A New Textbook Design in Language Teaching: Plurimethodological Pair-unit[1]

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Abstract
In this paper, I propose a model of plurimethodological approach in ELT textbook design, in which one unit is based on the communicative PPP unit model, where the unit ends with a final communicative task, and the following unit is based on the action-oriented unit model, where the unit is a mini-project unit as a whole. Such a textbook model is based on the concept of plurimethodological pair-unit, where the communicative approach and the action-oriented approach are combined in coherence and synergy. In such a plurimethodological textbook design, the topics of the two successive units (one PPP unit and the other mini-project unit) are the same or closely related, so that the unit based on the PPP model will provide the students with much of the language and documentary resources needed to complete the mini-project in the following unit. The mini-project unit will provide the students with additional language and documentary resources for carrying out the mini-project, but as there will be less language and documentary work for students in this unit, students will be better able to concentrate on carrying out the mini-project.

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[1] This article was first presented at the conference: International TESOL Conference UKI 70, which was held by English Scholars Beyond Borders and Universitas Kristen Indonesia in Jakarta, on 15 - 17 November 15, 2023

INTRODUCTION

The Council of Europe (CoE) document *The Threshold Level in a European-Unit/Credit System for Modern Language Learning by Adults* (Van Ek, 1975), in the following quote, indicates the reference action that the learners will be prepared for in the communicative approach (CA), which is language interaction:

> "Nevertheless, by far the largest single group of learners, everywhere, consists of people who want to prepare themselves, in a general way, to be able to communicate socially on straightforward everyday matters with people from other countries who come their way, and to be able to get around and lead a reasonably normal social life when they visit another country" (p. 2).

The same quote also indicates the reference situation as well as the social objective of the CA, which are short-term contact situations and meeting others (e.g., particularly tourist encounters as one-off meetings), respectively. Thus, the goal of the CA, as indicated in the *Threshold Level* document, is to train communicators who will be involved in language interaction in initial and short-term contact situations. Since the action that we want learners to be able to carry out themselves in society at the end of their learning is (language) interaction in the CA, the learning action, according to the end-means homology principle (Puren, 2009), favored in the classroom is also language interaction in simulated situations with the same characteristics (e.g. simulated tasks as favored by the proponents of task-based language teaching (TBLT) (Ellis, 2003; Estaire and Zanon, 1994; Nunan, 1989; Willis, 1996)).

CoE (2001), on the other hand, presents a new goal in the English language teaching field, the training of a social actor, as follows:

> "The approach adopted here, generally speaking, is an action-oriented one in so far as it views users and learners of a language primarily as 'social agents', i.e., members of society who have tasks (not exclusively language-related) to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment, and within a particular field of action. While acts of speech occur within language activities, these activities form part of a wider social context, which alone is able to give them their full meaning" (p.9).

This time, unlike the *Threshold Level* document, the reference action that the learners as social actors will be prepared for is social action, which indicates a rupture from the reference action of the CA, namely, language interaction. Communicative language activities are also argued to be meaningful only when they are part of social actions. Consequently, in the action-oriented approach (AoA), communication is no longer the goal of language teaching and learning as in the CA (Van Ek, 1975) as well as TBLT but just a means of social action (Acar, 2020a). In this respect, Puren (2015, 2019b, 2020b) renames the AoA as social action-oriented approach (SAOA), and Acar (2020c, 2020d, 2020e) replaces the name action-oriented approach (AoA) with social action-based learning (SABL).

The ultimate goal of the AoA, as indicated in CoE (2001) and CoE (2020), is to train social actors. CoE (2001) states that it adopts the goal of training learners as democratic citizens as follows:

"The second summit made preparation for democratic citizenship a priority educational objective, thus giving added importance to a further objective pursued in recent projects, namely: To promote methods of modern language teaching which will strengthen independence of thought, judgement and action, combined with social skills and responsibility" (p.4).

These social actors are critical but responsible, autonomous but supportive citizens, and productive professionals (Acar & Puren, 2024). According to the end-means homology principle (Puren, 2009), in the AoA, since the action that we want learners to be able to carry out themselves in society at the end of their learning is social action, the learning action favored in and/or outside the classroom, homologous, is also social action realized through mini-projects and pedagogical projects (Puren, 2014a, 2014b, 2019a).

Unlike the reference situation as well as the social objective of the CA, which are short-term contact situations and meeting others, respectively, the reference situation, as well as the social objective of the AoA, are permanent contact situations and acting with others, respectively. This acting with others refers to creating a society and working with others in the AoA as indicated more clearly in Figure 1 by Puren (2015, p.6) as follows:
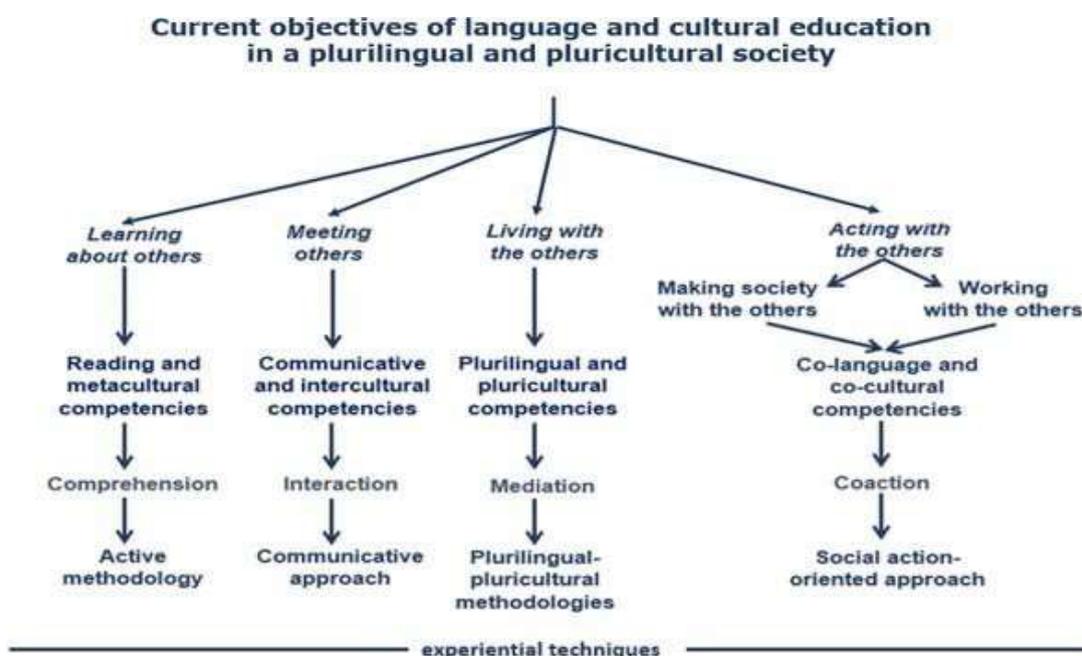

Figure 1. *Current Objectives of Language and Cultural Education in a Plurilingual and Pluricultural Society*

Figure 1 also indicates the reference actions of the active methodology, the CA, the plurilingual-pluricultural methodologies, and the AoA (SAOA) as comprehension,

interaction, mediation, and co-action (i.e. social action), respectively. The distinctions among the reference actions of these methods/approaches show the challenges for the students to cope with in society. For the active methodology, it is *learning about others*; for the CA, it is *meeting others*, for the plurilingual-pluricultural methodologies, it is *living with the others;* and for the AoA (SAOA), it is *acting with the others*.

The proponents of TBLT, through the communicative tasks they proposed, have never adopted the goal of training critical but responsible, autonomous but supportive citizens, and productive professionals since their ultimate goal has always been to train communicators. Consequently, communicative tasks serve a communicative objective, and they lack an educational goal as such. Pedagogical projects and mini-projects (which are pedagogical projects compatible with the duration of a textbook unit and which are more directive), on the other hand, naturally lead the learners to act together effectively in/outside their mini-society (classroom) in order to train them to act as social actors in the other domains of social life specified in the CEFR, namely, the personal, public and professional domains. In other words, the learners act together as citizens in the target language in and/or outside the classroom on the way to becoming social actors in their future personal, public, and professional lives.

Communicative PPP textbook design

Communicative textbook design typically follows a PPP sequence. New language items (particularly functions/notions) are presented in context and then practiced via various controlled activities. Since the goal of the CA, as indicated in the *Threshold Level* document, is to train communicators who will be involved in language interaction in short-term contact situations, and due to the end-means homology principle (Puren, 2009), the learning action favored in the classroom, homologously, is also language interaction realized through simulated tasks. These final communicative tasks are given place at the end of the units of communicative textbooks to allow the students to reuse the language content dealt with during the units of these communicative textbooks in free language production, as in the final P stage of the PPP (Presentation, Practice, Production) model. The language objectives of the units in these communicative textbooks, on the other hand, have generally been specified in terms of functions and notions, or communicative can-do objectives, while the units are designed to train communication skills initially in everyday situations and cultural themes. Consequently, the content of the units is organized to serve these communicative objectives, while the final tasks at the end of the units aim to enable the learners to reuse the learned content throughout the textbook unit.

The communicative textbook series, *Spot-On*, which was used in grades 6–8 in public schools in Turkey, for example, illustrates this case concretely, as shown by Gül Peker (2024), by offering the themes of the units, the communicative objectives, and the final communicative tasks at the end of the units, as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1. *Units, Functions and Tasks in Spot on Series Grades 6-8*

Example	Grade	Unit; Page	Theme of Unit	Functions	Task
1	6	2; 30	Hobbies and Interests	Asking for and giving information; Asking for and expressing likes and dislikes	Prepare a poster about their favorite cartoon characters' likes and dislikes.
2	6	5; 64	School Staff	Asking for and giving information; Asking for and talking about daily routines	Find a staff member; Interviewing him/her. Write a short paragraph about him.
3	7	5; 64	Technology	Making comparisons; discussing pros and cons of technology	Design and advertise a technological device.
4	7	12; 142	Changing Life Styles: Social Life	Describing past habits and routines; Asking for and giving information about past habits and routines	Find a picture showing lifestyle in the past. Write a short paragraph explaining it.
5	8	7; 86	Personal Experiences: Places	Talking about personal experiences; Asking and answering about your personal or someone else's personal experiences	Prepare a questionnaire about personal experiences.
6	8	11; 125	Personal Goals: Knowing What You Want	Expressing personal goals and outcomes; Expressing and inquiring about want and desire	Set five personal goals for the next five years.

In the English textbook *Count Me In* (B2-level) (the Ministry of National Education) used in the 12th grade public high schools in Turkey, on the other hand, some final tasks are seen at the end of each unit (e.g., Unit 1). Music. Final task: Create your dream concert poster) and some final tasks emerge towards the end of the unit, so they are not final (Acar, 2020d). The unit themes and final task(s) given in each unit are illustrated in Table 2.

In the textbook *Count Me In*, the objectives of each unit are given in terms of communicative functions. For example, *Unit 5. Psychology* indicates the objectives of the unit as *describing mood, making suggestions to change negative mood, following and giving instructions.* The task presented towards the end of Unit 5 *Work in pairs. Look at the role cards below and role-play a school counselor and a student. After creating your dialogue, serve* the communicative objectives of the units. This final task is as follows:

A. *Below are expressions with negative moods and suggestions for each of them. Match the situations with negative moods to suggestions.*

   'I feel nervous these days'; 'I'm in despair. I don't know what to do'; 'I can't help feeling excited. My lips are dried out'.

   1. Why don't you seek professional help? There is always a way out.
   2. Chill out! Let's go and get a drink.
   3. I suggest you socialize with cheerful people.

B.   Now, listen to Mrs. Calmer, talking to different clients, and make a list of the suggestions she makes to change the negative moods of her clients. Tape script 5.1

C.   Work in pairs. Look at the role cards below and role-play a school counselor and a student after creating your dialogue. (Çimen et.al. 2018, p. 52).

Table 2. *Units and final tasks in 'Count Me In*.

Unit title	Final tasks
Unit 1. Music	Create your dream concert poster.
Unit 2. Friendship	Use the following template to write an opinion essay. Choose at least 2 or 3 qualities and state the reasons.
Unit 3. Human rights	Write a variation of the essay in Part 5A using the template below. Take one or more disadvantaged group/s. Think about their problems and offer solutions. You can refer to Part 5 A.
Unit 4. Coming soon	Imagine that you have designed a cyber game and are trying to sell it to a company. Use the slide frames with headings on and prepare a slide show to introduce the game. For the scenario part, include the characters, setting, purpose, main actions, etc.
Unit 5. Psychology	Work in pairs. Look at the role cards below and role-play a school counselor and a student after creating your dialogue.
Unit 6. Favors	Think about your dream and write an application letter addressing to the scholarship announcements below. Remember to place the date and addresses as in the sample letter.
Unit 7. News stories	Write a news story or a past experience using the template below. Try to include answers to the questions in Part 2 C in your writing. Alternatively, you can write an imaginary story.
Unit 8. Alternative energy	Work in pairs. Pick one of the prompt boxes below and debate with your partner over alternative energy in the future as someone in favor or against.
Unit 9.Technology	Write a 'for and against essay' on any aspect of technology, as in the sample in Part 6 A.
Unit 10. Manners	Write a personal letter about a bad manner you have witnessed or experienced before. Describe the event, your experience and how you felt in detail.

Plurimethodological textbook design

The plurimethodological textbook design is one form of the action-oriented textbook design. It reflects a plurimethodological approach, in which different methodological matrices (e.g. the CA and the AoA) are brought together in coherence and synergy (Puren, 2020a). This is different from the multimethodological approach, which refers to the simple juxtaposition of different methodological matrices (Puren, 2020a). Consequently, in the plurimethodological textbook design, a mini-project offered to the students in a unit integrates different methodological matrices in coherence and synergy. Ipek & Acar (2023) illustrates how a mini-project integrates different methodological matrices in coherence and synergy on a mini-project offered by Acar (2020b) in Table 3

below (RM[2] refers to the reading matrix, CA refers to the communicative approach, PM refers to the Plurilingual Matrix and SAOA refers to the social action-oriented approach):

Table 3. *An Analysis of the Different Methodological Matrices in the Mini-project*

Methodological matrices	RM	CA	PM	SAOA
B: Discuss as a whole class why we celebrate birthdays (What's the point of a birthday party?) and how it is celebrated (How do you celebrate it in your family/community/culture?) and whether you (as a whole class) would like to realize this birthday party in reality, not as simulation.			X	
C: Decide collectively on which student you will organize the birthday party for as well as the date and the place of the birthday party (in the classroom or a place outside the classroom).		X		
D: Make an individual search on the internet, and then discuss as a whole class as to what makes a good birthday party.				X
E: Prepare a list of needs. Allocate each task among the classmates, and each student will get the necessary items.		X		X
F: Search for the close friends and/or family members and/or all the teachers of your classmate (also their contact information) for whom you are organizing the birthday party.		X		X
G: Prepare an email text or an invitation card as a whole class and send the email or the invitation card to them or call them on the phone, telling them their attendance will be a surprise for the classmates, and thank those who reply to you. (if you realize that some of the close friends and/or family members and/or the teachers of your classmates do not know English, translate, as a whole class, your email text or invitation card into your native language (Turkish) and send the email or the invitation card to them in your native language (Turkish) or talk to them on the phone in Turkish).		X	X	
H: As a whole class, realize the birthday party.				X
I: Do a collective self-evaluation of the organization and realization of the birthday party: What went well? What could have been done to make it better? Why? How?		X		X

Unlike the plurimethodological textbook design, the multimethodological textbook design juxtaposes two methodological matrices (e.g. the CA and the AoA) by offering the learners a communicative unit design and then an action-oriented unit design, or in one

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[2] *RM* is not used in this mini-project, but it is used in the project Puren (2021, p.21) analyzed in Table 3.

unit a final communicative task and a mini-project in that unit, to give the learners the freedom to choose freely any of them at the beginning of the units.

Table 4. *Themes and final tasks in 'Version Originale 4'*

Unit title	Final tasks
Unit 1. Inform: all journalists	Prepare a press review and/or create the front page of an April 1st newspaper.
Unit 2. Manage your image	Create a digital profile of the class and/or write a science fiction short story.
Professional task	Write a blog CV.
Unit 3. Live better	Design a Health-café project and/or write an article promoting the virtues of a dish.
Unit 4. Make the link	Reorganize a survey, write a report, and/or write a utopian essay.
Professional task	Animate a company round table discussion on intergenerational relationships.
Unit 5. Live together	Make a presentation on the theme of discrimination and/or stage and perform a humorous sketch on this same theme.
Unit 6. Have your chances	Prepare a plea on the theme of the second chance in education and/or give a chance to a historical character.
Professional task	Prepare for a job interview.
Unit 7. Be able to say it	Write an open letter and/or make a petition.
Unit 8. Make a commitment	Write a collection of committed poems and/or create a wacky association and write its founding text.
Professional task	Manage conflicts at work (labor courts).
Unit 9. Create	Design the cultural aspect of a stay in a French-speaking country and/or stage two cultural characters who defend their works to appear in a museum.
Unit 10. Circulate	Write a story of our French language learning experiences and/or write a metaphorical travel story.
Professional task	Write a call for tenders for a cultural event.

The action-oriented textbook design follows the design-implementation-evaluation (DIE) model, unlike the communicative textbook design that typically follows a PPP model. The unit objectives are stated in terms of social actions rather than communicative objectives, which are secondary objectives along with the language objectives. The unit of an action-oriented textbook is a mini-project as a whole (Acar, 2020c, 2021; Puren, 2008, 2021). One example of an action-oriented textbook is the French textbook *Version Originale 4 - B2* (Barthélémy et. al. 2003), edited and directed by Christian Puren. In *Version Originale 4* the final tasks are no longer communicative tasks but mini-projects. The themes, two final tasks in the form of mini-projects presented in each unit and one professional task offered after every two units, are illustrated in Table 4 (Acar, 2020d).

The theme of Unit 5, for example, is *Live together*. The mini-projects proposed in this unit are *make a presentation on the theme of discrimination and/or stage and perform a humorous sketch on this same theme*. The objectives of this unit, on the other hand, are stated in terms of social actions rather than communicative objectives: *At the end of this unit, the students will make a presentation on the theme of discrimination and/or stage and perform a humorous sketch on this same theme.* The action scenario of the mini-project, which is the predetermined design and organization of work, taking into account the structural constraints of a textbook (Acar, 2020d, 2021), *Stage and perform a humorous sketch on the theme of discrimination* in this unit :

A. Read the definition of parody and comment on it among yourselves.
B. Look at these two photos and explain why the second one is a parody.
C. In groups, choose the discrimination you want to report. Write the sketch. You can parody a work if you wish.
D. Work on the staging by adding stage directions to your text: indications about the places, costumes, intonations, gestures, mimics, etc.
E. Do a dress rehearsal and then play in front of the whole class. Which sketch was the most successful? Why?

Plurimethodological Pair-unit in Textbook Design

The textbook design with plurimethodological pair-units reflects the plurimethodological approach in ELT textbook design, in which one unit is based on the communicative PPP unit model, where the unit ends with a final communicative task, and the following unit is based on the action-oriented unit model, where the unit is a mini-project unit as a whole. Such a textbook model is based on a plurimethodological pair-unit since the CA and the AoA are brought into coherence and synergy in that the topics of the two successive units (one PPP unit and the other mini-project unit) are the same or closely related, so that the unit based on the PPP model will provide the students with much of the language and documentary resources needed to complete the mini-project in the following unit. The action-oriented unit, which is the mini-project unit, will provide the students with additional language and documentary resources for implementing the mini-project, but the learners will spare less time on the language work in this unit, so they will be better able to concentrate on carrying out the mini-project offered in this unit.

Such a plurimethodological textbook design employs a strategy of complementarity between the CA and the AoA since one unit implements the CA and the other unit implements the AoA, which provides a complementarity between the CA and the AoA within the same textbook. In the communicative unit of the textbook, after working on the presentation and practice phases throughout the unit, the learners carry out a final communicative task at the end of the unit that will enable them to reuse what they have learned in the unit in a free production stage. The following unit, which is an action-oriented unit or mini-project unit, is not an independent unit from the previous communicative unit in that they share the same theme or very close themes so that the mini-project that is offered to the learners in this unit will draw on the language and documentary resources that the learners have already gained in the previous unit. Consequently, the two units are brought into coherence and synergy through the theme

and the mini-project. Thus, such a plurimethodological textbook design results in creating a new unit that is more effective than the sum of its parts. I call the unit created as a result of such a combination of two units a *plurimethodological pair-unit*. A *plurimethodological pair-unit*, in this article, is a higher unit that brings together the CA unit and the SAOA unit.

At the end of a communicative unit related to the theme *kitchen*, for example, this unit can offer students a communicative task that will lead the learners to discuss the best recipes in their hometown, so that they can freely reuse the language resources they have learned throughout the *kitchen* unit. The next unit, which will be an action-oriented unit that can still cover the theme *kitchen,* will offer the learners a mini-project that the students will begin carrying out from the beginning of the unit and finalize at the end of the unit. The following mini-project proposed by Acar (2021, p. 312) can be a sample of such a mini-project in concrete terms:

A: As a whole class, prepare a cookbook with local recipes to promote Turkish cuisine to the world and share it on social media like Facebook.

B: Open up a Facebook account with a title you choose (e.g., Turkish cuisine, recipes for the world, etc.). You can also seek ways to invite your peers from other countries to share their cuisine on your Facebook account. Decide collectively on a title for your cookbook which reflects the content of your cookbook and add some inspiring subtitles on the cover to reflect your class identity (e.g. the best recipe suggestions from class 8A of secondary school X).

C: Search the internet as to what a recipe includes (e.g. The name of the meal, the number of people the meal can serve, ingredients and amount of ingredients, the steps of preparation instructions for cooking, the statement of cooking time, etc.) and decide collectively on the criteria for evaluating the recipes of the groups and agree on a format for your cookbook.

D: Search the internet and/or consult your parents as to which recipes best represent your local cuisine. If your parents suggest recipes in your native language, write down every detail you searched in C and translate, as a group, the parents' recipes into English. Search the internet for the relevant pictures to accompany your recipe.

E: In groups, write the recipe for your meal in the format you collectively agreed on in C.

F: In groups, present your recipes in the class.

G: The other classmates will listen to you, take notes, and evaluate your recipes by using the evaluation grid you formed collectively. Make suggestions to the

groups whose recipes are not in line with the criteria and format you formed and developed collectively.

H: As a whole class, put together all the recipes in a single word or PDF format.

I: Share your cookbook on social media.

J. Follow up (as a whole class) on the likes and dislikes and the comments received from people about the cookbook on the social media.

CONCLUSION

In line with the goal of the CA as stated in the Threshold Level document, which is to train successful communicators who will be involved in short-term contact situations in the real world, the communicative textbooks aim to train learners to be involved in effective communication by offering the learners communication situations at the end of its units so that they can reuse the language content, oral and written comprehension and production activities that they worked on throughout the unit. Since the goal of the AoA is to train social actors as engaged citizens, action-oriented textbooks, ultimately, aim to train learners to be able to act together effectively in the real world, and, in line with this goal, these textbooks offer the learners mini-projects in the units that will enable them to act together effectively with each other in and/or outside their mini-society (classroom). In the AoA, however, communication is not dispensed with, but its status changes from being both the means and the goal as in the CA to just a means in the service of communication. Thus, in action-oriented textbook design, the objectives of the unit are not stated in terms of communication but social actions. The content of the units, on the other hand, serves as resources for the learners to be able to carry out the mini-project throughout the unit. Consequently, the mini-projects in action-oriented textbooks aim to train social actors.

Communicative textbooks adopt a monomethodological approach by designing the units only according to their own principles (e.g., communicative objectives, communicative activities, and a final communicative task at the end of the units). Action-oriented textbooks, on the other hand, adopt a plurimethodological approach since mini-projects naturally put several methodological matrices in coherence and synergy, in other words, action-oriented textbooks with mini-project units allow the implementation of several approaches at the same time in harmony.

This article proposed a new model of ELT textbook design, in which one unit is based on the communicative unit model, where the unit ends with a final communicative task, and the other unit is based on the action-oriented unit model, where the unit is an action-oriented mini-project unit. Such a textbook model is based on plurimethodological pair-units in which the CA and the AoA are brought into coherence and synergy. Since the topics of the two successive units (the communicative unit and the other mini-project unit) are the same or closely related and the communicative unit will provide the students with much of the language and documentary resources needed to complete the mini-project in the following unit, the learners will need less language work while they carry

out the mini-project offered in the action-oriented unit. The mini-project unit will still provide the students with additional language resources for carrying out the mini-project, but as there will be less language work for students in this unit, students will be better able to concentrate on carrying out the mini-project. Thus, such a plurimethodological textbook design results in creating a new unit that's more effective than the sum of its parts, which I call a plurimethodological pair-unit.

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