

The Evaluation of Iranian High School English Textbook from the Prospective of Teachers

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ABSTRACT

In spite of remarkable advances in teaching and developing new technologies, textbooks have very crucial affects in the process of language teaching and learning. This study evaluates English text books which are taught in Iranian high schools from the perspective of teachers. The advantages and shortcomings of the textbooks are discussed in detail with reference to eight common criteria extracted from different material evaluation checklists. The study was carried out at several high schools in Mazandaran, Iran. The mixed method, a combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches, was used in this study. The data was obtained from a total of 271 English teachers, both female and male. It was collected through a questionnaire with 40 items which were related to the eight criteria; Content, Physical appearance, Exercises and Activities, Clarity of instruction, Level of textbook, Vocabulary, Grammar, Consideration of learning style differences in the textbooks. Quantitative data were analyzed through SPSS.. The results revealed that the teachers seemed happy with the textbooks and had positive attitudes towards the textbooks. The research findings make it clear that the current materials or textbooks can meet Iranian teachers' need and interests.

Keywords: Textbook, evaluation, materials, criterion

INTRODUCTION

It is beyond doubt that the English language is the center of communication all over the world. In fact, it is one of the reasons why English is taught as a foreign language in many countries. In fact, it has already become a tool of communication in many educational settings such as public schools as well. It has been taught so as to help learners to keep up with the recent advances and developments of time in new fields of science and technology.

It can be stated here that with the rapid developments in the above mentioned field, Learners are becoming more interested and conscious, particularly through the unavoidable effects of television and computer. Due to this fact, learners expect high standards of production and presentation in which different instructional materials such as slides, films, audiotape recordings, computerized materials can be used to communicate the subject in a context applicable to the learners. Among those teaching and learning materials, textbooks or course books play a crucial role.

To many professional teachers, ELT textbooks are basic elements in ELT teaching and they are the most extensively used instructional materials in schools at present. Sheldon (1988) contends that "textbooks are visible heart of any ELT program". In explaining the vital role of textbook in ELT teaching, Benevento (1984) states that whenever foreign language teachers meet each other, the first words after "How do you do" is usually what course books do you use (p.6). In addition, Dubin and Olsten (1986) state that the tangible element that gives a language course face validity to many learners and teachers is textbook. Regarding the primary purpose of the ELT textbooks, Byrd (2001) states that ELT textbooks embody two

kinds of information, which are thematic / topic content (family, school, etc.) and linguistic content (grammar, vocabulary, skills). The users of ELT textbooks engage with the content of the document to obtain the linguistic knowledge needed so as to communicate in a foreign language. ELT textbooks build their four skills such as speaking, listening, reading and writing in a second/ foreign language.

Regarding the role of ELT textbooks in the process of language teaching and learning most of English language teaching professionals share a wide range of opinions about the use and usefulness of ELT textbooks in classes. According to Tomlinson (1998) some people are against ELT textbooks because they are limited in content and application in meeting the needs of the students. On the other hand, some people are more positive about the use of ELT textbooks because for them textbook provide a structure and cohesion to the learning process. No matter which views one holds, it is a fact that ELT textbooks are used in many language classes and they are the most important part of teaching. Moreover, the textbook has a crucial and a positive part to play in the everyday job of teachers and students in teaching and learning English. Furthermore, textbooks became a universal element of ELT teaching. (Hutchinson and Torres, 1994, Tomlinson, 1998)

Textbook evaluation can be very useful in teacher development and professional growth. Cunnings worth (1995) and Ellis (1997) suggest that Textbook evaluation helps teachers move beyond impressionistic assessments and it helps them to acquire useful, accurate, systematic, and contextual insights into the overall nature of textbook material. Textbook evaluation, therefore, can potentially be a particularly worthwhile means of conducting action research as well as a form of professional empowerment and improvement. Similarly, textbook evaluation can also be a valuable component of teacher training programs for it serves the dual purpose of making student teachers aware of important features to look for in textbook while familiarizing them with a wide range of published language instruction materials.

In summary, it is a fact that evaluation of textbook and other materials in the natural and fundamental part of the teaching and learning process.

Despite the vital role that textbooks play in teaching and learning English as a foreign language in Iran, there is limited research conducted to evaluate textbooks. In one study, course books prepared for high schools in Iran were compared in terms of predetermined criteria. The results of the study indicated that books had better features from the teacher's point of view.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Teachers usually teach English language for four years in Iranian high schools and pre-university centers. Since many teachers encounter immense problems in terms of teaching English in high schools and Pre-university centers, one may ask where the origin of these problems is. It is assumed that this predicament is mainly caused by the inadequacies in instructions and curriculums. (Jahangard, 2007)

The textbook which is used to as an instructional material has a vital role in learning English. It is assumed that the textbooks are responsible of these problems

Since the primary users of textbooks are the instructors and learners, evaluation should be carried out while both parties are using the textbook so as to get their opinions about how the textbook works in the teaching learning situation. In the present study teachers prospective in this case is investigated to see how they think.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to assess the effectiveness of textbooks titled "English Book for high school" which was prepared by Ministry of Education as an instructional material for high school students from the perspective of the teachers. This study answers the following research question by evaluating the textbook according to these eight criteria: Content, Physical appearance, Exercises and Activities, Clarity of instruction, Level of Textbook, Vocabulary, Grammar, Consideration of learning style differences in the Textbook.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Do Iranian teachers have a positive attitude towards the textbooks for those levels?

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Ho1: Iranian teachers have a negative attitude towards the textbooks.

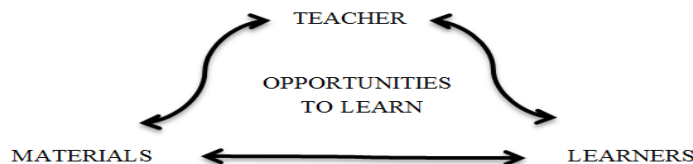
SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Course book analyses and evaluations not only help teachers to develop themselves but also help them to gain very good and useful insights into the nature of the material. In addition, as Hutchinson (1987) points out materials evaluation not only serves the immediate practical aim of choosing teaching materials but also plays a critical role in developing teacher's awareness in a number of ways, providing teachers to analyze their own presuppositions about the nature of language and learning, forcing teachers to set their prerequisites and helping them to see materials as an essential part of the whole teaching/ learning situation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Textbooks have always been the most preferred instructional materials in ELT. They are best seen as resources in achieving aims and objectives that have already been set concerning learner needs (Cunningsworth, 1995). Textbooks play a prominent role in the teaching /learning process and they are the primary agents of conveying the knowledge to the learners. Moreover, one of the basic functions of textbooks is to make the existence knowledge available and apparent to the learner in a selected, easy and organized way. Hutchinson and Torres, (1994) argues that the textbook has a very important and a positive part to play in teaching and learning English. They state that textbooks provide the necessary input into classroom lessons through different activities, readings and explanations. Thus, they will always survive on the grounds that they meet certain needs.

Allwright (1981) adds a further dimension to the role of the textbook by characterizing the lesson as an interaction between the three elements of teacher, learners and materials. This interaction enhances the opportunities to learn.



Hutchinson and Torres (1994) also mention that the good textbook, as long as it is properly used can be an excellent tool for effective and long- lasting change. They conclude that the textbook is an important means of satisfying a wide range of needs that come out from the classroom. Their role in education cannot be ignored because they make the lives of teachers and learners easier, more secure, and fruitful.

Regarding the multiple roles of textbooks in ELT, Cunningsworth (1995) identifies a textbook as a resource in presenting the material, a source for learners to practice and do the activities. They also provide the learners with a reference source on grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. What is more, textbooks serve as a syllabus and a self-study source for learners. They also serve as a support for the beginning teachers who have yet to gain in confidence. Thus, it can be said that the fundamental role of textbooks is to be at the service of teachers and learners but not their boss. Similarly, Grant (1990) presents the opinions of teachers about the textbook in his book. Most teachers state that a textbook shows the order what is to be taught and learned and in which order it is to be taught and learned. They guide the teachers as to what methods to be used and as Richards (2001) states above, a textbook save the teacher an extraordinary amount of time. Last but not least, they are very useful Learning aids for the learners.

Ur (1996) also states that a textbook provides a clear framework. It makes clear what is coming next and learners know where they are going. As mentioned above, it serves as a syllabus and save the time of the teacher because it already includes ready-made texts and tasks for a particular group of learners. It also acts as a guide to the inexperienced teachers. Finally, Ur (1996) concludes that a textbook can gain the learner with some degree of autonomy. She states that a learner without a textbook becomes more teacher-dependent.

Despite the impact of new technologies, textbooks will doubtless continue to play an important role in language teaching and provide a useful resource for both teachers and learners. What is more it has significant impact on the learners' meeting their language learning objectives. The role of the textbook in the language classroom is undeniable. Both teachers and students need a framework on which to build and textbooks definitely provide this.

There are some empirical studies carried out on the evaluation of textbook and materials evaluation in Iran. Riazi and Aryashokouh (2007) also studied the four high school and pre-university English textbooks focusing on the consciousness-raising aspect of vocabulary exercises. They found that of all exercises in the four books, only one percent of them could be categorized as consciousness-raising. They also found that the exercises mainly concentrated on individual words (approximately 26%) with no emphasis on fixed expressions, lexical collocations (approximately 15%) and grammatical collocations (approximately 2%). They concluded that students are mainly dealing with meanings of individual words and not with how words are used with other words or in what combinations.

Rahimpour (2001) conducted a material evaluation study in Tabriz. This case study aimed to evaluate the three English language textbooks used at Iran high schools from the teachers' point of view. For this purpose a 46 items questionnaire was developed about five sections of the textbooks (vocabulary, reading, grammar, language functions and pronunciation practice. Participants of this study were fifty high schools teachers with more than five years of teaching experience. For analyzing the survey data collected, the answers were quantified. Each option of the items was ranked (not at all 1, not satisfactory 2, to some extent 3, to a great extent 4).

The results of the study revealed that the textbooks are not acceptable from the teachers' points of views by considering five sections.

Ellis (1997) distinguishes two types of materials evaluation, namely, predictive evaluation and retrospective evaluation. A predictive evaluation is designed to make a decision regarding what materials to use. Teachers who are required to carry out a predictive evaluation determine which materials are best suited to their purposes. Once the materials

have been used, further evaluation may be conducted to find out whether the materials have worked out for them, and this type of evaluation is called retrospective evaluation.

It is for the reason mentioned above that there is then a need to evaluate materials retrospectively because such an evaluation provides the teacher with feedback so as to determine whether it is worth using the material again. Thus, Ellis (1997) states that 'a retrospective evaluation serves as a means of testing the validity of a predictive evaluation and what is more, it may point to ways in which the predictive instruments can be improved for future use (p.37). As can be understood from above definitions, both predictive and retrospective evaluations aim at making teaching/learning environment more effective. They both help teachers to make appropriate judging concerning the effectiveness of their teaching including the materials they used.

DESCRIPTION OF THE CRITERIA TO BE USED IN THE PRESENT STUDY

The following criteria have appeared to be important among the ones cited in the previous section and this section deals with those common criteria with regard to their underlying principles.

Content

Content, in other words 'subject matter' is the first criterion to be used in this study. In all setting authors need to consider whether the textbook is likely to be of interest or use to the students. According to the checklist that Skierso (1991) offers, what subject matter (topics, content) is covered, whether the topics are interesting for the learners or not and also how (if at all) culture is presented are all questioned and what is more, what text types such as, dialogs, notes, songs, poems, essays, biographies, letters, newspaper articles, jokes, folktales, etc. The textbook contain. Finally, Skierso (1991) in his checklist, questions whether the texts in the textbook are authentic, up to date or not.

Physical Appearance

Another criterion to be used in this study focused on the appropriateness of the materials in relation to their physical appearance. It is stated in the literature that materials should achieve impact, which is realized when materials have a noticeable effect on learners. Thus, when the learners' interests, attention, and curiosity are attracted through attractive presentation, such as use of color, drawings, photographs, cartoons, charts, tables etc., their motivation to the task will increase and as a result there is likely to be a better chance of learning.

Exercises and Activities/Tasks

Exercises and activities/tasks are the next criteria to be considered in this study.

It is highly important for the learners to do the exercises and activities and perform the tasks so as to be able to have enough practice in the classroom. Jones (1999) implies that it is essential that the activities in the course book have a variety of focus and pace and that the activities should be enjoyable to the students so that their motivation can increase.

Clarity of Instruction

Clarity of instruction is another important criterion to be used in this study. All instructions to the exercises, activities and tasks should be clear and appropriate to the level of the students so that they can understand and perform such activities, tasks and exercises easily. Unclear and complex instructions may lead the learners to unwillingness, which usually results in lack of motivation to the lesson.

Level

Another criterion for the evaluation of language teaching materials is the level of the instructional materials. The extent to which the students can make use of a textbook depends on the appropriateness of the textbook to the level of the students concerned. The level of difficulty of the grammatical features, the vocabulary to be taught in the reading texts, task/activities and exercises and the level of instructions should neither be below the student's level nor far beyond their proficiency level and developmental stages.

Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the next criterion to be considered significant for the course book evaluation. As well as teaching as many words as possible, one of the targets of course books should be to equip learners with strategies for handling the unfamiliar vocabulary they inevitably will meet and also they can help learners to develop their own vocabulary- learning strategies. Nearly in all modern course books, there are vocabularies learning activities, however, whether they aim at helping learners to extend and develop their vocabulary in a purposeful and structured way or not is the matter to be considered.

Grammar

Grammar is another important criterion to be used in this study. It is one of the major components of any language course. It is through effective teaching of grammar that learners are equipped with the ability to create their own utterances and use language for their own purpose.

METHODOLOGY

This part deals with the methodology, describing the steps taken in the process of carrying out the study. Specific sections are devoted to a description of the participants, materials, procedures and data analysis employed in this investigation.

Participants

The sample of this survey study consisted of high school teachers. This study was conducted at several high schools in Mazandaran Province. A total of 271 teachers participated in the study half of them were males and half females whose teaching experiences have been placed somewhere on the continuum of 6-20 years.

Materials

This study employed questionnaire and interview to collect data on the points of views of teachers about the mentioned textbooks. The questionnaires were used to obtain quantitative data and the interviews were used to obtain qualitative data that supported and enriched the quantitative data.

Questionnaire

For the purpose of developing the questionnaire, the literature related to materials evaluation was reviewed. The review of literature revealed that there were some commonly used criteria in textbook and material evaluation process. The questionnaire was examined by two specialists, one from Tonekabon Azad University and the other from Azad University of Chalus. This helped to eliminate the ambiguities, to complete lacking topics and issues, and to examine the face validity. The questionnaire consisted of 40 items related to eight criteria determined through literature review to conduct a macro level material evaluation.

Interview

Interview was used to collect the information related to perception of teachers on effectiveness of the textbooks they used. A tape recorder was used in the interview in order to have precise information. Not only the aim of interview was to obtain their attitude towards the books, but also was to get their suggestions in improving the textbooks. The interview questions were piloted with one of the teachers using the particular textbooks. This helped to decide on the issues like pacing, tape recording, clarity and comprehensibility of the questions.

Procedures

In this study quantitative and qualitative data were obtained through questionnaires and teachers were interviewed for the macro level evaluation of the textbooks. Data collection procedures were carried out between April and May 2013. Prior to the implementation of the instruments, the course teachers were informed about the textbook evaluation study and data collection procedures by means of the questionnaires. The questionnaires were given to teachers by the researcher. The researcher stated that: All your data would be kept confidential and no one would have access to them except the researcher.

Teachers were interviewed by the researcher using the interview schedule. The interviews were conducted with teachers between 10th May and 20th May. The interviews took approximately 30 minutes individually and the interviews were tape-recorded by the researcher. A tape recorder was used in the interview in order to have precise information

Data Analyses

This study produced both qualitative and quantitative data through questionnaires and interviews. Frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations were calculated for each item to describe the overall picture of how the teachers rated the textbooks in terms of eight criteria. Data collected through interviews were transcribed, content, analyzed and grouped according to eight criteria used in this study for the evaluation of the particular textbook.

RESULTS & FINDINGS

The evaluation carried out at macro level focuses on eight criteria namely, content, physical appearance, exercise and activities, clarity of instruction, level, vocabulary, grammar, consideration of learning style differences.

For presenting the result of the study, means, standard deviations, frequencies, percentages of each item were calculated to describe and summarize the responses of students. The results of items related to each evaluation criteria were presented in tables and explanation were provided accordingly.

Content

The first criteria “content” was measured through seven items in students’ questionnaire and the responses are presented in Table 1. As table indicated most of the teachers (64.4% strongly agreed or agreed) believe that the topics in the units are interesting for them. (37.5% agreed or strongly agreed with the related item) think that the reading passages in the textbook are quite long. Most of the teachers believed that the reading passages related to their daily life. 38.5 % of the teachers are satisfied with that multiple choice tests and they believed that multiple choice tests involved in the text would facilitate their English. (48.7% strongly agreed or agreed) stated that the units in the textbook cover all skills. (46.7 % disagreed or strongly disagreed) think that the textbook includes topics which are not up to date, (44.2% strongly agreed or agreed) expressed that the content of the book has sufficient variety. But in their comments they expressed their desire to have more varieties.

Table1. Descriptive statistic of the content in the textbook

Item No	Item	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1	The topics of the units are interesting for me.	2.03	.675	48 (17.9)	173 (64.4)	38 (14.2)	9 (3.4)
2	Reading passages and examples in the textbooks are related to our daily lives.	2.19	.825	55 (20.2)	125 (46.0)	76 (27.9)	16 (5.9)
3	The reading passages in the textbooks are quite long.	2.39	.931	55 (20.2)	85 (31.3)	102 (37.5)	30 (11.0)
4	The units in the textbooks provide sufficient coverage of skills.	2.30	.771	36 (13.5)	130 (48.7)	86 (32.2)	15 (5.6)
5	Multiple choice tests involved in the text would facilitate students' English.	1.94	.881	98 (36.3)	104 (38.5)	54 (20.0)	14 (5.2)
6	The units in the textbooks include topics which are up to date.	2.29	.806	42 (15.4)	127 (46.7)	85 (31.3)	18 (6.6)
7	There is sufficient variety in the subject and content of the textbooks.	2.11	.865	69 (25.7)	119 (44.2)	63 (23.4)	18 (6.7)

1= Strongly Agreed; 2=Agreed; 3=Disagreed; 4=Strongly Disagreed

Physical Appearance of the Textbooks

The second criteria" Physical appearance" was measured through ten items in students' questionnaire and the responses are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive statistic of the physical appearance in the textbook

Item No	Item	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
8	The cover of the textbooks is attractive.	2.58	.958	40 (14.8)	85 (31.4)	95 (35.1)	51 (18.8)
9	The layout of a page is quite attractive.	2.38	.825	29 (10.7)	142 (52.4)	69 (25.5)	31 (11.4)
10	The weight of the textbooks appropriate for me.	1.84	.844	103 (38.6)	119 (44.6)	29 (10.9)	16 (6.0)
11	Following the layout of a page is easy.	2.15	.798	50 (18.5)	150 (55.4)	52 (19.2)	19 (7.0)
12	The layout in the textbooks encourages me to do the activities.	2.51	.862	32 (12.1)	100 (37.7)	100 (37.7)	33 (12.5)
13	The artwork (picture-illustrations-graphs-tables- etc.) in the textbooks is helpful to me to understand.	2.14	.894	70 (25.7)	116 (42.6)	64 (23.5)	22 (8.1)
14	The font type in the textbooks helps me to follow up the units easily.	2.04	.847	75 (28.0)	121 (45.1)	57 (21.3)	15 (5.6)
15	The font size in the textbooks helps me to follow up the units easily.	2.10	.821	63 (23.3)	131 (48.5)	61 (22.6)	15 (5.6)
16	The colors in the textbooks look attractive.	2.92	1.04 8	35 (12.9)	55 (20.2)	78 (28.7)	104 (38.2)
17	The textbooks are organized effectively	2.34	.824	36 (13.5)	127 (47.7)	79 (29.7)	24 (9.0)

1= Strongly Agreed; 2=Agreed; 3=Disagreed; 4=Strongly Disagreed

As table indicated that (35.1% Disagreed and Strongly Disagreed) and did not think that the covers of textbooks are attractive. And also the teachers (37.7%) think that the layout in the textbook encouraged them to do the tasks and activities. Moreover the teachers (38.2%) think that the colors in the textbooks are not attractive. The additional comments that teachers made support the above findings. Over 50 teachers suggested that the textbooks must be more colorful.

To begin with, more than half of the teachers (55.4% strongly agreed or agreed) reported that the layout of the page is attractive. Most of them (44.6% agreed or agreed) believed that the weight of the textbook is appropriate for them. About 42.6% agreed that the artworks (picture –illustrations-graphs-etc.) are helpful to them to understand the lessons better. About 45.1% believe that the font type helps them to follow up the units easily. Similarly, about 48.5% believe that the font size font type helps them to follow up the units easily. More than half of the teachers stated that the textbooks are organized effectively.

Exercises and Activities in the Textbooks

The third criteria “exercises and activities” was measured through eight items in students’ questionnaire and the responses are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive statistic of the exercise and activities in the textbook

Item No	Item	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
18	The exercises and activities in the textbooks are interesting.	2.25	.939	61 (22.7)	112 (41.6)	64 (23.8)	32 (11.9)
19	The activities and exercises in the textbooks are appropriate for students' levels.	2.80	.840	20 (7.4)	67 (24.9)	129 (48.0)	53 (19.7)
20	The activities and exercises in the textbooks increase students' desire to learn English.	2.19	.925	63 (23.3)	123 (45.6)	53 (19.6)	31 (11.5)
21	The activities in the textbooks sufficiently encourage collaborative work.	2.57	.945	40 (14.7)	85 (31.1)	100 (36.6)	48 (17.6)
22	The reading activities and exercises in the textbooks help students to improve their reading skills.	2.03	.835	73 (26.7)	137 (50.2)	45 (16.5)	18 (6.6)
23	The activities in the textbooks help students to improve their writing skills.	1.92	.851	93 (34.2)	125 (46.0)	37 (13.6)	17 (6.3)
24	The speaking activities in the textbooks encourage students to use English in the classroom.	2.10	.805	59 (21.8)	141 (52.0)	55 (20.3)	16 (5.90)
25	The speaking activities in the textbooks provide me use English outside the classroom in daily life.	2.06	.875	79 (29.3)	114 (42.2)	60 (22.2)	17 (6.3)

1= Strongly Agreed; 2=Agreed; 3=Disagreed; 4=Strongly Disagreed

As table indicated, nearly 41.6% agreed that the exercises and activities in the textbooks are interesting .But 48% disagreed and think that the activities and exercises in the textbook were not appropriate for their level. 45.6% agreed expressed that the activities and exercises in the textbooks increased students desire to learn English.

Clarity of Instructions

The fourth criteria" clarity of instruction" was measured through only one item in the questionnaire and the responses are presented in table 4.

Table 4. Descriptive statistic of the clarity of instructions

Item No	Item	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
26	Students understand the instructions in the textbooks easily.	2.13	.951	77 (28.3)	112 (41.2)	53 (19.5)	30 (11.0)

As table indicated, 41.2 % of the teachers agreed that the instructions in the textbooks were comprehensible.

Level of the Textbooks

The fifth criteria" level of the textbook" was measured through four items in the questionnaire and the responses are presented in table 5.

Table 5. Descriptive statistic of the level of the textbook

Item No	Item	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
27	The textbooks are above the levels of high school students.	2.84	.978	35 (13.0)	48 (17.8)	111 (41.1)	76 (28.1)
28	The reading passages in the textbooks are difficult for the students.	2.95	.881	21 (7.8)	48 (17.9)	123 (45.9)	76 (28.4)
29	The writing activities in the textbooks are difficult for the students.	2.89	.942	30 (11.3)	43 (16.2)	118 (44.4)	75 (28.2)
30	The speaking activities in the textbooks are difficult for the students.	2.90	.930	25 (9.4)	54 (20.4)	109 (41.1)	77 (29.1)

1= Strongly Agreed; 2=Agreed; 3=Disagreed; 4=Strongly Disagreed

As table indicated, 41.1% of teachers disagreed, stated that the textbooks was not above their level. 45.9% believed that the reading passages in the textbook were not difficult for high schools students. As for writing activity, 44.4% of the respondents disagreed with the item" The writing activities in the textbooks are difficult for the high school students". Moreover, about the last item" The speaking activities in the textbooks are difficult for students, again 41.1% of teachers or disagreed with the item.

Vocabulary in the Textbooks

The sixth criteria" vocabulary" was measured through five items in the questionnaire and the responses are presented in table 6.

As the table indicated, half of the respondents (50.1%) believed that the new vocabulary words repeated in subsequent lessons to reinforce their meaning use, 38.9 % agreed) believed that the new vocabulary words is presented in a variety of ways31.7% stated the textbooks are not consisted of too many unknown words. The additional comments that they made supported the above finding.

More than 50% disagreed that the textbooks includes adequate number of exercises and activities to revise the new vocabulary. About the last item" the vocabulary exercises in the textbook make vocabulary learning easier for me" Most of them (55.2%) were strongly disagreed.

Table 6. Descriptive statistic of the vocabulary in the textbooks

Item No	Item	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
31	The new vocabulary words repeated in subsequent lessons to reinforce their meaning use.	1.63	.762	137 (50.4)	108 (39.7)	17 (6.3)	10 (3.7)
32	The new vocabulary words presented in a variety of ways.	1.97	.883	94 (34.8)	105 (38.9)	56 (20.7)	15 (5.6)
33	There are too many unknown words in the textbooks.	2.29	.990	69 (25.7)	85 (31.7)	80 (29.9)	34 (12.7)
34	The textbooks include adequate number of exercises and activities to revise the new vocabulary.	2.18	.869	54 (20.3)	135 (50.8)	51 (19.2)	26 (9.8)
35	The vocabulary exercises in the textbooks make vocabulary learning easier for the students.	1.88	.733	80 (29.9)	148 (55.2)	31 (11.6)	9 (3.4)

1= Strongly Agreed; 2= Agreed; 3= Disagreed; 4= Strongly Disagreed

Grammar in the Textbooks

The seventh criteria “grammar” was measured through two items in the questionnaire and the responses are presented in table 7.

Table 7. Descriptive statistic of the grammar in the textbook

Item No	Item	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
36	The Grammar points in the textbooks are presented in a clear and understandable way.	2.08	.98 8	91 (33.6)	99 (36.5)	50 (18.5)	31 (11.4)
37	The Grammar exercises in the textbook are organized effectively.	2.10	.78 2	58 (21.9)	134 (50.6)	62 (23.4)	11 (4.2)

1= Strongly Agreed; 2= Agreed; 3= Disagreed; 4= Strongly Disagreed

As table indicated, 36.5% of teachers agreed that the grammar points in the textbook were presented in a clear and understandable way and about the second item, more than 50% of the teachers believed that the grammar exercises in the textbooks are organized effectively.

Consideration of Learning Style Differences in the Textbooks

The eighth criteria” Consideration of learning style differences in the textbooks” was measured through three items in the students’ questionnaire and the responses are presented in table 8.

Table 8. Descriptive statistic of learning style differences in the textbooks

Item No	Item	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
38	The units in the textbooks include sufficient number of visuals (graphs – diagram- tables- picture- etc)	2.26	.981	69 (25.5)	98 (36.2)	69 (25.5)	35 (12.9)
39	The units in the textbooks include sufficient number of activities that allow students to learn through moving in the classroom.	2.16	.884	60 (22.1)	134 (49.4)	50 (18.5)	27 (10.0)
40	The units in the textbooks include sufficient number of activities that allow students to learn through listening.	2.21	.944	70 (25.8)	103 (38.0)	70 (25.8)	28 (10.3)

1= Strongly Agreed; 2= Agreed; 3= Disagreed; 4= Strongly Disagreed

As table indicated, 36.2 % agreed believed that the units in the textbooks included sufficient number of visuals, 49.4% agreed that the units in the textbooks consisted of sufficient number of activities that allowed the students to learn through moving in the classroom.

Similarly, 38% agreed that the units in the textbooks include sufficient number of activities that allow the students to learn through listening.

HYPOTHESES ANALYSES

The purpose of this study was to evaluate Iranian high school English books from the perspective of the teachers. Based on the literature review as well as the proposed methodology outlined in the previous chapters, the research question has been considered:

1. Do Iranian high school teachers have a positive attitude toward the textbooks for those levels?

HO1: Iranian high school teachers have negative attitude towards the textbooks.

Content

As table 1 indicated, teachers felt positive about the content in the textbooks. So the first null hypothesis concerning the teachers' attitude towards the content of the textbook is rejected.

Physical Appearance of the Textbook

As table 2 revealed, the teachers felt negative about 2 items where they felt positive about the other seven items. So the null hypothesis concerning the teachers' attitude towards the physical appearance of the textbook is rejected. .

Exercises and Activities in the Textbook

As table 3 indicated, the teachers seemed happy about the exercises and activities in the textbooks expect in two cases namely being suitable for the students' level and encouraging collaborative works. So the null hypothesis concerning the teachers' attitude towards exercises and activities in the textbook is rejected.

Clarity of Instructions

As table 4 indicated, the teachers believed that the instructions in the textbook are comprehensible. As far as they had positive attitudes towards the clarity of instruction, the null hypothesis concerning the teachers' attitude towards the clarity of instructions is rejected.

Level of the Textbook

The teachers were positive about the level of the textbooks and disagree with all the items that say the levels are not suitable for high school students. So the null hypothesis concerning the teachers' attitude towards the level of the textbooks is rejected.

Vocabulary in the Textbook

Findings revealed that teachers seemed positive about the vocabulary in the textbooks and agree with all items.

Grammar in the Textbook

As table 7 indicated, the teachers had positive attitudes towards the grammar in the textbooks. So the null hypothesis concerning the teachers' attitude towards the grammar in the textbooks is rejected.

Consideration of Learning Style Differences in the Textbook

Findings revealed that teachers seemed positive about the last criterion. As table 8 indicated, they believed that the units in the textbook consisted of sufficient number of visuals and activities. Most of the teachers stated that the artworks seemed helpful for the students to understand the information in the text as they required students to organize it in a chart, table or diagram. However, they pointed out that there could be more visuals such as pictures, and authentic photographs which would appeal to the interest of the students.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY

This article revealed that teachers have a positive feeling toward the content, physical appearance, exercises and activities, clarity of instructions, level of the textbooks, vocabulary, grammar and learning style differences of high school textbooks in Iran. Finding of this study may offer insights for those involved in educational administrations, syllabus design, curriculum planning and material development. Different sections of the textbooks can be modified by the committee of text book developers of the Iranian high schools in order to improve their quality. The books' task should be written in a way that the students can use them to learn language and for the purpose of helping the teachers to teach effectively and successfully. In order to enhance the amount of learning, the application of language teaching tools such as film, DVDs and computer are suggested. This study is limited to public high schools in Tonekabon. Therefore conclusions need to be verified by conducting similar studies across different cities in Iran. It is assumed that Students answered the questions honestly and seriously. Based on the results and the limitations of the current research, recommendations can be made for future research in order to have more effective text books for high schools.

In this study macro evaluation of textbooks was done. It is necessary to complement this study with a micro evaluation studies. The micro evaluation studies which are on the task level can be implementing for this textbooks. The micro evaluations can take place by means of observation tools, task evaluation sheets and journal keeping so as seeing how tasks and activities work in the classroom. Furthermore, a combination of both macro and micro evaluation study will provide extensive feedback and help to identify both weaknesses and strength of the material concerned.

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