "Video Games: For or Against."
	S16	**Assessment, Support, and Reinforcement**
END OF SEMESTER 1	S17	**Semester 1 Assessment**
UNIT 4	S18	→ Complete an explanatory text
	S19	- Examine a text (with a photo) and answer the related questions; - Fill in the blanks in a text using the given words (with a self-assessment grid)
	S20	→ Write slogans to raise awareness about energy conservation
	S21	- Look at two slogans and answer the questions about them; - Write slogans for a poster promoting energy conservation (using a checklist).
	S22	**Assessment Week**
UNIT 5	S23	→ Write a story about a personal experience
	S24	- Examine a text with a photo and answer the related questions; - Describe a personal experience, an event you've lived through, or a memory related to a challenge or achievement (using an outline and a self-assessment rubric).
	S25	→ Write an informative newspaper article
	S26	- Examine a text accompanied by a photo and answer the related questions; - Write a newspaper article that encourages students to take action to protect nature.
	S27	**Assessment Week**
UNIT 6	S28	→ Describe a person
	S29	- Examine a text with a photo and answer the related questions; - Write a six-line description of the actor "Gérard Depardieu" (using a self-assessment rubric).
	S30	→ Describe a place
	S31	- Read a text and answer the questions related to it; - Describe a museum based on a fact sheet (with a self-assessment rubric).
	S32	**Assessment Week**
END OF SEMESTER 2	S33	**Semester 2 Evaluation**

By reviewing the writing activities in the vocational training textbook and examining this table, we can make the following observations:

– The structure of most writing lessons is organized into three stages: "I Observe and Discover," "I Experiment and Reflect," and "I Practice." For the lesson on page 37, we identified only two stages: "I Observe and Discover" and "I Practice," whereas for the lesson on page 71, we identified "Comprehension" and "I Practice."

– Compared to the practice stage (writing), the observation and discovery phases, as well as the hands-on and reflection phases, are much more extensive and detailed, which risks encroaching on the writing and composition task—the primary objective of the writing sessions. However, the time allotted for writing does not allow for all tasks to be addressed sufficiently. Wouldn't it make sense to address the form and structure of the texts to be written during grammar sessions—especially "text grammar"—so as to devote all the time and attention solely to writing during the "writing" sessions? ;

– For the first time, writing activities are interspersed with sidebars containing some writing strategies, though not on a regular basis;

– The textbook provides self-assessment rubrics to help students refine their work and write a ^{second}draft.

The following table provides an overview of the distribution of activities related to the components of writing presented in the "Writing Production" section of the F.P. textbook:

Table 6: Distribution of activities related to the writing components proposed in the "Writing Production" section of the^{6th}-grade primary school F.P. textbook

Writing components proposed by the textbook	Targeted aspects	Number of activities
Text Comprehension	- Read a text with or without an image/photo and answer these questions; - Put the sentences of a text in order by numbering them; - Copy a text in the correct order; - Fill in the blanks in a text using the given words.	15
Sentence Construction	- Fill in speech bubbles in a comic strip with sentences you create; - Complete an interview; - Write slogans.	03
Text Composition	- Write a short story about world civilizations; - Write a newspaper article or a descriptive text.	06
Total Activities		24

Based on this table, we can see that reading comprehension continues to account for the majority of writing activities. Writing assignments, on the other hand, represent only about 37.5% of all the activities offered.

4. ANALYSIS OF THE "PARCOURS FRANÇAIS" TEXTBOOK

Presentation Sheet 3: The "Parcours français" Textbook for^{6th}Grade

TITLE	Parcours français
AUTHORS	Y. Gormati, M. J. Toumi, H. Issami, A. El Harrak, S. Meneouali.
PUBLISHER	Nadia Edition - Rabat
ISBN	978-9920-33-939-1
NUMBER OF PAGES	208
DOCUMENT(S) SUPPLEMENT(S)	Teacher's Guide
RETAIL PRICE	21.80 MAD

The Teacher's Guide was developed by a team consisting of two higher education professors (instructors), two elementary school inspectors, and a certified secondary school teacher (instructor). Like the textbook *Français pratique*, this workbook is also used exclusively in sixth grade. In other words, this method is not used in other grades of elementary school, which leads us to question the didactic and pedagogical continuity of the method in terms of prior knowledge and future learning.

The section "I Discover My Workbook" is dedicated to explaining the instructions for the various learning activities through 11 sample pages representing the subjects covered in the curriculum. For writing activities, the caption for the thumbnail highlights the three main phases that form the key components of the writing activities, namely: "I Observe and Discover," "I Practice," and "I Write";

The following table provides the content:

Table 7: Activities related to "Written Expression" included in the P.f. textbook for the^{6th}grade

UNITS	WEEKS	ACTIVITIES BY WRITING DOMAIN (Section: WRITING)

DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT	S1	Assess prerequisites.
UNIT 1	S2	→ Put a narrative text in the correct order.
	S3	- Examine a text in both ordered and disordered form and answer these questions; - Put sentences in order by writing the numbers in the appropriate boxes; - Write a coherent text using the given sentences.
	S4	→ Write a narrative or descriptive text
	S5	- Read a text and answer these questions; - Describe, in at least five lines, a trip you took with your parents; - Write a five-line text in which you describe a trip.
	S6	**Assessment Week**
UNIT 2	S7	→ Fill in the speech bubbles of a narrative comic strip
	S8	- Look at a comic strip without asking questions; - Write a comic strip using the given dialogue; - Fill in the speech bubbles of a comic strip.
	S9	→ Complete an interview designed to present an argument
	S10	- Watch an interview and answer these questions; - Fill in the blanks of an interview using the provided answers; - Write questions to prepare for an interview related to citizenship and civic behavior.
	S11	**Assessment Week**
UNIT 3	S12	→ Put an informative text in the correct order.
	S13	- Read a text and answer the questions related to it; - Put the sentences of a text in the correct order to form a coherent text, numbering them as you go; - Put sentences in order to create a coherent text.
	S14	→ Write an argumentative essay.
	S15	- Read a text and answer the questions related to it; - Write an argumentative text using the provided arguments and the toolkit; - Write an argumentative essay to defend a science and technology product.
	S16	**Assessment, Support, and Reinforcement**
END OF SEMESTER 1	S17	**Semester 1 Assessment**
UNIT 4	S18	→ Complete an explanatory text
	S19	- Read a text and answer the questions related to it; - Fill in the blanks in a text using the provided words and phrases; - Fill in the blanks in a given text.
	S20	→ Write slogans for a poster
	S21	- Look at slogans and answer questions about them; - Place each slogan under the corresponding card; - Write three slogans related to energy conservation.
	S22	**Assessment Week**
UNIT 5	S23	→ Write a narrative (personal experience/memory/event)
	S24	- Read a text and answer the questions about it; - Describe a real-life event in at least six lines; - Write a story about a real-life event (for the school newspaper).
	S25	→ Write an informative newspaper article
	S26	- Examine a newspaper article and answer questions about it; - Write a newspaper article of at least six lines in which you inform readers about an environmental initiative; - Write an informative article on a topic related to the challenges of contemporary life (for the school newspaper).
	S27	**Assessment Week**
UNIT 6	S28	→ Create a portrait of a person
	S29	- Examine a text accompanied by a photo and answer the related questions; - Describe the artist depicted in the image using the provided toolkit; - Examine a portrait and describe the person.
	S30	→ Describe a place related to the art world
	S31	- Examine a text accompanied by an image and answer the related questions; - Describe a museum exhibition hall using sentences; - Examine the filming location of a movie scene and describe it.
	S32	**Assessment Week**
END OF SEMESTER 2	S33	**Semester 2 Evaluation**

By reviewing the writing activities in the P.f. textbook and examining this table, we can highlight the following observations:

– All writing lessons are presented in three stages: "I Observe and Discover," "I Practice," and "I Write";

– The writing tasks undertaken by the learner are not accompanied by any rubric or self-assessment tool, nor by explicitly stated writing strategies. The learner is often presented with sequential (rewriting) exercises, lexical exercises (filling in sentences or texts with given words), or structural exercises (filling in with expressions or time markers). Situations that expose the learner to creative writing proper are rare, and even when asked to write, the learner is not given complete freedom of expression but is often provided with suggested sentences and toolkits to use. In short, this is not truly independent writing work.

The following table lists the activities proposed in the "Written Production" section of the P.f. textbook according to the components of writing:

Table 8: Breakdown of activities related to the components of writing proposed in the "Written Expression" section of the P.f. textbook for the^{6th}grade of elementary school

Components of writing proposed by the textbook	Targeted aspects	Number of activities
Comprehension of sentences	- Place each slogan under the corresponding card.	1
Text Comprehension	- Read a text with or without an image or photo and answer these questions; - Put the sentences of a text in order by numbering them; - Copy a text in the correct order; - Fill in the blanks in a text with the given words. - Fill in the speech bubbles of a comic strip with given sentences.	18
Sentence Construction	- Write questions to prepare for an interview; - Write three slogans; - Describe a museum exhibition hall by forming sentences.	04
Text Composition	- Write a coherent text using the provided sentences. - Write a story, a newspaper article, or a descriptive text.	11
Total Activities		34

Based on this table, it is clear that, as with the other textbooks studied, writing is once again relegated to a secondary role in the P.f. textbook, coming after comprehension activities involving either sentences or texts.

5. SUMMARY

To summarize the results of the longitudinal study of the three sixth-grade textbooks—namely, **Mes apprentissages en français** (M.A.F.), **Le français pratique** (F.P.), and **Parcours français** (P.f.)—we propose the following key points:

5.1 Status of the Authors of Sixth-Grade Textbooks

The following table shows the representation of each status across all three textbooks mentioned above:

Table 9: Status of the authors of sixth-grade elementary school textbooks

Status of Textbook Authors	Number
Elementary School Inspector	2
Former elementary school inspector	4
Secondary and College Education Inspector	1
Vocational secondary education inspector	1

School Principal	2
Elementary School Teacher	1
Language and Communication Teacher	1
Vocational Education Teacher	1
Certified Secondary School Teacher - Instructor	1
Higher Education Professor - Instructor	2
Assistant Professor at the École Normale Supérieure	1

A first glance at this table reveals that educational inspectors take center stage, with eight inspectors, half of whom are former inspectors (apparently retirees). It is also clear that all levels of education are represented, though those in elementary education predominate. Apart from the two school principals on the M.A.F. team, the rest of the authors are all teachers, though with different backgrounds. In fact, there is only one elementary school teacher on the F.P. textbook team, along with other secondary and higher education teachers, some of whom are trainers and assistants.

Each workbook is generally the product of a team of five authors (in the case of F.P. and P.f.) to six authors (in the case of M.A.F.).

It should also be noted that the two workbooks—F.P. and P.f.—are textbooks without precedents in earlier grade levels. In other words, these two methods are only adopted in sixth grade. This leads us to question their place in a teaching-learning process that spans an entire cycle. Furthermore, how did the authors of these textbooks design subsequent lessons—especially those focused on writing—when they did not guide students' learning in the preceding years or throughout the entire elementary school cycle? This question becomes even more interesting when one realizes that most of the authors—whether they are school inspectors or teachers—come from educational levels other than elementary school.

5.2 Activities for Teaching and Learning Writing

On page 223 of the Primary Education Curriculum published in July 2021, the pedagogical guidelines stipulate that writing activities aim to train learners to produce written work related to the targeted text types by placing them in situations involving written communication. Nevertheless, despite the 30-minute sessions in weeks 2 and 4 of each unit—which were added to the weekly 35-minute sessions—time remains insufficient, limiting the number of activities that can be carried out. In fact, these activities remain few in number and are largely limited to the systematic study of the rules governing each type of writing. The transition to application or even actual writing is not always achieved.

The following table shows the number of written production activities proposed by each textbook, based on the components of writing identified in the longitudinal study, namely: comprehension of sentences and texts, and the production of sentences and texts:

Table 10: Number of Activities Included in the "Written Production" Section of 6th-Grade Elementary School Textbooks

Textbooks	Number of activities in the				TOTAL
	Comprehension of		Sentence Writing		
	sentences	texts	sentences	texts	
M.A.F.	02	17	03	10	32
F.P.	00	15	03	06	24
P.F.	01	18	04	11	34
TOTAL	03	50	10	27	**90**
	53		**37**		

Based on this table, we can conclude that although the 6th grade marks the culmination of the elementary school cycle, the same observation holds true: reading comprehension activities dominate over writing activities. The opportunities for students to write remain insufficient.

As for the methodology followed during writing sessions, the table below shows the methodological framework recommended by each textbook:

Table 11: Methodological steps recommended by 6th-grade elementary school textbooks for writing lessons.

The Textbook	Recommended Methodological Steps for Writing
M.A.F.	"I Observe and Discover," "I Experiment and Reflect," "I Practice," and "I Write"
F.P.	"I observe and discover," "I experiment and reflect," and "I practice."
P.F.	"I observe and discover," "I practice," and "I produce"

A review of this table reveals that the methodological steps differ from one manual to another. The F.P. manual, for example, treats "practice" as "production," whereas for M.A.F. and P.f., "practice" and "production" are not the same, since they have been separated. The evaluation stage does not appear in any of the methodological frameworks. However, the F.P. textbook is the only one that offers self-assessment rubrics in addition to a few sidebars containing writing strategies. On the other hand, we note that this textbook places great emphasis on the first two stages, namely: "I Observe and Discover" and "I Experiment and Reflect." The "I Practice" stage is not very well developed, and as a result, learners do not spend enough time writing and producing.

Similarly, the M.A.F. and P.f. textbooks are criticized for failing to provide learners with writing strategies and proofreading and checking rubrics that would enable them to improve and develop their writing, however infrequent it may be.

CONCLUSION

A comparative analysis of the textbooks **Mes apprentissages en français**, **Le Français pratique**, and **Parcours français** has highlighted the strengths and limitations of the pedagogical approaches proposed for developing the written production skills of sixth-grade students in Morocco. Although these textbooks are approved by the Ministry of National Education, they exhibit significant disparities in terms of the diversity of activities, the progressive nature of the exercises, and their alignment with curriculum requirements.

A critical issue highlighted by this study is the frequent confusion between *reading comprehension* and *writing*. In fact, a majority of the exercises classified under the heading of writing are more closely related to text comprehension, thereby limiting the opportunities available to students to truly practice producing text. However, to strengthen writing skills, it is essential that writing activities go beyond the simple interpretation of content to encourage students' creativity, independence, and personal expression.

Furthermore, the exclusive focus on sentence-level grammar constitutes another significant limitation of the textbooks analyzed. To promote more coherent and structured writing, it would be beneficial to incorporate textual grammar, enabling students to master not only isolated grammatical structures but also logical and cohesive connections at the text-level. This would foster more fluent and better-organized writing, meeting the curriculum's expectations for written communication.

In summary, given the results of national assessments highlighting students' poor performance in written composition (PNEA, 2009), this analysis calls for a revision of textbooks, encouraging textbook developers and instructional designers to rethink the activities proposed. By incorporating more authentic writing activities and taking textual grammar into account, it would be possible to better support the development of Moroccan students' writing skills, thereby addressing the needs identified in national reports in a more targeted manner.

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