



## CLT in Prospect Series: A Predictive Evaluation of Iranian Junior High School English Textbooks

*Ahmad Goodarzi*

Faculty of Humanities, Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran

Email: *ahmad.goodarzi1234@gmail.com*

*Hiwa Weisi \**

Faculty of Humanities, Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran

Kermanshah, Iran

Email: *hiwaweisi@gmail.com*

*Nouroddin Yousofi*

Faculty of Humanities, Razi University, Kermanshah, Iran

Email: *nyousofi@yahoo.com*

### Abstract

Textbooks have a chief standing as an essential element of language teaching; therefore, analyzing and evaluating them is imperative to guarantee their efficiency and consistency with the objectives set and expected in language classes. Hence, this study utilizing a Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) model, examined Cognitive, Communicative, and Creature potentials of three Iranian recently published junior high school English textbooks, called *Prospect Series*. The results showed that the intended books aiming at following the CLT approach failed to satisfy communicative, cognitive, and creative potentials sufficiently and some crucial ingredients of CLT, such as strategy instruction, use of authentic materials, and skills integration. Additionally, the over-emphasis on Iranian culture caused sociocultural aspects of CLT to be relatively neglected in this series, and foreign cultures are roughly avoided. Although the development of the *Prospects* is surely a step forward toward designing high quality Iranian English textbooks in Iranian schools, progressive modifications on textbooks are always needed to reach their greatest formats. The findings of this study have useful implications for the Iranian stakeholders in the field of teaching English as a foreign language and the authors of the *Prospect* series in terms of revising and modifying activities to achieve the highest congruency with CLT tenants.

**Keywords:** Cognitive Potential, Communicative Potential, Content Analysis, Coursebook Evaluation, Creature Potential, Prospect Series

## **1. Introduction**

Coursebooks play a crucial role in educational process and are believed to be the pivotal ingredient of language teaching (See, Skierso, 1991; Tomlinson, 2012), or as Sheldon (1988) believes they are the "visible heart of any ELT program" (p.237). In the process of teaching and learning, coursebooks are the main source of information; furthermore, teachers make use of them to achieve their teaching goals and facilitate students' learning process (Cunningsworth, 1995; Hutchinson & Torres, 1994). Skierso (1991) states that, without relying on a textbook, teachers can rarely handle teaching effectively.

In Iran, all textbooks taught at state schools, including EFL (English as a Foreign Language) textbooks, are developed by the textbook curriculum development and planning department of the Ministry of Education. Due to a series of criticisms leveled against previous school textbooks (Yarmohammadi, 2000), *Prospect* (P) 1, 2, and 3, being the first three parts of the six-volume series of English for High Schools, have been developed based on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) principles by the Ministry of Education (Alavimoghadam, Kheirabadi, Foroozandeh, Sharabyani, Anani Sarab, & Ghorbani, 2013-2015) to be utilized as the English coursebooks for junior high school students. As this coursebook series are new-comers and taught to all Iranian students, naturally they need continual evaluations and analysis to reach their best. Although some studies attempted to evaluate and analyze these textbooks (Kamyabi Gol & Baghaeeyan, 2015), these series lack an analytic study in which the series are analyzed thoroughly against CLT tenets of textbook development. Hence, this study framed by Ellis's Predictive evaluation utilized the model of CLT coursebook analysis by Dubin and Olshtain (1986) to evaluate the *Prospect* series.

## **2. Literature Review**

In order to check the suitability of textbooks for an English program or classroom and conduct needed revisions, textbook evaluation and analysis becomes a necessity. Tomlinson, Dat, Masuhara and Rubdy (2001) state that textbook evaluation is "an applied linguistic activity through which teachers, supervisors, administrators and material developers can make judgments about the effect of the materials on the people using them"

(p.15). Many studies have emphasized on the crucial part played by textbook analysis and evaluating EFL process (Richards, 2001; Tomlinson, 2012, to name a few).

The development of Iran's National Curriculum in 2012 can be deemed as a turning point since, whereas before that, in any formal document the goals and objectives of EFL teaching had never been stated (Zarrinabadi & Mahmoudi-Gahrouei, 2018), two pages in the National Curriculum (pages 37 and 38) have been devoted to EFL teaching and learning goals and policies. In National Curriculum (2012), it is clearly mentioned that, "the approach of foreign language teaching is an active and self-relying communicative approach" (p. 38). Thus, it can be claimed that the change toward a Communicative Approach program or CLT, as "the beginning of a major paradigm shift" in the twentieth century (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 81), necessitates new responsibilities for both teachers and students.

Accordingly, Forouzande and Forouzani (2015) believe that the development of the new English coursebooks splits the history of EFL textbook development in Iran into two chief parts of pre-revolution series (1939-79) and post-revolution series (1982-2010) entitled *Prospect* series and *Vision* series (Kheirabadi & Alavi Moghaddam, 2016). The former series includes three volumes for the junior high school students and the latter series consists of three volumes for the senior high school students. The *Prospect* series which is the focus of the present study are alleged to help the learners to learn the four language skills from the beginning; with a dominant emphasis on listening and speaking skills (Kheirabadi & Alavi Moghaddam, 2016), instead, the *Vision* series gives more prominence to the writing and reading skills.

CLT is known as an approach to foreign or second language teaching aiming at enhancing communicative competence. The Proponents of CLT believe in a skill-based, discovery-based, collaborative approach to teaching and learning (Holliday, 1994) where classroom language learning usually occurs in small classes through group and pair work. Brown (2001) lists six interconnected features of CLT.

- a) Concentrating on all of the constituents of communicative competence,
- b) Engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes,
- c) Emphasizing on fluency and accuracy,
- d) Using Language productively and receptively,

- e) Students 'understanding of their own styles of learning, and
- f) Using appropriate strategies for autonomous learning.

As the *Prospect* Series textbooks are newly published (2013) few studies have examined them thoroughly. For instance, Sardabi and Koosha (2015) compared the *Prospect* series with the former English textbooks of Iranian junior high schools. They revealed that even though the *Prospect* series does not cover up some of the shortfalls and lacks of former textbooks, the new textbook based on Communicative Language Teaching syllabus can be largely considered as a great achievement in teaching English in Iranian schools. However in their study, no internal analysis based on existing frameworks was utilized. Moreover, they just explored 6 Iranian EFL teachers' idea about *Prospect* series and learners' views and needs were also wholly neglected.

In another study, Zohoorian, MatinSadr, and Shamabadi (2018), investigated the motivational design of P1 utilizing Keller's ARCS model (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction). In this study, 384 junior high school students filled out the questionnaire and 11 of them attended follow-up interviews. In general, it was revealed that the students' motivation for this book is moderate. They also reported that P1 seems to be more effective in the Confidence and Relevance areas. However, the findings suggested that the students' Satisfaction and Attention are not desirable.

In a recent study, Shahmohammadi (2018) employed an eclectic checklist evaluated the *Prospect* series in Iran from teachers' perspectives. In her study, 34 teachers were asked to evaluate the series according to the checklist. Also, 8 teachers attended follow-up interviews declare their views about the strength and weak points of the series. The findings of the study showed that pronunciation practices, language tasks, and activities need to be improved and revised. Further, teachers believed that vocabulary was the most acceptable aspect of the *Prospects*.

In the same way, Safari and Sahragard (2015) in a qualitative study explored English teachers' problems, challenges, and constraints regarding *Prospect* Series. They reported that many teachers complained the provision of facilities and rich teaching context in poor areas is an issue which should be taken into account to make the best use of the newly published series.

Accordingly, Toriki and Chalak (2017) employing a 45-item questionnaire explored high school teachers' and students' views toward the *Prospect* series. The participants

were also asked to take part in interviews to investigate their attitudes toward CLT and the *Prospect* series. They found that participants believed 80 percent of CLT principles are considered and available in the *Prospects*, but modifications are needed to increase the efficiency of this series.

These reviewed studies along with other similar ones (Kamyabi Gol & Baghaeeyan, 2015) are valuable in terms of collecting teachers' and learners' views; however, researcher's thorough internal analysis of the textbooks is still absent.

Another recent study conducted by Mohammadi (2017) examined P3 utilizing Stufflebeam's (1971) Context, Input, Process, and Product Evaluation Model. She collected questionnaire data from 140 teachers and an interview with the head of development committee of *Prospect* Series. Her results indicated that generally both authors and teachers felt positive about the development and outcome of the textbook, respectively. Additionally, the results of the questionnaire revealed that the teachers were mostly consent with the textbook, however, they expressed that the textbook needs to be improved in terms of its design and illustration, supplementary materials, language skills and practice and testing.

According to Ellis (1997), Predictive evaluation can be conducted in two main ways. In the first way, teachers refer to the evaluations carried out by experts specializing in textbook evaluation. This kind of evaluations; however, may be imprecise and implicit, as the experts normally incline to evaluate textbooks in accordance with general purposes. Hence, the results of these evaluations should be used with care. On the other hand, predictive evaluations can be conducted by teachers by means of several checklists and guidelines accessible in the literature (Çakir, 2004). Hence, this study framed by Ellis's Predictive evaluation utilized the model of CLT coursebook analysis by Dubin and Olshtain (1986).

Accordingly, to attain a better understanding of the strengths and weakness of the *Prospect* series and their adherence to CLT, the following research question was posed to guide the study.

-What are the strengths and weaknesses of the series seen based on the checklist of CLT coursebook evaluation by Dubin and Olshtain (1986)?

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Design of the Study

As Alavi Moghaddam, the chief executive of *Prospects*' authors stated, the *Prospect* series are developed based on CLT tenants (Interview with Alavi Moghaddam, Communication with the official website of Curriculum Development Center, January, 13, 2016); therefore, a quantitative approach in collecting data was employed to examine the series against the adapted version of Dubin and Olshtain's (1986) checklist. This study was shaped by Ellis's predictive evaluation framework (1997) aimed to evaluate the *Prospects* against their alleged communicative values. In so doing, three scales were used in this research for assessing the coursebooks' activities in terms of their communicative, cognitive and creative (CCC) potentials.

#### 3.2. Instruments

The version of checklist used in this study was validated by Aftab (2011); however, to enhance the validity of the utilized checklist, its content validity of was scrutinized and confirmed by two EFL experts. Further, to guarantee the reliability of the results, the coursebooks were analyzed based on the checklist by a second rater. Then, to calculate inter-rater reliability (Cohen's Kappa), the results were fed into SPSS separately for each coursebook. The reliability statistics of the ratings showed high associations of 0.799, 0.864, and 0.876, for P1, P2, and P3, respectively (Table 1).

Table 1.

*Inter-rater Reliability (Kappa) of the Prospects*

	Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error <sup>a</sup>	Approximate T <sup>b</sup>	Approximate Significance
Kappa Prospect 1	.799	.074	11.460	.000
No. of items	36			
Kappa Prospect 2	.864	.056	15.767	.000
No. of items	42			
Kappa Prospect 3	.876	.047	19.280	.000
No. of items	54			

Dubin and Olshtain (1986) have provided a scale for investigating the communicative potential of activities, nevertheless their original scale exclusively emphasized on communication as indicating exchange of information. Therefore, a

modified communicative potential scale by Aftab (2011) was employed in this study concentrating on all aspects of communicative activities. Based on this scale, the individual scores of the coursebooks and their tags are assessed according to Table 2.

Based on this check list, only those activities score between ‘7’ and ‘12’ can be reckoned as wholly communicative, realistic and involve meaningful exchange of information. On the other hand, those activities scoring less ‘7’ are not considered communicative. The cognitive scale includes the use of analytical skills, such as prediction, inference, analysis and evaluation. Aftab (2011) has also updated Dubin and Olshtain’s (1986) cognitive potential scale and appended more score tags to it. The finalized and adapted version of the scale used in this study includes ‘0’ to ‘14’ scores, which is shown in Table 3.

Table 2.

*Explanations of the Tags of the Communicative Scale (Aftab, 2011, p. 138)*

Score	Scale Tags	Explanations
0	De-contextualized reception of new information	<i>Contrived</i> exposure to new data
1	No processing of information	<i>Exercises</i> involving simple procedures
2	De-contextualized response to new information	Answering <i>comprehension</i> questions based on new data
3	De-contextualized expression of new information	<i>Contrived production</i> of language
4	De-contextualized negotiation of new information	<i>Contrived</i> exchange of data
5	Contextualized reception of new information	Exposure to new data in a realistic scenario
6	Contextualized examination of new information	<i>Activities</i> requiring comprehension of new data in a realistic scenario
7	Contextualized evaluation of new information	Reflection about or interpretation of new data in a realistic scenario
8	Contextualized non-verbalized application of new information	Non-verbalized use of provided data in a realistic scenario
9	Contextualized verbalized transfer of new information	Using the provided data in a different realistic scenario
10	Contextualized verbalized application of new information	Oral or written use of provided data in a realistic scenario
11	Contextualized expression of new information	Expression of feelings, beliefs, reactions in a realistic scenario
12	Contextualized negotiation of new information	Engaging in exchange of new data in a realistic scenario

Tasks achieving scores from ‘7’ to ‘14’ (significant scores) are cognitive, whereas those obtaining scores of ‘6’ and less do not invoke any analytical abilities. Primarily, Dubin and Olshtain (1986) have presented the idea of the creative scale under notion of “Practical Applications” (1986, p. 104)., but in this study, a scale of creative potential, developed by Aftab (2001), seeking to assess the flexibility feature of both content and language of coursebooks, were utilized whose scores vary between ‘0’ to ‘11’ (Table 4).

Table 3.

*Explanations of the Tags of the Cognitive Scale (Aftab, 2011, p. 141)*

Scores	Scale Tags	Explanations
0	Pure Reception of Data	No comprehension of data is required
1	Reproduction	Involves simple repetition of provided data
2	Reception with Comprehension	Exposure requiring understanding of data
3	Simple Mechanical Tasks	Basic steps involving addition and selection
4	Controlled Production	Producing language with detailed assistance
5	Extended Selection	Finding answers to questions or chunks of information from the given texts
6	Limited Guided Production	Producing small chunks of language with the help of some basic provided instructions
7	Transference	Understanding and using provided data in different tasks
8	Interpretation	Tasks involving inference of provided data
9	Guided Reflection /Evaluation	Assisted assessment of provided data or issues
10	Extended Guided Production	Composing texts with provided instructions
11	Application	Using examined data to produce own text
12	Analysis	Critically examining the component factors/ aspects of the provided data
13	Free Production	Unaided composition of texts
14	Free Evaluation	Unaided appraisal of provided texts

Activities score ‘7’ and more can be deemed as creative (the scores ‘7’ to ‘11’ are significant), while those activities obtaining ‘6’ and less are assumed not to be creative.



Table 4.

*Explanations of the Tags of the Creative Scale (Aftab, 2011, p. 143)*

Score	Scale Tags	Explanations
0	Tasks requiring reproduction and repetition	Activities only involving use of provided content and language
1	Controlled mechanical operations	Activities involving selection from provided data
2	Transferring tasks	Using provided data for undertaking other tasks
3	Summaries	Extended selection of relevant data from texts
4	Comprehension tasks requiring explanation, identification, selection and restatement of parts of the text	Activities involving clarification and selection of content from the text
5	Controlled speaking/writing tasks	Producing language with detailed guidance
6	Tasks requiring interpretation and analysis	Activities involving inference
7	Open mechanical operations requiring minimal output	Simple guided activities involving production of very small chunks of language
8	Open summaries	Activities involving selection, manipulation and limited production
9	Evaluative and reflective tasks	Activities involving assessment of data and issues
10	Guided speaking/writing tasks	Producing language with the help of basic instructions
11	Free speaking/writing tasks	Unaided production of language

### 3.3. Data Collection Procedure

All data required in this study were collected by the researchers through guidelines provided by Aftab (2011). Firstly, all the activities of the *Prospects* were checked and listed separately. This list included background details, explanations and comprehensive instructions. Then, all the listed activities were reckoned to calculate the overall number of tasks encompassed in each coursebook. Next, each item or activity was analyzed separately against the scale and was scored. Subsequently, each score of the scale along with the number of items receiving that particular score were tabulated and listed and the percentages of items in comparison to the complete coursebook were calculated based on the following formula;

$$\frac{\text{Number of items receiving a particular score}}{\text{Total number of items in the textbook}} \times 100$$

Also, reading/listening comprehension activities were primarily investigated separately, as each activity included a group of questions which may assess dissimilar abilities. For each comprehension task, the overall number of questions and the number of questions showing each relevant score were noted down. Then, the percentages of the questions representing the different scores were calculated in terms of the whole activity. The whole activity itself was given the score which was the greatest percentage of questions.

Finally, all the comprehension tasks were added to the other tasks of the coursebook with that same score. In these cases, equal percentage of questions of a single reading activity obtained two different scores; the activities were not given any scores and were labeled as '*could not be assigned any score*'.

### 3.4. Data Analysis Procedure

To analyze the collected data based on the guidelines of Aftab (2011), the task percentages having obtained the significant scores were added for each coursebook and the resulting totality called 'significant score total task percentage' (SSTTP) was reported. Furthermore, the percentage of mechanical operations incorporated in each coursebook (determined by the percentage of tasks having scored '1' on the communicative scale) was noted down. Finally, the percentage of included controlled activities (calculated by adding the percentages of tasks having scored '0' – '5' on the creative scale) were tabulated. The textbook quantitative data interpretation key is wholly illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5.

*Textbook Quantitative Data Interpretation Key (Aftab, 2011, p. 146)*

Percentage Range	Grade	Interpretation
80% and above	A	Extremely High
60% – 79%	B	High
40% – 59%	C	Moderate
20% – 39%	D	To a limited extent
19% and below	E	No consideration

## 4. Results

### 4.1. The Map of the *Prospect* series

Before starting to evaluate the *Prospect* series based on the checklist, the activities and the number of their occurrences were carefully analyzed and are reported in the following Table. As Table 6 suggests, while the conversations, oral practices, and listening activities are the shared activities between the *Prospects* and vocabulary presentation, grammatical activities are left to P3. Also, it can be observed that the pronunciation activities under different headings started from P1 from letter sounds and ended in P3 to language melody and intonation patterns. Moreover, writing activities can be seen in P2 and P3.

After tabulating the activities of P1, P2, and P3 with their types (Appendix A), their potentials were meticulously measured and reported (Appendix B). Based on the frequency of the activities in each textbook and the provided formula in the data analysis section of this study, the CLT potentials of each textbook were measured and are reported in the following.

Table 6.

#### *The Maps of the Coursebooks*

	Coursebooks		
	P1	P2	P3
Number of Units	8	7	6
1. Conversation	8	7	6
2. Oral Practice1 & 2	16	14	12
3. Your Conversation	8	7	-
4. Listening and Reading	8	7	-
5. Speaking and Writing	8	7	-
6. Sounds and Letters	8	7	-
7. Spelling and Pronunciation	-	7	-
8. Listening and Writing	-	7	-
9. Reading, Speaking and Writing	-	7	-
10. Role Play	-	7	6
11. Vocabulary Presentation	-	-	6
12. Language Melody	-	-	6
13. Grammar	-	-	6
14. Find It	-	-	6
15. Tell Your Classmates	-	-	6
16. Listening and Reading, and Writing	-	-	6
17. Reading, Speaking, Listening, and Writing	-	-	6

#### 4.2. Communicative, cognitive, and creative Potentials of P1

The communicative, cognitive, and creative potential of the P1 is shown in Table 7. As demonstrated in Table 7, whereas P1 enjoys a more moderate concern in creative potential (35% of the activities of P1), communicative and cognitive potentials of P1 remained at its lowest level which delineates lack of or no consideration of these two potentials. Hence, de-contextualized negotiation of new information and very limited cognitive challenge are frequently observed than the other types of activities in P1.

Table 7.

##### *P1 –Student and Work Book Grades*

	Communicative Potentials	Cognitive Potentials	Creative Potentials	Average
SSTTP	18%=E	8%=E	35%=D	20.33%=D
	No consideration	No consideration	To a limited extent	To a limited extent
Controlled Activities Score	43%=C	22%=D	21%=D	28.66%=D
	Moderate	To a limited extent	To a limited extent	To a limited extent

Thus, the P1's activities are of relatively moderate controlled activities (C) and communicative potentiality (E) is not roughly considered which stands against the claims proposed by their authors. Likewise, primarily owing to the insignificant use of discourse-level language and the preponderance of controlled activities, P1 does not seem to facilitate communicative competence in learners as the average SSTTP obtained is only 20.33% of all activities.

#### 4.3. Communicative, cognitive, and creative Potentials of P2

The obtained data for communicative, cognitive, and creative potentials of P2 is illustrated in Table 8.

Table 8.

*P2 –Student and Work Book Statistics*

	Communicative Potentials	Cognitive Potentials	Creative Potentials	Average
SSTTP	37%=D To a limited extent	25%=D To a limited extent	42%=C Moderate	34.66%=D To a limited extent
Controlled Activities Score	43%=C Moderate	41%=C Moderate	22%=D To a limited extent	35.33%=D To a limited extent

As what is presented in Table 8, no parts of P2 enjoy relatively high extent of communicative, cognitive, and creative potentials (D), so the average SSTTP is only 34% of all the activities in average. Moreover, these textbooks do not include a high degree of controlled activities which ascertains that P2 could not achieve either controlled or communicative ends of the continuum in designing activities.

**4.4. Communicative, cognitive, and creative Potentials of P3**

Table 9 shows that the previous scenarios of P1 and P2 are similarly reflected in P3.

Table 9.

*P3 –Student and Work Book Statistics*

	Communicative Potentials	Cognitive Potentials	Creative Potentials	Average
SSTTP	12%=E No consideration	12%=E No consideration	33% D To a limited extent	19%=E No consideration
Controlled Activities Score	49%=C Moderate	46%=C Moderate	29%=D To a limited extent	41.33%=C Moderate

Yet the average SSTTP is comparatively low (19 %), since 41% of the activities include tasks requiring controlled reproduction of knowledge. Moreover, the SSTTP of communicative and cognitive potentials of P3 reveals that, with the introduction of

grammar in this textbook, these potentials have been approximately ignored in this textbook.

## **5. Discussion**

The aim of the present study was to carry out a predictive evaluation (Ellis, 1997) of the *Prospect* series taught in Iranian junior high schools Dubin and Olshtain (1986) to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the series according to CLT tenants. The obtained results of the present study revealed that, although the *Prospects* sought to follow the CLT approach and allocated the major proportion of every unit to communicative skills, the results showed that they failed to satisfy the communicative, cognitive, and creative potentials.

Although the presence relatively authentic conversations might be the strength point of the *Prospect* series (Widdowson, 2007), in P1, it can predicted that there is no guarantee whether they suit the beginners' level or not. Based on Nunan (2003, p. 589), the critical problem of Asian countries is "...disjunction between curriculum rhetoric and pedagogical reality", which can clearly observed in Iranian EFL context in public sector (Kiany, Mahdavy, & Ghafar Samar, 2011). The pre-assumption is that seven-graders have not experienced any language learning situation, hence it is roughly improbable for a learner with no English background in remote deprived regions of Iran to understand the conversations or even repeat their line without any familiarity with English sounds (Safari & Sahragard, 2015). The dialogues seem to be more effective if they were shorter and postponed to the latter half of the coursebook. This point, which was also confirmed by in-service teachers in Eghtesadi and Hassanabadi's study (2016), lowers all communicative potentials pertaining to the conversations. In line with Sardabi and Koosha (2015), conversations and even language practices in P1 and P2 are the major activities which mirror CLT tendencies of this series.

As Littlewood (1981) believes, one of the fundamental principles of communicative pedagogy is to teach language skills in an integrated way. Accordingly, Alavi Moghaddam, the chief author of this series, maintains this series are developed based on the fact that language should be taught in an integrated manner (Interview with Alavi Moghaddam, Communication with the official website of Curriculum Development Center, January, 13, 2016); however, over-emphasis on this issue has tarnished the creative potential of this

series in some cases. For instance, in some activities, such as listening or speaking, the authors have listed a group of skills as the aims of the activities which injects a sense of confusion amongst learners and teachers (Figure 1).

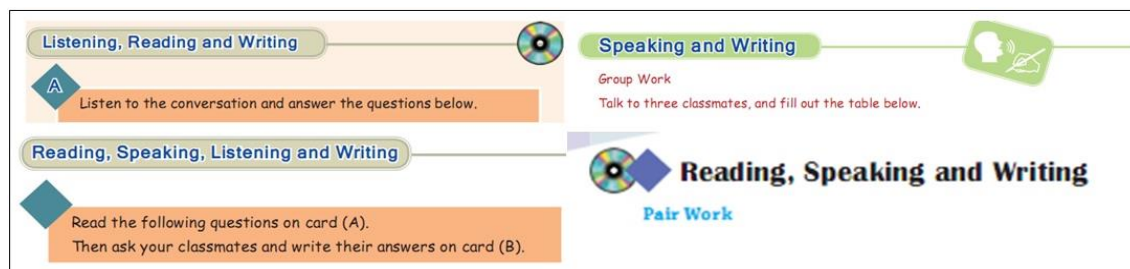


Figure 1. Integrated activities in *Prospect* series

Additionally, the over-emphasis on Iranian culture caused sociocultural aspects of CLT to be relatively neglected in this series (Sardabi & Koosha, 2015), and foreign cultures are roughly avoided. Savignon (2018) maintains that the definition of a communicative language teaching context requires learners to obtain an understanding of the sociocultural contexts of language use. Hence, paying attention to the sociocultural contexts of language in textbooks increases communicative potentiality of activities for learners. On the other hand, the cognitive load and potentiality of activities have been indirectly affected by embarking unnecessarily only on internal resources of intercultural talks. These findings are clearly in line with previous studies, such as Sadabi and Koosha (2015) and Shahmohammadi (2018).

Moreover, language learning and communicative strategies are absent in *Prospect* series. As Brown (2001) maintains, the development of appropriate strategies for autonomous learning is a necessity of CLT classes. Besides, Wu (2010) believes that the presence of communicative strategies in CLT classes decreases tensions and contributes to learners' connection with activities which might induces a lower cognitive and creative potentiality of the activities due to lack of deep connection.

Furthermore, this research will provide assistance to the future of Iran's English text book development; however, in brief, some critical issues need to be kept in mind. Firstly, it is faulty to compare the new English textbooks of Iranian educational system with the former ones, since the new series are alleged to be created based on recent achievements in English course book development. Hence, it is obvious that the *Prospects* are superior over

the previous course books of Iranian junior high school due to the attempts to employ a communicative approach; however, a comprehensive modification of the activities included these text books through continual content an needs analyses will be more helpful than stabilizing the current text books and accepting them as they are. Secondly, teachers and learners' insights, as the direct users of the textbooks, are valuable and should be culled and observed in textbook modifications and revisions. Thirdly, due to the fact that the students are going to learn an international language, it would be propitious to familiarize them with other cultures and use more authentic materials to help them perceive the international sense of English and to enhance the communicative values of the coursebooks. Fourthly, use of supplementary materials along with the text books can be an illuminating way to ensure efficiency of the *Prospect* series (Alishahi, Ghanizadeh, & Hosseini, 2019).

And finally, a comprehensive and revolutionary perspective toward teaching English in Iranian high schools is needed which invites all ideas and accepts all criticisms.

To put it in a nutshell, the *Prospect* coursebooks are presumed as a successful breakthrough in relation to the previous English textbooks taught in junior high schools of Iran (Yarmohammadi, 2000); however, it needs improvement in terms of activities regarding communicative, cognitive, and creative potentials.

## **6. Conclusion**

This study sought to carry out a predictive evaluation (Ellis, 1997) on English coursebooks of Iranian junior high schools using the model of CLT coursebook analysis by Dubin and Olshtain (1986). Careful evaluation of the series revealed that despite the authors' claims that the *Prospect* series are developed according to CLT tenants, this series lack the basic potentials of CLT which are communicative, cognitive, and creative potential. Although it is obvious that the *Prospects* are superior over the previous coursebooks of Iranian junior high school due to the attempts to employ a communicative approach, a comprehensive modification of the activities included these textbooks through continual content an needs analyses will be more helpful than stabilizing the current textbooks and accepting them as they are. Further, use of supplementary materials along with the textbooks can be an illuminating way to ensure efficiency of the *Prospect* series (Alishahi, Ghanizadeh, & Hosseini, 2019). Moreover, this study enjoys theoretical



implications as it raises critical questions in terms of the claimed underlying communicative essence of the textbooks. As the findings revealed, none of the main three communicative potentials were fulfilled in this series. Therefore, two points can be concluded; the textbooks are not developed based on the alleged communicative approach or Iranian English material developers have present a new definition of CLT. These are the issues that need to be explained by the *Prospects*' development team and the involved authorities. Additionally, the findings of the present investigation into the Prospect series may assist material designers to develop coursebooks which are more adapted to the alleged communicative aspects.

Meanwhile, this study is limited in terms of obtaining the teachers' and learners' retrospective opinions about the alleged underlying communicative tenants in the *Prospect* series. Such studies would also be illuminating and insightful in providing a more comprehensive overview of the status quo of the *Prospect* series in Iranian public schools.

## References

- Aftab, A. (2011). *English Language Textbooks Evaluation in Pakistan* (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis). University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK.
- Alavi Moghaddam, B. (2016, January 13). Interview with the official website of Curriculum Development Center. (Available at [eng-dept.talif.sch.ir](http://eng-dept.talif.sch.ir))
- Alavimoghadam, B., Kheirabadi, R., Foroozandeh, E., Sharabyani, Sh., Anani Sarab, M. R., & Ghorbani, N. (2013). *Prospect 1*. Tehran: Iran School Books Publication Company.
- Alavimoghadam, B., Kheirabadi, R., Foroozandeh, E., Sharabyani, Sh., Anani Sarab, M. R., & Ghorbani, N. (2014). *Prospect 2*. Tehran: Iran School Books Publication Company.
- Alavimoghadam, B., Kheirabadi, R., Foroozandeh, E., Sharabyani, Sh., Anani Sarab, M. R., & Ghorbani, N. (2015). *Prospect 3*. Tehran: Iran School Books Publication Company.
- Alishahi, M. H., Ghanizadeh, A., & Hosseini, A. (2019). Designing supplementary materials for prospect series and probing their impact on emotional facet and perceptions. *Research in English Language Pedagogy*, 7(1), 137-166.

- Brown, H., D. (2001). *Teaching by principles*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.
- Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Choosing your coursebook*. London: Heinemann.
- Dubin, F., & Olshain, E. (1986). *Course design: Developing programs and materials for language learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Eghtesadi, A. R., & Hassanabadi, S. (2016). An evaluation of in-service training courses for the seventh grade English package for Iranian schools (prospect 1). *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, 3(5), 130-143.
- Hutchinson, T. & Torres, E. (1994). The textbook as agent of change. *ELT Journal*, 48(4), 315-328.
- Kamyabi Gol, A., & Baghaeeyan, J. (2015). Critical analysis and teachers' perspectives on prospect one (Iranian junior high school English book). *International Journal of Language and Applied Linguistics*, 1(4), 14-25.
- Kheirabadi, R., & Alavimoghaddam, S. B. (2016). Evaluation of Prospect series: A paradigm shift from GTM to CLT in Iran. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 7(3), 619-624.
- Kiany, G. R., Mahdavy, B., & Ghafar Samar, R. (2011). Towards a harmonized foreign language education program in Iran: National policies and English achievement. *Literacy Information and Computer Education Journal*, 2(3), 462-469.
- Mohammadi, P. (2017). *Implementing the CIPP evaluation model (context, input, process and product) in evaluating the ninth grade junior school EFL textbook "prospect 3" in Iran* (Unpublished M.A. thesis). Kharazmi University, Karaj, Iran.
- Nunan, D. (2003). The impact of English as a global language on educational policies and practices in the Asia-Pacific region. *TESOL quarterly*, 37(4), 589-613.
- Richards, J. C. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press.
- Safari, P., & Sahragard, R. (2015). Iranian EFL teachers' challenges with the new ELT program after the reform: from dream to reality. *Khazar Journal of Humanities & Social Sciences*, 18(4), 65-88.
- Sardabi, N., & Koosha, M. (2017). New perspective in prospect: an assessment of strengths and weaknesses of Iranian second year junior high school English textbooks. *Research in English language pedagogy*, 3(2), 57-70.

- Savignon, S. J. (2018). Communicative Competence. *The TESOL Encyclopedia of English Language Teaching*, 1-7.
- Shahmohammadi, S. (2018). Textbook evaluation: looking at Prospect series through teachers' perspective. *Research in English Language Pedagogy (REL P)*, 6(2), 182.
- Sheldon, L.E. (1988). Evaluating ELT textbooks and materials. *ELT Journal*, 42(4), 237-246.
- Skierso, A. (1991). *Textbook selection and evaluation*. In M. Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (pp. 432-453). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- Tomlinson, B., Dat, B., Masuhara, H., & Rubdy, R. (2001). EFL courses for adults. *ELT journal*, 55(1), 80-101.
- Tomlinson, B. (2012). Materials development for language learning and teaching. *Language Teaching*, 45 (2), 143–179.
- Torki, F., & Chalak, A. (2017). An evaluation of English textbooks used in Iranian high schools: teachers' and learners' attitudes. *Research in English Language Pedagogy*, 5(1), 52-60.
- Widdowson, H. G. (2007). *Discourse analysis* (Vol. 133). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wu, K. H. (2010). The relationship between language learners' anxiety and learning strategy in the CLT classrooms. *International Education Studies*, 3(1), 174.
- Yarmohammadi, L. (2000). Reflections on the treatment and contextualization of pronunciation practices and language functions in the pre-university textbooks in Iran. *Journal of Teaching Languages*, 1(3), 1-21.
- Zarrinabadi, N., & Mahmoudi-Gahrouei, V. (2018). English in contemporary Iran. *Asian Englishes*, 20(1), 81-94.
- Zohoorian, Z., MatinSadr, N., & Shamabadi, F. (2018). A Summative Evaluation of 'Prospect 1': Employing the ARCS Model. *International Journal of Instruction*, 11(3), 449-462.

**Appendix A****The activities of P1, P2, and P3 with their types**

	Activities	Number	Communicative Scale Score	Cognitive Scale Score	Creative Scale Score
Prospect 1 –Student Book	1. Conversation	8	9	2	6
	2. Practices	16	4	4	5
	3. Sounds and Letters	8	5	2	4
	4. Listening and Reading	8	6	6	6
	5. Speaking and Writing	8	2	7	10
	6. Your Conversation	8	10	6	7
Prospect 1 –Work Book	1. Matching Information	22	1	6	4
	2. Finding Information	17	6	5	5
	3. Ordering Activities	8	6	7	6
	4. Differentiating Information.	5	7	9	6
	5. Writing Activities	23	2	6	7
	6. Asking for Real World Information	11	10	10	8
	Total	142	68	68	74

	Activities	Number	Communicative Scale Score	Cognitive Scale Score	Creative Scale Score
Prospect 2 –Student Book	1. Conversation	7	9	2	6
	2. Practices	18	4	4	5
	3. Vocabulary presentation	7	1	0	0
	4. Spelling and Pronunciation	7	5	2	4
	5. Listening and Writing	7	6	6	6
	6. Reading, Speaking and Writing	7	4	9	10
	7. Role Play	7	12	10	10
Prospect 2 –Work Book	1. Matching Information	4	1	6	4
	2. Finding Information.	9	6	5	5
	3. Ordering Activities	1	6	7	6
	4. Differentiating Information	2	7	8	6
	5. Writing Activities	9	2	6	7
	6. Asking for Real World Information	23	10	10	8
	7. Translation Activities	7	3	3	4
	Total	115	75	78	81

	Activities	Number	Communicative Scale Score	Cognitive Scale Score	Creative Scale Score
Prospect 3 – Student Book	1. Conversation	6	9	2	6
	2. Practices	12	4	4	5
	3. Vocabulary Presentation	6	1	0	0
	4. Language Melody	6	5	2	4
	5. Grammar	6	0	0	0
	6. Find It	6	1	5	4
	7. Tell Your Classmates	6	3	6	2
	8. Listening and Reading, and Writing	6	6	8	6
	9. Reading, Speaking, Listening, and Writing	6	4	10	10
	10. Role Play	6	12	11	10
Prospect 3 – Work Book	1. Matching Information	8	1	5	4
	2. Finding Information	11	6	5	5
	3. Ordering Activities	7	6	3	6
	4. Comprehension Questions	19	6	8	6
	5. Writing/ Grammar Activities	28	2	3	7
	6. Asking for Real World Information	6	10	10	8
	7. Editing Activities	6	6	9	9
	8. Multiple-Choice Questions	7	2	5	1
Total	158	84	96	99	

## Appendix B

## The Potentials of the activities of P1, P2, and P3

<b>Communicative Potential of Prospect 1</b>		
<b>Score</b>	<b>Number of Activities</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0	0	0%
1	22	15%
2	31	23%
3	0	0%
4	16	11%
5	8	6%
6	33	24%
7	5	3%
8	0	0%
9	8	5%
10	19	13%
11	0	0%
12	0	0%
<b>Total Activities</b>	142	100%
<b>Cognitive Potential of Prospect 1</b>		
<b>Score</b>	<b>Number of Activities</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0	0	0%
1	0	0%
2	16	11%
3	0	0%
4	16	11%
5	17	12%
6	61	44%
7	16	11%
8	0	0%
9	5	3%
10	11	8%

11	0	0%
12	0	0%
13	0	0%
14	0	0%
<b>Total Activities</b>	142	100%
<b>Creative Potential of Prospect 1</b>		
<b>Score</b>	<b>Number of Activities</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0	0	0%
1	0	0%
2	0	0%
3	0	0%
4	30	21%
5	33	24%
6	29	20%
7	31	22%
8	11	8%
9	0	0%
10	8	5%
11	0	0%
<b>Total Activities</b>	142	100%
<b>Communicative Potential of Prospect2</b>		
<b>Score</b>	<b>Number of Activities</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0	0	0%
1	11	9%
2	9	8%
3	7	4%
4	25	22%
5	7	6%
6	17	12%
7	2	2%
8	0	0%



9	7	6%
10	23	21%
11	0	0%
12	12	10%
<b>Total Activities</b>	115	100%
<b>Cognitive Potential of Prospect 2</b>		
<b>Score</b>	<b>Number of Activities</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0	7	6%
1	0	0%
2	14	13%
3	7	6%
4	18	16%
5	9	8%
6	20	17%
7	1	1%
8	2	2%
9	7	6%
10	30	25%
11	0	0%
12	0	0%
13	0	0%
14	0	0%
<b>Total Activities</b>	115	100%
<b>Creative Potential of Prospect 2</b>		
<b>Score</b>	<b>Number of Activities</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0	7	6%
1	0	0%
2	0	0%
3	0	0%
4	18	16%
5	27	24%

6	17	12%
7	9	8%
8	23	21%
9	0	0%
10	14	13%
11	0	0%
<b>Total Activities</b>	115	100%
<b>Communicative Potential of Prospect 3</b>		
<b>Score</b>	<b>Number of Activities</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0	6	4%
1	20	12%
2	35	22%
3	6	4%
4	18	11%
5	6	4%
6	49	31%
7	0	0%
8	0	0%
9	6	4%
10	6	4%
11	0	0%
12	6	4%
<b>Total Activities</b>	158	100%
<b>Cognitive Potential of Prospect 3</b>		
<b>Score</b>	<b>Number of Activities</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0	12	8%
1	0	0%
2	12	8%
3	35	22%
4	12	8%
5	32	19%

6	6	4%
7	0	0%
8	25	15%
9	6	4%
10	12	8%
11	6	4%
12	0	0%
13	0	0%
14	0	0%
<b>Total Activities</b>	158	100%
<b>Creative Potential of Prospect 3</b>		
<b>Score</b>	<b>Number of Activities</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0	12	8%
1	7	5%
2	6	4%
3	0	0%
4	20	12%
5	23	14%
6	38	24%
7	28	17%
8	6	4%
9	6	4%
10	12	8%
11	0	0%
<b>Total Activities</b>	158	100%