

Full Length Research Paper

TEFL textbook evaluation: From teachers' perspectives

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This study aims to examine the advantages and disadvantages of one type of TEFL materials, English language textbook "Spot On" , used in state primary schools in Turkey. Sample of the research consists of 46 English teachers chosen randomly from state primary schools in Malatya and Adiyaman city centres. A five-likert type scale was used for evaluation. In this research, the course book was evaluated in term of 'layout and design, activities and tasks, language type, subject, content and skills and whole aspect'. The research revealed that 'Spot On' textbook actually did not stand up reasonably well to a systematic in-depth analysis and that the negative attributes far out-weighed the positive characteristics.

Key words: Textbook, material, evaluation of course book, English Language Teaching (ELT).

INTRODUCTION

Instructional materials may take two forms: Printed ones, such as textbook, workbook, teacher's guide, readers, etc.; and non-print ones, such as audiotapes, videotapes and computer-based materials. They are considered as key component in most TEFL programs, which is essential for both teachers and learners. Especially, textbooks are the mostly used teaching and learning materials for both teachers and the learners. They do not only provide a framework for teachers in achieving the aims and objectives of the course, but also serve as a guide to the teacher when conducting lessons. On behalf of the learners, a textbook truly affects their attitudes and performance to the lesson throughout the course. It is a fact that when learners like their textbooks, they like the course as well and become active participants to the lesson. The textbook is an important source of input and a great opportunity for EFL learners to communicate in the target language, which is realized only in classroom settings in most public schools in Turkey.

Since English teachers use "textbooks" in their classrooms, they have the right to be involved in the process of evaluation in order to be provided with the relevant textbook for their specific learner group. Their views on the usefulness and effectiveness of the

textbooks are also worth scrutinizing their textbooks, so as to identify the weak and strong points in relation to their own teaching situation. This is required because selecting textbooks involves matching the material to the context where it is going to be used, and a wide range of specialists share the view that no textbook that is designed for a general market will be absolutely appropriate and ideal for one's particular group of learners. As Grant (1987, p.8) claims (the) 'Perfect book does not exist', yet the aim is to be to find out the best possible one that will fit and be appropriate to a particular learner group.

Sheldon (1988) suggests that textbooks do not only represent the visible heart of any ELT program, but also offer considerable advantages for both students and the teachers when they are being used in ESL/EFL classrooms. Cunnigsworth (1995) suggest that potential, which textbooks have, in serving several additional roles in ELT curriculum, is an advantage. He argues that textbooks are an effective resource for self directed learning, an effective source for presentational material, a source of ideas and activities, a reference source for students, a syllabus where they reflect pre-determined learning objectives, and support for less experienced teachers who are yet to gain confidence. In addition to that, Hycroft (1998) states that one of the primary advantage of using textbooks is that they are psychologically essential for students since their progress and achievement can be measured concretely when we

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use them.

Textbooks play a prominent role in the teaching /learning process and they are the primary agents of conveying the knowledge to the learners. Besides, 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 of 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.

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.

Richards (2001) states that without textbooks, a program may have no impact, therefore, they provide structure and a syllabus. Besides, the use of a textbook in a program can guarantee that students in different classes will receive a similar content and therefore, can be evaluated in the same way. In other words, textbooks provide the standards in instruction. Moreover, they include a variety of learning resources such as workbooks, CDs and cassettes, videos, etc., which makes the learning environment interesting and enjoyable for the learners.

While there are many theorists, as mentioned before, that point out the extensive benefits of using ESL/EFL textbooks, there are many other researchers and practitioners who do not necessarily accept this view and retain some well founded reservations on the subject. Allwright (1982) suggests that textbooks are too inflexible and generally reflect the pedagogic, psychological, and linguistic preferences and biases of their authors.

Some proponents of authentic classroom language models have argued that the problems with many textbooks are not necessarily the fact that they are culturally or socially biased, but that they are actually too contrived and artificial in their presentation of the target language. They argue that it is crucial to introduce learners to the fundamental characteristics of authentic real-life examples of both spoken and written discourse. They have demonstrated that many scripted textbook language models and dialogues are unnatural and inappropriate for communicative or cooperative language teaching because they do not adequately prepare students for the different types of pronunciation (Brazil et

al., 1980; Levis, 1999 cited in Litz, 2005), language structures, grammar, idioms, vocabulary and conversational rules, routines and strategies that they will have to use in the real-world (Cathcart, 1989; 1991; Yule et al., 1992, cited in Litz, 2005). They further contend that the scripted unauthentic language found in many textbooks does not lend itself to communicative practice, but instead can lead to an oversimplification of language and unrealistic views of real-life situations. It can also provide additional inaccurate advice about the target language society that can be particularly dangerous for students entering the target language community or those who are expecting to engage in significant amounts of real-life interactions with native speakers. Whether one believes that textbooks are too inflexible and biased to be used directly as instructional material or that they actually help teaching and learning, one cannot deny the fact that textbooks still maintain enormous popularity and are most definitely essential.

Rea-Dickins and Germaine (1994, p.4) state that "evaluation is an intrinsic part of teaching and learning". Evaluation plays a key role in education and it is important for the teacher since it can provide valuable information for the future going of classroom practice, the planning of courses and management of learning tasks by students. Finally, evaluation is essential for the use of instructional materials such as textbooks.

Cunningsworth (1995, p.7) suggests that we should ensure that "careful selection is made, and that the materials selected closely reflect [the needs of the learners and] the aims, methods and values of the teaching program". One other reason for textbook evaluation is that it can be very useful in teachers' development and professional growth. Ellis (1997) suggests that textbook evaluation helps teachers go beyond impressionistic assessments and it helps them to acquire useful, accurate, systematic and contextual insights into the overall nature of textbook material.

If one accepts the value of textbooks in ELT, then it must surely be with the qualification that they are of an acceptable level of quality, usefulness, and appropriateness for the context and people with whom they are being used. In the literature, the subject of textbook evaluation is not particularly extensive. Preeminent theorists in the field of ELT textbook design and analysis such as Williams (1983), Sheldon (1988), Brown (1995), Cunningsworth (1995) and all agree, for instance, that evaluation checklists should have some criteria pertaining to the physical characteristics of textbooks such as layout, organizational, and logistical characteristics. Other important criteria that should be incorporated are those that assess a textbook's methodology, aims, and approaches and the degree to which a set of materials is not only teachable, but also fits the needs of the individual teacher's approach as well as the organization's overall curriculum. which a set of materials is not only teachable, but also fits the needs of

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Finally, textbook evaluations should include criteria that pertain to representation of cultural and gender components in addition to the extent to which the linguistic items, subjects, content, and topics match up to students' personalities, backgrounds, needs, and interests as well as those of the teacher and/or institution.

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. As can be understood from the aforementioned definitions, both predictive and retrospective evaluations aim at making the teaching/-learning environment more effective. They both help teachers to make appropriate judgment concerning the effectiveness of their teaching including the materials they used.

The reasons for materials evaluation activities are also many and varied. One of the major reasons is the need to adopt new coursebooks. Another reason as Cunningsworth (1995) emphasized is to identify particular strengths and weaknesses in coursebooks already in use. Such activities also permit teachers to make optimum use of their strong points and strengthen the weaker areas by adapting and substituting materials from other books. Coursebook analyses and evaluation do not only help teachers to develop themselves, but also helps them to gain good and useful insights into the nature of the material. Moreover, as Hutchinson (1987) points out, materials evaluation do not only serves the immediate practical aim of selecting teaching materials, but also plays a critical role in developing teacher's awareness in a number of ways, which are teachers being able 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.

The textbook titled "Spot On" was suggested and distributed to the primary schools all over Turkey that are free of charge by Ministry of National Education (MONE) to be used in 2008 - 2009 academic year. This particular research will report on a survey that was conducted on English teachers in the cities of Malatya and Adıyaman. It is hoped that this study will be a preliminary evaluation of the mentioned textbook and it is also expected that the results of this evaluation study will reveal the areas that need to be revised and improved in that particular EFL textbook. Furthermore, it is hoped that this study will raise the awareness of textbook writers in considering various criteria for the development of ESL/EFL textbooks for all

grades in primary and high schools.

AIM OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to assess the overall effectiveness of a pre-intermediate level textbook titled "Spot On" which was approved and distributed to 8th grade students of primary schools by National Ministry of Education from the perspective of teachers .

Research questions

The specific research questions are listed as follows:

1. To what extent is the textbook effective according to the layout and design?
2. To what extent is the textbook effective according to the activities?
3. To what extent is the textbook effective according to the skills?
4. To what extent is the textbook effective according to the language type?
5. To what extent is the textbook effective according to the subject and content?
6. To what extent is the textbook effective according to whole Aspect?

METHODOLOGY

Method

This research was designed by using descriptive research model. The data about the assessment of the textbook used in 8th grades for English lesson of the subject group, which consists of the English teachers working in various primary schools is based on the results of the data collection instrument (Teacher Textbook Evaluation Form).

Participants

The study was done with 46 English teachers (36 females, 10 males) at primary schools. 65.3% of participants have 1 to 5 years experience in teaching, 21.7% of the participants have 6 to 15 years experience in teaching, 13% of the participants have 16 to 25 years experience in teaching. Information on the subject group is demonstrated in Table 1.

Instrument

The data collection instrument consists of two parts. The first part is about the subjects' personal information; the second part is the Teacher Textbook Evaluation Scale, which elicits the criteria of a textbook for English course. "Teacher Textbook Evaluation Scale" was adapted to Turkish by the researcher. The original version is "Teacher Textbook Evaluation Scale (TTES)". This scale was developed by Sung Kyun Kwan University in 2000. The version, which was adapted into Turkish, consists of 30 items, covering 6

Table 1. Information on the subject group.

Variables	N	%
Gender		
Female	36	78.3
Male	10	21.7
Total	46	100
Experience in teaching		
1-5 years	30	65.3
6-15 years	10	21.7
16-25 years	6	13
26 and over	0	0
Total	46	100

Table 2. The Cronbach alpha coefficients of teacher textbook evaluation scale.

Teacher textbook evaluation scale	Items	Alpha
Layout and design	(1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)	0.860
Activities	(9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14)	0.866
Skills	(15, 16, 17, 18)	0.744
Language type	(19, 20, 21, 22)	0.750
Subject and content	(23, 24, 25, 26, 27)	0.670
Whole aspect	(28, 29, 30)	0.798
Total	(30)	0.947

dimensions. For the statements in the "Teacher Textbook Evaluation Scale" a Likert-type of equal-range and six sections was used. The statements in the inventory have been labelled as: "Completely Agree (5)", "Agree (4)", "Partly Agree (3)", "Disagree (2)", "Completely Disagree (1)". In order to test the reliability of the "Teacher Textbook Evaluation Scale, both as a whole and each of the six dimensions, the Cronbach Alpha Coefficients were calculated. As a whole the "Teacher Textbook Evaluation Scale" has a high degree of reliability (" α -0.9478").

Table 2 shows that when Alpha coefficient evaluation value criteria are considered, "Teacher Textbook Evaluation Scale" has a high degree of reliability as a whole. In group comparisons, reliability values between 0.60 and 0.80 are acceptable.

Limitations

This study is limited to English teachers in city centres of Malatya and Adiyaman in Turkey. Therefore, conclusions need to be verified by conducting similar studies across different cities in Turkey. It is assumed that teachers answered the questions honestly and with seriousness. Another limitation of this study is that the present study is a macro level evaluation study, however, it can be complemented with a micro evaluation study, which is on the task level. The study does not contain students' perspectives because they may not be as expressive in the language of ELT as their teachers. We assume that teachers' evaluations will be more accurate.

FINDINGS

This chapter presents the results of the particular study,

which aims to assess the effectiveness of an EFL textbook on teaching and learning English from the perspectives of teachers. The evaluation carried out at macro level focuses on six criteria namely, 'layout and design, activities, skills, language type, subject and content and whole aspect'.

In presenting the results of the study, the means, standard deviations and percentages of each item were calculated to describe and summarize the responses of students. The results of items that relate to each evaluation criteria were presented in tables and explanations were provided accordingly.

Layout and design

The first research question: 'To what extent is the textbook effective according to layout and design in the Textbook?' was measured through eight items in the questionnaire and the responses are presented in Table 3.

As Table 3 indicated, one third of the teachers (43.5% agreeing or strongly agreeing with the related item) stated that the textbook includes a detailed overview of the functions, structures and vocabulary that will be taught in each unit. However, another one third of teachers (34.6% disagree, strongly disagree with the related item) respond unfavorably to this item. More than half of the teachers (60.9% disagreeing and strongly

Table 3. Means, standard deviations and percentages of the items on layout and design in the textbook.

Textbook evaluation items	5		4		3		2		1		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Layout and design											
1. The textbook includes a detailed overview of the functions, structures and vocabulary that will be taught in each unit.	4	8.7	3	16	34.8	10	21.7	14	30.4	2	4.3
2. The layout and design is appropriate and clear.	2	4.3	6	13.0	10	21.7	24	52.2	4	8.7	
3. The textbook is organized effectively.	4	8.7	12	26.1	18	39.1	6	13.0	6	13.0	
4. An adequate vocabulary list or glossary is included.	2	4.3	4	8.7	14	34.4	18	39.1	8	17.4	
5. Adequate review sections and exercises are included.	-	-	-	-	18	39.1	18	39.1	10	21.7	
6. An adequate set of evaluation quizzes or testing suggestions is included.	-	-	4	8.7	22	47.8	18	39.1	2	4.3	
7. The teacher's book contains guidance about how the textbook can be used to the utmost advantage.	4	8.7	24	52.2	16	34.8	2	4.3	-	-	
8. The materials objectives are apparent to both the teacher and student.	6	13.0	16	34.8	16	34.8	8	17.4	-	-	
Teacher textbook evaluation scale	N	Average	Standard deviation		Variance						
Layout and design	46	2.99	0.66		0.43						

disagreeing) stated that the layout and design is not appropriate and clear. As for vocabulary and glossary, more than half of the teachers (56.5% disagreeing and strongly disagreeing) stated that an adequate vocabulary list or glossary is not included. Nearly, with the same ratio as the previous one, teachers stated that adequate review sections and exercises are not included. When it comes "An adequate set of evaluation quizzes or testing" item, nearly half of the teacher sated that they somewhat agree with that.

The layout and design of a textbook refers to its organization and presentation of language items and activities and the results of the teacher evaluation survey demonstrated that most people actually responded unfavorably to these particular aspects of the book (Table 3). Thus this is because Arithmetic average score of layout and design parts of evaluation scale is 2.99. In the textbook, for instance, the learning objectives are not clear and concise and a detailed overview of the topics, functions, structures/grammar, and skills within each unit can not be found totally in the introductory table of contents. It can be seen that there are short review units in the workbook. It is likely the reason why the teachers gave relatively low scores to this particular component of the book (21.7% partially agree and 30.4% disagree) (Table 3).

The course components are not effectively and clearly organized around specific topics, which can be referred to in daily life. The subjects are too academic for students. So it is possible to say that Units do not cover a vast array of subject areas consistent with a present-day younger audience's experience.

Another shortage of overall layout and design of 'Spot On' is that there are not enough vocabulary lists with their meaning, expression glossaries, grammar references and

communicative expansion. As it is known, the vocabulary lists, glossaries, and references are all very helpful supplementary aides for students.

52.2% of the teachers agree that the teacher's book provide guides about how the textbook can be used to the utmost advantage of the student. This is a good point for the textbook. However, one cannot say the same thing for the objects of the material. There is a discrepancy between views of respondents. 34.8% of the teachers agree and another 34.8% of teachers disagree. When it is regarded holistically, teachers express negative ideas about this dimension.

Activities of the textbook

The second research question, 'To what extent is the textbook effective in terms of Activities?' was measured through six items in the questionnaire and the responses are presented in Table 4.

In Table 4, While 52.2% of the respondents think that 'Spot On' textbook partially provides a balance of activities, almost half of teachers think that the activities in textbook encourage insufficient communicative and meaningful practices.

Nearly 70% of teachers in survey agree that activities contained in textbook incorporate pair and group work. It is not possible to say the same favorable things for grammar point and vocabulary items. Thus, this because more than half of the respondents think that grammar points and vocabulary items are not introduced in motivating and realistic context (Table 4).

Activities generally do not promote meaningful exchanges and genuine communication in realistic contexts. The teachers, at the same time, believe that

Table 4. Frequencies of Items of textbook evaluation scale.

Textbook evaluation items	5		4		3		2		1	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
9. The textbook provides a balance of activities (Ex. There is an even distribution of free vs. controlled exercises and tasks that focus on both fluent and accurate production).	4	8.7	12	26.1	24	52.2	4	8.7	2	4.3
10. The activities encourage sufficient communicative and meaningful practice.	2	4.3	18	35.1	16	34.8	8	17.4	2	4.3
11. The activities incorporate individual pair and group work.	12	26.1	22	47.8	6	13.0	4	8.7	2	4.3
12. The grammar points and vocabulary items are introduced in motivating and realistic contexts.	2	4.3	16	34.8	22	47.8	4	8.7	2	4.3
13The activities promote creative original and independent responses.	2	4.3	18	39.1	20	43.5	6	13.0	-	-
14. The textbook's activities can be modified or supplemented easily.	-	-	16	34.8	20	43.5	10	21.7	-	-
Teacher textbook evaluation scale	N	Average	Standard deviation		Variance					
Activities	46	3.32	0.68		0.47					

'Spot on' do not promote creative original and independent responses. They also think that (nearly 65% of the respondents) textbook's activities can be modified or supplemented easily. Most people actually responded unfavorably to these particular aspects of the textbook either, and this because Arithmetic average score of activity part of evaluation scale is 3.32.

Skills of the textbook

The third research question, 'To what extent is the textbook effective in terms of Skills?' was measured through four items in the questionnaire and the responses are presented in Table 5.

As Table 5 indicated, 60.9% of teacher state that the materials provide an appropriate balance of the four language skills. So, it is possible to say that 'Spot On' is a multi-skills syllabus and therefore, covers and integrates both productive (speaking and writing) and receptive skills (listening and reading). However, it does place a larger emphasis on reading and writing. There are much more reading comprehension passages than dialogues and prompts for speaking. Two prominent writers, McDonough and Shaw (1997) advocate an integrated multi-skills syllabus because it considers and incorporates several categories of both meaning and form.

While 47.8% of the respondents said that the materials partially include and focus on the skills that the students need to practice, 30% of the teachers agree that materials include and focus on the skills that the students need.

A close examination of each unit, for instance, reveals that reading passages become more complex as the

units progress. Moreover, reading texts also become slightly longer, while the discourse structure becomes more complex. In addition, comprehension questions check the students understanding of simple facts in early stages, but as the textbook progresses the questions start to require students to undertake more difficult tasks such as inferring meaning or extracting certain relevant information from a mass of less relevant information. 56.4% of the teachers think that the textbook pays attention to sub-skills that is, listening for gist, note-taking, skimming for information, etc.

In reading and listening activities, sub-skills such as making predictions, extracting specific items (scanning/listening for detail), acquiring general information (skimming/listening for gist), extracting detailed information, recognizing function and discourse patterns/markers, and for deducing/inferring meaning from context can be partially seen in the textbook. Arithmetic average score of skill sections of Scale is 3.32. This means that teachers did not responded completely favorably to these particular aspects of the textbook.

With respect to pronunciation, the results of the survey seemed to demonstrate that this was one of the book's major weak points .One of the most glaring inadequacies was the fact that very few units contained any exercises devoted to the teaching of word stress, sentence stress, and intonation.

Levis (1999) suggested that intonation problems are typical of both traditional and modern ELT textbooks and point out that these shortcomings can often be overcome or "greatly lessened by thinking differently about the uses of intonation and the needs and abilities of learners". More specifically, he has stated that pronunciation skills such as stress and intonation should only be taught in an explicit context so as to emphasize their communicative

Table 5. Frequencies of Items of textbook evaluation scale.

Textbook evaluation Items	5		4		3		2		1	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
15. The materials include and focus on the skills that I/my s to practice.	-	-	14	30.4	22	47.8	8	17.4	2	4.3
16. The materials provide an appropriate balance of the four language skills.	6	13.0	28	60.9	6	13.0	4	8.7	2	4.3
17. The textbook pays attention to sub-skills, that is, listening for gist, note-taking, skimming for information. etc	4	8.7	26	56.4	14	30.4	2	4.3	-	-
18. The textbook highlights and practices natural pronunciation (that is, stress and intonation).	-	-	12	26.1	16	34.8	18	39.1	-	-
Teacher textbook evaluation scale	N	Average	Standard deviation		Variance					
Skills	46	3.32	0.62		0.38					

Table 6. Frequencies of Items of textbook evaluation scale.

Textbook evaluation Items	5		4		3		2		1	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
19. The language used in the textbook is authentic, that is, like real-life English.	4	8.7	22	47.8	10	21.7	8	17.4	2	4.3
20. The language used is at the right level for students' current English ability.	-	-	6	13.0	8	17.4	6	13.0	26	56.5
21. The progression of grammar points and vocabulary items is appropriate.	-	-	16	34.8	-	-	18	39.1	12	26.1
22. The grammar points are presented with brief and easy examples and explanations.	2	4.3	16	34.8	6	13.0	14	30.4	8	17.4
Teacher textbook evaluation scale	N	Average	Standard deviation		Variance					
Language type	46	2.61	0.87		0.76					

value and relevance. Clenell (1997) suggests that teachers and textbooks should only describe intonational meaning, generally, at the outset, but gradually work towards the demonstration of specific meanings and roles, by presenting them in particular contexts through systematic exposure to meaningful, authentic, and phonologically salient texts.

Writing activities in 'Spot On typically' ask students to perform tasks of various kinds such as descriptions, narratives, postcards, reviews, etc., while the teacher's guide offers suggestions on how students can improve their compositional skills by completing these written tasks accurately and focusing on the writing process simultaneously. It can be suggested, therefore, that the writing skills in 'Spot on' are attended to, through both 'product' and 'process' approaches. Litz (2005) states that, essentially, a product-oriented approach centers on the end-result of writing, whereas, a process-oriented approach centers on the process of writing itself. In addition, product-oriented approaches typically engage learners in imitating, copying and transforming models of

correct language texts, while process-oriented approaches emphasize brainstorming, planning, drafting, revision and editing. In other words, the former approach demands quality, while the latter approach demands quantity. In a close examination, it can be seen that Spot On has included activities that incorporate both the product as well as the process approach.

Language type of the textbook

The third research question, 'To what extent is the textbook effective in terms of Language Type?' was measured through four items in the questionnaire and the responses are presented in Table 6.

As Table 6 indicated, more than half of the students (57% agreeing or strongly agreeing with the related item) stated that the language used in the textbook is not authentic. As Litz (2005) states that since the advent of the 'Communicative Approach' to language teaching in the 1970's and 1980's, there has been a growing school

Table 7. Frequencies of items of textbook evaluation scale.

Textbook evaluation items	5		4		3		2		1	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
23. The subject and content of the textbook is relevant to students' needs as an English language learner(s).	2	4.3	10	21.7	16	34.8	12	26.1	6	13.0
24. The subject and content of the textbook is generally realistic.	6	13.0	22	47.8	14	30.4	4	8.7	-	-
25. The subject and content of the textbook is interesting, challenging and motivating.	4	8.7	22	47.8	10	21.7	8	17.4	2	4.3
26. There is sufficient variety in the subject and content of the textbook.	6	13.0	30	65.2	6	13.0	4	8.7	-	-
27. The materials are not culturally biased and they do not portray any negative stereotypes.	10	21.7	16	34.8	8	17.4	10	21.7	2	4.3
Teacher textbook evaluation scale	N	Average	Standard deviation		Variance					
Subjects and contents	46	3.42	0.64		0.42					

of thought that says that authentic reading, speaking, listening, writing, and grammatical language models should be used to teach English language skills as long as the activities or tasks associated with them are also authentic and suitably graded to the level of the students with whom they are being used. Proponents of authentic materials such as Cathcart (1989) and Lee (1995) suggest that when we prevent our students from gaining access to these types of materials, we can be confident that the models of language are not only genuine, but also representative of real-life language use, particularly in terms of discourse structure. In addition, they point out that the use of these materials brings greater realism and relevance to the ESL/EFL classroom and they can increase learner motivation.

Approximately, two third of the students (69.5% disagreeing and strongly disagreeing) stated that the language used is not at the right level for students' current English ability. About two third of the students (65.2% disagreeing and strongly disagreeing) stated that the progression of grammar points and vocabulary items is not appropriate. It is understood from these data that most respondents seemed disappointed with the textbook's treatment of linguistic items such as grammatical structures, functions, and vocabulary. These problematic results may have stemmed from the selection, ordering, progression, and sequencing of the grammar, structures, vocabulary, and functions covered in the textbook.

Nearly half of students (48.2% agreeing or strongly agreeing and another 48.2% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the related item) stated that the grammar points are somewhat presented with brief and easy examples and explanations. They are not at desired level. Another reason for the disappointment is that 'Spot

On' does not give detail explanation about grammatical structures and functions. Grammar points are given in the context of reading passages and without enough repetitions and exercises. Perhaps teachers cannot see clearly the concrete structures of grammar points. Moreover, they are not accustomed to this kind of grammar presentation.

Subject and content

The fifth research question, 'To what extent is the textbook effective according to Subject and content in the textbook?' was measured through five items in the questionnaire and the responses are presented in Table 2.

As Table 7 indicated, one third of the students (39.1% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the related item) stated that the subject and content of the textbook is not relevant to students' needs. One third of the students (34.8% somewhat agree) state that the subject and content of the textbook is partially relevant to students' needs. More than half of the students (60.8% agreeing or strongly agreeing with the related item) stated that the subject and content of the textbook is generally realistic. The reading passages of the textbook are scripted from scientific articles, and so, their content is realistic. For example, some reading passages are about "Emotional Intelligent, a living scientist, Study skills, friendship rules, independence war personality types, learning styles, body care etc". More than half of the students (56.5% agreeing and strongly agreeing) stated that the subject and content of the textbook is interesting, challenging and motivating. And two third of (78.2% agreeing and strongly agreeing) the respondents stated that there is sufficient

Table 8. Frequencies of items of textbook evaluation scale.

Textbook evaluation Items	5		4		3		2		1	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
28. The textbook is appropriate for the language-learning aims of my institution.	-	-	8	17.4	22	47.8	8	17.4	8	17.4
29. The textbook raises my (students') interest in further English language study.	-	-	10	21.7	16	34.8	14	30.4	6	13.0
30. I would choose to study/teach this textbook again.	2	4.3	16	34.8	10	21.7	6	13.0	12	26.1
Teacher textbook evaluation scale	N	Average	Standard deviation		Variance					
Whole aspect	46	2.69	0.92		0.84					

variety in the subject and content of the textbook. More than half of the teachers (65%, agreeing and strongly agreeing) stated that the materials are not culturally biased and they do not portray any negative stereotypes.

The average score of subjects and contents dimension is 3.42. This means that teachers responded almost favorably to these particular aspects of the book.

Whole aspect

The sixth research question, 'To what extent is the textbook effective in terms of whole aspect?' was measured through three items in the questionnaire and the responses are presented in Table 8.

As Table 8 indicated, nearly half of the teachers (47.8 % somewhat agreeing with the related item) stated that the textbook is partially appropriate for the language-learning aims of my institution. As for raising interests, on third of teachers (43.4%, disagreeing and strongly disagreeing) stated that the textbook does not raise students' interest in further English language study. According to the scores (39.1% disagree and 39.1% agree), we can say that teachers are not sure whether they would choose the textbook again or not.

The average score of whole aspect dimension is 2.69. This means teachers' perspective about the whole aspect dimension is negative. They do not think totally that they are in favor of choosing the textbook again.

Conclusion

"Spot on" textbook has some notable and some negative characteristics. As for notable characteristic, for example, the teacher's book contains guides about how the textbook can be used to the utmost advantage of the students. The activities incorporate individual pair and group work. It also reflects a multi-skills syllabus, and it manages to integrate the four language skills without

neglecting other important aspects of ELT such as vocabulary development.

With respect to content, content of the textbook is generally realistic. Moreover, it is interesting. Challenging and motivating. There are sufficient varieties in the subject and content of the textbook. And the materials are not culturally biased and they do not portray any negative stereotypes.

Despite its strengths points, 'Spot On' has so many negative characteristics. Most people actually responded unfavorably to the layout and design aspects of the book. This is because the Arithmetic average score of layout and design parts of evaluation scale is 2.99. As aforementioned, almost all respondents think that Spot On textbook partially provides a balance of activities; almost half of teachers think that the activities in textbook encourage insufficient communicative and meaningful practices. They also think that activities contained in textbook do not incorporate pair and group work. Half of the teachers think that grammar points and vocabulary items are not introduced in motivating and realistic context. Many of the activities, for instance, were repetitive, failed to neither encourage truly meaningful practice, promote realistic discourse, nor lead to the internalization of language.

The results of the research seemed to demonstrate that this particular textbook actually did not stand up reasonably well to a systematic in-depth analysis and that the negative attributes far out-weighed the positive characteristics. Despite a few favorable points, the teachers felt that 'Spot on' was not relatively compatible with the 8th grade students' language-learning aims (47.8%, partially agree, 34.2% disagree, 17.4% agree).

Moreover, the teachers found that 'Spot On' actually did not raise their students' interest in further language study and they would voluntarily choose to use the textbook again (39.1% disagree, 21.7 partially agree, 34.8% agree). In conclusion, 'Spot on' can not be wholeheartedly recommended. Nevertheless, if the entire textbook package is well organized and it contains a wide variety of useful supplementary materials, it can be an

effective textbook in the hands of a good teacher and instructors should not be discouraged from using it with the appropriate learner audience. It should be organized with the goal of facilitating communicative competence.

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