

V. ALGERIAN ENGLISH FRAMEWORK (AEF) FOR GRADES 6-12

A. INTRODUCTION

The Algerian English Framework is a comprehensive, general description of the expected level of attainment of each of the competencies *for each* grade level and *across* grade levels. The Algerian English Framework is organized around competencies that correspond to those in the Common European Framework of Reference (2001), but have been adapted to reflect the Algerian middle school and high school context. They correspond to levels A1, A2 (basic language user) and B1 (independent language user) in the Common European Framework. The leap from being a basic language user (A2) to an independent language user (B1) is significant and thus significant time is devoted to the B1 level. MS1 corresponds to level A1; MS2 corresponds to level A2; MS3 corresponds to level A2+; MS4 and SE1 correspond to level B1; SE2 and SE3 to B1+. The aim is for Algerian learners to become independent users of English by the end of the seven years of English instruction.

The Algerian English Framework enables the user to see two views of the curriculum, one vertical, by year, and one horizontal, over the years.

The vertical view

The vertical view is an overall view of learning targets by competency for a particular grade level. The competencies are categorized according to:

- Interaction (speaking)
- Interpretive Listening
- Interpretive Reading
- Productive Writing
- Productive Speaking
- Linguistic Competency

The learning targets for the competencies are expressed in terms of what the learner **can do** by the end of the year, with respect to the kinds of **topics** and the **breadth** of language they can use. For speaking and writing, the learning targets include the **functions** learners can do and for listening, reading and writing, the learning targets include the **genres** the learners can read, listen to or write.

For example, at the MS4 level, in the **interactional speaking** competency, the first of the year-end targets is for learners to be able to:

interact orally to start and maintain short conversations (i.e. asking/ answering questions and responding to information and news of others)	→ this shows what they can do by the end of the year
on a range of familiar topics related to self and community	→ this shows the kinds of topics the can talk about
using both routine and simple, spontaneous	→ this shows the breadth of language

sentences	
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The second **interactional speaking** competency is for learners to be able to:

carry out a range of basic, common functions in order to make plans, give opinions and advice, give and follow instructions, and ask for and offer things and assistance using routine and straightforward, spontaneous sentences.	→this shows the kinds of functions they can do →this shows the breadth of language
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For the **reading** competency, one of the targets is for learners to be able to:

read and understand the main points of straightforward personal letters describing personal events, feelings/opinions and wishes	→ this shows what they can do → this shows the genre →this shows the topics
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For the listening competency, one of the targets is for learners to be able to:

Listen to and understand instructions and explanations that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have several steps • are accompanied by visuals (e.g. gestures, writing or drawing, modeling, demonstration) • are broken down step-by-step. 	→this shows what they can do and the genres →this shows the breadth/nature of the language
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For the **writing** competency, one of the targets is for the learners to be able to:

Write short, personal letters or email on familiar topics and those of personal interest, that follow a conventional format consisting of one main paragraph to provide description and ask questions	→his shows the genre and what they can do → this shows the topics → this shows the breadth of language → this shows the function/purpose
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The last part of each of the competencies describes language learning strategies that help learners to acquire, remember, organize and use information on an ongoing basis. For example, in the productive speaking competency, one of the targets in MS4 is for learners to be able to use strategies to convey words they can't say in the target language. Such strategies include using gestures to convey the meaning of the word, or using words they

do know to describe it. Another strategy is to be able to demonstrate their interest in what another person is saying. Ways to do this include using eye contact or nodding one's head.

These strategies are expressed as follows:

Plan for, use and evaluate the effectiveness of productive speaking strategies used

- a. *to convey unknown words, phrases and structures*
- b. *to maintain interest.*

In the reading competency, one of the strategies is to develop guessing skills. One way to do this is to use context clues in the reading passage to guess the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Another strategy is to develop reading efficiency and speed. Reading word for word inhibits reading efficiency. One way to do increase reading efficiency is to read in phrases, not words. In other words, to practice and train the eyes to perceive several words at a time.

These strategies are expressed as follows:

Plan for, use and evaluate the effectiveness of several reading strategies to develop

- *reading efficiency and speed*
- *guessing skills.*

Descriptors for each grade level

The descriptors for each grade level describe at a **general** level what learners should know and be able to do with respect to each of the competencies ***by the end of that year.*** The descriptions thus provide the targeted learning outcomes for the year. For example, the descriptors for MS4 describe what learners should know and be able to do with respect to interactive speaking, interpretive listening and reading, productive writing and speaking, grammar and strategies at the end of the fourth year of middle school.

In the next section, The Expanded Curriculum, the general descriptors of the AEF are expanded and described in detail with examples so that teachers and materials developers can use them to plan lessons and develop materials.

The horizontal view

The Algerian English Framework also allows one to view learners' expected progress through each of the competencies over the course of the seven years of English instruction. The competency for each year articulates with the previous year by building on and expanding what has been attained in that year. Learners expand and deepen the competencies over the seven years of study, moving from a focus on self and the local community in the earlier years, to a focus on the larger community and the world in the high school years.

Descriptors across grade levels

For example, compare one part of the interactive spoken competency across three grade levels:

Grade 6

Can interact orally to ask and answer a question

- on topics and situations related to describing themselves and others, home and time
- using memorized phrases and basic sentences.

Grade 9

Can interact orally to start and maintain short conversations (i.e. asking/ answering questions and responding to information and news of others)

- on a range of familiar topics related to self and community
- using both routine and simple, spontaneous sentences

Grade 12

Can interact orally to start and maintain a conversation (e.g. greetings, asking questions and follow-up questions, answering in detail, giving and seeking facts, reasons, advice and opinions and agreeing and disagreeing)

- on topics of interest and familiar matters (e.g. current events and contemporary issues, and concrete issues related to personal life and found in media such as film, books and music)
- using a range of appropriate simple language

By the end of Grade 6, learners can ask and answer questions about themselves, by the end of Grade 9, they can maintain short conversations about themselves and their community, by the end of Grade 12, they can carry on a conversation on current events and contemporary issues.

See the tables on the following pages.