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Iranian EFL Learners' and Teachers' Attitudes Towards High School English Textbooks

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Abstract

The current study aimed to evaluate the content of the English textbooks taught in Iranian senior high schools. To this purpose, the study relied upon a descriptive survey design. Through a stratified random sampling, a total of 12 senior high schools were selected from the high schools located in Isfahan. To select the teacher participants, a convenience sampling method was employed. Then, a structured questionnaire was administered to the selected teachers and students. The obtained data were statistically analyzed and item analysis revealed that the accessibility and affordability of the textbooks were the most-favored features. However, most of the students wondered whether the textbooks were equipped with supplementary (online and offline) materials. The post-hoc analysis results revealed the significant overall teacher-student disagreement towards the textbooks. Generally, the results showed that there is a need to adapt the teaching materials to the target situation of use. As a practical implication, the findings may urge the developers of the textbooks to launch a modification project in order to get more conscious in developing future textbooks. Moreover, the findings are of use for the teachers of the textbooks as well as the pedagogical policy makers.

Keywords: high school textbooks, students' attitude, teachers' attitude, textbook evaluation

Introduction

Textbooks serve as the basis for much of the language input learners receive and the language practice taking place in the classroom in Iran. Richards (2001) states that textbooks serve as a tool to train the EFL teachers. Considering the advantages, he states that without textbooks a program may have no path. Moreover, they guarantee that students in different classes will receive similar content and be evaluated in the same way. He concludes that textbooks are efficient in that they allow much time for the teacher to focus on teaching rather than material development. ELT textbooks are both input provider and guide to how materials should be taught (Yu, 2018). The significance of textbooks in language teaching and learning was also emphasized by Tomlinson (2008), who held that textbooks play a significant role in helping students develop their communication skills.

Textbooks can present a balance between language skills and sub-skills taught in ELT classes, and highlight the pedagogical model that is being used. In addition, they can present the main language content students are exposed to, and they help teachers to decide on planning and teaching their lessons (Richards, 2001). Nunan (1999, p. 98) mentions that "a textbook is the main component of any instructional program and it is difficult to imagine a class without it". As Hutchinson and Torres (1994) mentioned, the textbooks have a positive role to play in teaching and learning English. They also argued that textbooks act as the necessary input for classroom lessons through different activities. As stated by Zohrabi, Sabouri, and Kheradmand (2014), "textbooks are one of the elements that may promote or discourage learners depending on their materials. They are a kind of support for both teachers and learners. Textbooks provide students a kind of consistency"(p.95).

Nowadays, evaluation and selection of materials that best fit the learners' needs are becoming more and more important in language teaching (Tosun, 2012). It is a very important task helping find ways to deal with, improve, or make changes. Tomlinson (1996) regards material evaluation as a way of action research that develops understanding of the paths in which the materials work. According to Jahangard (2007) evaluation of EFL materials currently taught at Iran public school requires a deeper and more exhaustive

analysis and scrutiny by a group of experienced teachers. It is very important to understand what teachers believe and practice in their classroom since these beliefs will influence their teaching (Raths and McAnich, 2003). It may be understandable that teachers are end-users who face the pros and cons of textbooks, but ignore that students are other shareholders who are positive or negative about the potential of textbooks. For this reason, learners' needs and teachers' attitudes should be carefully considered when choosing a textbook. When teachers who are committed to the success of their students know what they need to learn, they can express their needs. Furthermore, research on language teachers' thinking suggests that teachers tend to develop their knowledge in the course of their reflective practice (Borg, 2003).

According to Tomlinson (1996, as cited in Alkhaldi, 2010), materials evaluation may be defined as a procedure or a systematic appraisal measuring the potential value(s) of materials on learners in relation to their objectives (Tomlinson, 2011). In other words, materials evaluation means a principled process of providing useful information about the targeted materials in order to select and/or develop them in a reliable and valid approach. Material evaluations can be impressionistic or empirical (Ellis, 1997) and the impressionistic way of materials evaluation has come under criticism for being unempirical or unscientific (Mukundan, 2006). Moreover, the evaluation practices have not been examined critically to determine the effectiveness and value in teaching-learning environments and this is likely the main potential reason why the literature suggests that selected coursebooks have been more of a hindrance than a benefit to teaching (Mukundan, 2009).

Tomlinson (2011) considers materials evaluation as "the systematic appraisal of the value of materials in relation to their objectives and to the objectives of the learners using them" (p. xiv). Brown (2001) and Long (2005) emphasize the importance of sequencing and utilizing different methods of evaluation, starting with existing information, followed by unstructured interviews with the stakeholders. Based on these pieces of information, questionnaires may be designed and administered followed by post structured-interviews that follow up on the written responses in the

open-ended section of the questionnaire. Richards (2001) considers needs assessment to be the basis for designing a general language course, and when planning a language curriculum, needs assessment is used to achieve several things. I can do it. It serves as a means of collecting a wide range of contributions to the content, design, and implementation of language programs through the involvement of all stakeholders.

Different textbook evaluation studies have been carried out in Iran. Bagheri and Moghadasi (2020) explored how frequently Politeness Markers (PMs), Speech Acts (SAs), and Language Functions (LFs) are being incorporated in Iranian high school English textbooks: Prospect and Vision Series. The results indicated that these pragmatic components were not equally distributed throughout the conversations and no significant relationship existed between the level of the textbooks and the frequency of the pragmatic elements.

Pouranshirvani (2017a) conducted an external evaluation on *Vision 1* from teachers' perspectives. She asked 25 senior high school teachers to express their perceptions in terms of physical characteristics, objectives and supplementary materials. The results revealed that teachers are satisfied with the physical characteristics and objectives of the book, while they do not completely agree with the supplementary aids. Kheirabadi and Alavimoghaddam (2016) evaluated the English Textbook *Prospec*t series from teachers' point of view. Teachers believed that the main pitfall of the books was lacking high-quality illustrations that foster students learning. Although many teachers had found the new series a considerable step forward, it seemed that it faces some serious shortcomings. Salehi and Amini (2016) also evaluated *Prospect 1* from the teachers' and students' perspectives. They focused on eight criteria (layout and physical appearance, language type, content, activities and tasks, objectives, skills, teacher's needs, and cultural considerations). The results of the study showed that the book is mostly favored by the teachers and students. The same research was replicated by Alipour, Mohebzadeh, Gholamhosseinzadeh and Mirzapour (2016) on the English textbook *Prospect 3*. They evaluated the book from the teachers' viewpoints in terms of grammar and lexis, general content, physical characteristics, dialogues, activities, and supplementary materials. The results showed that most

teachers were satisfied with the general content, physical characteristics, and supplementary materials, while 50% of them were not pleased with the dialogues, lexis, grammar, and activities.

Based on the above findings and acknowledging Chambers's (1997) claim that textbook evaluation is usually more beneficial when all its beneficiaries are involved in the analytical process, the significant point of the current study is that the authors investigated high school textbooks by focusing on EFL teachers' as well as students' perceptions. Accordingly, the main objectives of the study were to examine the overall attitudes of Iranian high school English teachers and students towards the English textbooks for senior high school student. The study also sought to check if there were any significant differences between teachers' and students' attitudes towards the above-mentioned textbooks. Thus, the following research questions were addressed:

RQ1. What are the overall attitudes of Iranian high school English teachers towards English textbooks?

RQ2. What are the overall attitudes of Iranian high school English students towards English textbooks?

RQ3. Are there any significant differences between teachers' and students' attitudes towards high school English textbooks?

Method

To handle the current inquiry, the study relied upon a descriptive survey design involving impressionistic analysis of the materials. It entailed administering a questionnaire to teachers and students.

Participants

For the purposes of the study, a total of 12 senior high schools (male and female schools) were selected through stratified random sampling from the schools located in Isfahan. To select the teacher participants, a convenience sampling method was employed. Consequently, a total of 26 English teachers constituted the teacher sample of the study. The teachers have been teaching *Vision 1* and *Vision 2 to ten-grade high school students* since the beginning of fall 2016 and 2017 respectively. They aged between 29 and 48, with 5-year teaching experience. Following the selection of the teacher

sample of the study, the teachers invited volunteer students to fill the attitudinal questionnaire about their English textbooks. From among the pool of potential participants containing 518 (273 first-grade and 245 second-grade) senior high school students, a convenience sample including 373 students completed the questionnaire.

Instruments and Materials

Having reviewed several standardized CA checklists developed by the pioneers of textbook evaluation (e.g., Littlejohn, 1996; Litz, 2005; Sheldon, 1988; Skierso, 1991; Ur, 1996), the authors finalized a 51-item questionnaire to delve into the textbook users' attitude towards the desirability of the materials in terms of four distinctive thematic domains. The domains included subjects and contents (10 items), skills and sub-skills (28 items), layout and physical appearance (8 items), and practical considerations (5 items). To gauge the participants' attitude, a five-point Likert scale was used. The scale included 1 as strongly disagree (SDA), 2 as disagree (DA), 3 as uncertain (U), 4 as agree (A) and 5 as strongly agree (SA). Although the questionnaire was initially developed in English (see Appendix A), it was translated into Persian before being administered to the participants to avoid ambiguity. To ensure that the translated version is an exact equivalent of the original one, a university professor of translation was consulted and his suggestions were taken into account in framing the final copy (see Appendix B).

To establish the reliability of the questionnaire, it was administered to a pilot sample of 30 senior high schools, first- and second graders as well as a group of 20 high school English teachers with more than 5 years of teaching experience. Having employed the internal consistency technique, the authors made sure of the instrument reliability. To establish validity, two experts in TEFL were consulted and their appraisal of the ultimate versions assured the authors of the validity of the questionnaire.

From among the books specific to senior high schools, *Vision 1* and *Vision 2* were chosen to be evaluated in this study. The books, developed by Alavi Moghaddam, Kheirabadi, Rahimi, and Davari (2016) are intended to foster English learning among senior high school students.

Procedure

In order to elicit data from the teachers and students about the desirability of the textbooks under study, the teacher participants were required to express their attitudes towards the general characteristics of the textbooks, filling in the questionnaire. Then, the authors launched another survey administering the questionnaire to the student participants in each class under the direct supervision of their teacher and the authors.

To explore teachers' and students' attitudes towards the textbooks, the data elicited from the teachers and students were analyzed descriptively (through data tabulation and percentage estimation). Recognizing that the teachers' and students' attitudes were surveyed in terms of a multiplicity of domains, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was carried out to explore whether the textbooks were perceived differently by the students and teachers. The descriptive statistics estimated to provide an overall description of the teachers' and students' attitudes towards the textbooks under investigation. The data elicited from the pilot participants were used to evaluate the internal consistency of the whole questionnaire as well as its different domains. The results are tabulated in the next section.

Results

In order to answer the research questions, the statistical analyses were as follows.

Table 1
Cronbach's alpha for the Attitudinal Questionnaire of the Study

Book	User	Aspect	Size of Pilot Sample	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Vision 2	Teacher	The whole questionnaire		51	.837
		Subjects and Contents		10	.709
		Skills and Sub-skills	20	28	.739
		Layout and Physical Make-up		8	.712
		Practical Consideration		5	.721
	Students	The whole questionnaire		51	.921
		Subjects and Contents		10	.754
		Skills and Sub-skills	30	28	.879
		Layout and Physical Make-up		8	.707
		Practical Consideration		5	.703

As displayed in Table 1, the Cronbach's alpha coefficients evaluated for the whole questionnaire based on the pilot study as well as all the sub-domains were greater than .7, indicating an acceptable level of internal consistency for the instrument utilized in the study.

Teachers' Attitude towards the Books

The results drawn from the administration of the questionnaire to the teachers is presented in here. The comparison of the descriptive statistics estimated for the teachers' attitudes towards different domains of the book *Vision 1* (as displayed in Table 2 below) indicated that learning strategies ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 1.19$) and listening ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 0.99$) were perceived more positively compared to the other domains and sub-domains. On the other hand, reading ($M = 2.48$, $SD = 1.09$), speaking ($M = 2.51$, $SD = 1.13$) and pronunciation ($M = 2.54$, $SD = 1.13$) were the most negatively-perceived sub-domains respectively.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics of the Teachers' Attitudes towards Different Domains of Vision 1

Domain		Frequency (*F*) Percentage (*P*)					*M*	*SD*
		SA	A	U	DA	SDA		
Subjects and Contents		7 3%	76 33%	15 6.5%	114 49.6%	18 7.8%	2.74	1.09
Sub-skills and Skills	Reading	0 0%	21 30.4%	2 2.9%	35 50.7%	11 15.9%	2.48	1.09
	Listening	2 2.2%	61 66.3%	5 5.4%	20 21.7%	4 4.3%	3.40	0.99
	Speaking	3 3.3%	25 27.2%	1 1.1%	50 54.3%	13 14.1%	2.51	1.13
	Writing	8 11.6%	22 31.9%	2 2.9%	34 49.3%	3 4.3%	2.97	1.21
	Vocabulary	7 6.1%	44 38.3%	5 4.3%	58 50.4%	1 0.9%	2.98	1.08
	Grammar	2 1.4%	50 36.2%	2 1.4%	67 48.6%	17 12.3%	2.66	1.14
	Pronunciation	0 0%	16 34.8%	0 0%	23 50%	7 15.2%	2.54	1.13
	Learning Strategies	4 17.4%	14 60.9%	0 0%	3 13%	2 8.7%	3.65	1.19
Layout and Physical Make-up		13 7.1%	99 53.8%	20 10.9%	44 23.9%	8 4.3%	3.35	1.06
Practical Considerations		11 9.6%	61 53%	7 6.1%	27 23.5%	9 7.8%	3.33	1.17

The remaining features of the book were perceived either neutrally or negatively by most of the teachers. The most noteworthy areas which caused

disagreement included the recycled-based use of pronunciation (Item 37: $M = 1.74$, $SD = 0.45$) and grammar points (Item 35: $M = 1.87$, $SD = 0.81$) in the following lessons. The majority of the teachers also contradicted the adequacy of group-based speaking activities (Item 21: $M = 1.74$, $SD = 0.75$).

According to the domain analysis results, it was inferred that the teachers perceived different domains of the book in much the same way as their counterparts did regarding *Vision 1*. As the only difference, the three least-favored domains of *Vision 1* (i.e., reading, speaking, and pronunciation respectively) were evaluated in a different order with respect to *Vision 2* (i.e., speaking: $M = 2.38$, $SD = 1.24$, pronunciation: $M = 2.48$, $SD = 1.04$, and reading: $M = 2.52$, $SD = 1.19$, see Table 3).

Regarding the teachers' attitude towards different features of the book *Vision 2,* the results bear a striking resemblance to the results related to *Vision 1*. The only difference is that unlike the partial agreement of the teachers with the appropriateness of the syllabus design of the book *Vision 1*, the teacher sample surveyed about *Vision 2* was split over the appropriateness of this feature ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.02$).

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics of the Teachers' Attitudes towards Different Domains of Vision 2

Domain		Frequency (*F*) Percentage (*P*)					*M*	*SD*
		SA	A	U	DA	SDA		
Subjects and Contents		10 4.5%	66 30%	19 8.6%	94 42.7%	31 14.1%	2.68	1.17
Sub-skills and Skills	Reading	3 4.6%	17 26.2%	2 3.1%	32 49.2%	12 16.9%	2.52	1.19
	Listening	10 11.4%	50 56.8%	3 3.4%	19 21.6%	6 6.8%	3.44	1.15
	Speaking	5 5.7%	19 21.6%	3 3.4%	38 43%	23 26.1%	2.38	1.24
	Writing	5 7.6%	24 36.4%	3 4.5%	27 40.9%	7 10.6%	2.89	1.23
	Vocabulary	6 5.5%	41 37.3%	6 5.5%	51 46.4	6 5.5	2.91	1.13
	Grammar	3 2.3%	45 34.1%	3 2.3%	68 51.5%	13 9.8%	2.67	1.11
	Pronunciation	0 0%	13 29.5%	0 0%	26 59.1%	5 11.4%	2.48	1.04
	Learning Strategies	3 13.6%	14 63.6%	0 0%	4 18.2%	1 4.5%	3.64	1.09
Layout and Physical Make-up		20 11.4%	86 48.9%	17 9.7%	41 23.3%	12 6.8%	3.35	1.16
Practical Considerations		11 10%	53 48.2%	12 10.9%	22 20%	12 10.9%	3.30	1.20

Students' Attitude towards the Books

To provide an evaluation of the students' perception of various domains of the textbooks, the scales response to every individual item of the questionnaire were used to estimate a number of descriptive statistics including frequency (*F*), percentage (*P*), mean (*M*), and standard deviation (*SD*). Before evaluation, the reverse-worded items and the corresponding scales were changed to adopt a uniform approach to item analysis. Table 4 below displays the results based on the domains under investigation.

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics of the Students' Attitude Towards Different Domains of the Book Vision 1

Domain		Frequency (*F*) Percentage (*P*)					*M*	*SD*
		SA	A	U	DA	SDA		
Subjects and Contents		322 15.3%	823 39.2%	495 23.6%	348 16.65%	112 5.3%	3.43	1.10
Sub-skills and Skills	Reading	68 10.8%	274 43.5%	153 24.3%	101 16%	34 5.4%	3.38	1.05
	Listening	65 7.7%	235 28%	195 23.2%	204 24.3%	141 16.6%	2.86	1.22
	Speaking	84 10%	178 21.2%	228 27.1%	293 35.5	52 6.2%	2.93	1.10
	Writing	44 7%	204 32.4%	175 27.8%	139 22.1%	68 10.8%	3.03	1.21
	Vocabulary	146 13.9%	411 39.1%	192 18.3%	222 21.1%	79 7.5%	3.31	1.17
	Grammar	144 11.4%	459 36.4%	325 25.8%	249 19.8%	83 6.6%	3.26	1.10
	Pronunciation	20 4.8%	131 31.2%	63 15%	113 26.9%	93 22.1%	2.70	1.25
	Learning Strategies	55 26.2%	10 4.8%	52 24.8%	70 33.3%	23 11%	3.02	1.37
Layout and Physical Make-up		262 15.6%	562 33.5%	433 25.8%	321 19.1%	102 6.1%	3.33	1.13
Practical Considerations		288 27.5%	210 20%	294 28%	150 14.3%	107 10.2%	3.40	1.30

As shown in Table 4, subjects and contents (*M* = 3.43, *SD* = 1.10) and practical considerations (*M* = 3.40, *SD* = 1.30) were the two domains perceived more positively. In contrast, pronunciation (*M* = 2.70, *SD* = 1.25) and listening skills (*M* = 2.86, *SD* = 1.22) were the two least-favored components of the book *Vision 1*. To determine the features contributing to such results, a follow-up item analysis was done and the following results were revealed.

Based on the item analysis results, the students had the most favorable attitude towards items 48 (*M* = 4.48, *SD* = 0.81), 45 (*M* = 4.29, *SD* = 1.08),

and 7($M = 4.11$, $SD = 0.87$), whereby the majority of them agreed that the book is affordable (item 48) and convenient to use in terms of size and weight (item 45) as well as confirming that the thematic content is culturally appropriate (item 7). Taking the mean and standard deviation amounts into account, these three features were the only features perceived positively by the students, since their mean values were at least one standard deviation greater than the neutral scale (3). Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics of the second-graders' attitude towards different domains of the book *Vision 2*.

Table 5
Descriptive Statistics of the Students' Attitudes towards Different Domains of Vision 2

Domain		Frequency (*F*) Percentage (*P*)					*M*	*SD*
		SA	A	U	DA	SDA		
Subjects and Contents		126 7.7%	518 31.8%	341 20.9%	437 26.8%	208 12.8%	2.95	1.18
Sub-skills and Skills	Reading	12 2.5%	120 24.5%	134 27.4%	144 29.4%	79 16.2%	2.68	1.09
	Listening	11 1.7%	177 27.1%	105 16.1%	225 34.5%	134 20.6%	2.55	1.14
	Speaking	22 3.4%	182 27.9%	178 27.3%	180 27.6%	90 13.8%	2.79	1.10
	Writing	12 2.5%	177 36.2%	102 20.9%	123 25.2%	75 15.3%	2.85	1.14
	Vocabulary	22 2.7%	349 42.8%	136 16.7%	254 31.2%	54 6.6%	3.04	1.05
	Grammar	41 4.2%	285 29.1%	199 20.3%	255 26.1%	198 20.2%	2.71	1.20
	Pronunciation	5 1.5%	77 23.6%	96 29.4%	109 33.4%	39 12%	2.69	1.01
	Learning Strategies	6 3.7%	17 10.4%	71 43.6%	31 19%	38 23.3%	2.52	1.07
Layout and Physical Make-up		178 13.7%	473 36.3%	281 21.5%	224 17.2%	148 11.3%	3.24	1.22
Practical Considerations		126 15.5%	288 35.3%	145 17.8%	179 22%	77 9.4%	3.25	1.23

As the results presented in Table 5 indicate, practical considerations ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 1.23$) and layout and physical Make-up ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 1.22$) were the two domains perceived more positively. In contrast, the sub-domains representing different skills and sub-skills, except for vocabulary

(M = 3.04, SD = 1.05), were the least-favored components of the book *Vision 2*.

Comparative Analysis of the Participants' Attitude towards the Textbook

At the initial stage of the comparative analysis, the scales chosen by every participant to rate the items representing each particular domain of the textbooks, were added to evaluate a new scale entitled 'attitude score'. Tables 6 and 7 show the descriptive statistics of the teacher' and students' attitude scores based on different domains of the textbooks *Vision1* and *Vision 2* respectively.

Table 6
Descriptive Statistics of the Teachers' and Students' Attitude Scores Based on Different Domains of the book Vision 1

Domain	User	Statistic						
		N	*Min*	*Max*	*M*	*SD*	Skewness	Kurtosis
Subjects and Contents	Student	210	20	40	34.26	5.28	- 1.082	0.855
	Teacher	23	23	38	27.39	2.95	2.150	1.122
Skills and Sub-skills	Student	210	38	109	86.91	13.71	- 0.455	0.935
	Teacher	23	65	95	79.61	6.50	- 0.076	1.085
Layout and Physical Make-up	Student	210	16	33	26.67	4.39	-1.112	0.805
	Teacher	23	21	34	26.83	3.02	- 0.034	0.796
Practical Considerations	Student	210	10	24	17.00	3.29	0.302	0.471
	Teacher	23	12	22	16.65	2.04	0.024	1.829

Note. N= Number*, Min* = Minimum, *Max* = Maximum, *M* = Mean, and *SD* = Standard

As shown in Table 6, the students' attitude towards the subjects and domains (M = 34.26, SD = 5.28) was more positive compared to the students' (M = 27.39, SD = 2.95). The case was broadly similar with respect to the skills and sub-skills domain. Nonetheless, the teachers' attitude towards the textbook's layout and practical consideration (Layout: M = 26.83, SD = 3.02; Practical consideration: M = 16.65, SD = 2.04) was quite

similar to that of the students (Layout: $M = 26.67$, $SD = 4.39$; Practical consideration: $M = 17.00$, $SD = 3.29$).

Table 7
Descriptive Statistics of the Teachers' and Students' Attitude Scores Based on Different Domains of the book Vision 2

Domain	User	Statistic						
		N	*Min*	*Max*	*M*	*SD*	Skewness	Kurtosis
Subjects and Contents	Student	163	13	40	29.49	5.94	- 0.991	1.177
	Teacher	22	20	38	26.82	3.49	1.29	1.172
Skills and Sub-skills	Student	163	55	104	77.33	8.35	0.023	- 0.860
	Teacher	22	66	94	78.64	7.00	0.086	- 0.054
Layout and Physical Make-up	Student	163	19	33	25.90	4.45	- 0.051	- 1.335
	Teacher	22	19	34	26.77	3.57	- 0.065	0.336
Practical Considerations	Student	163	12	20	16.27	2.13	- 0.406	- 0.687
	Teacher	22	13	22	16.50	2.15	0.503	0.870

The results presented in Table 7 revealed a remarkable difference between the teachers and learners' attitudes towards the subject and contents of *Vision 2* (Students: $M = 29.49$, $SD = 5.94$; Teachers: $M = 26.82$, $SD = 3.49$). The teachers' attitude towards the other domains bore a remarkable resemblance to that of the students.

Assuming that the teachers' and learners' overall attitude was a function of their attitude towards the four domains, a one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) examined the significance of the difference between the teachers' and students' attitudes in terms of a linear combination of the four domains. Before running MANOVA, the fundamental assumptions required to report valid results (i.e., multivariate normality, no multi-collinearity, homogeneity of variances) were checked and no violation was found. The MANOVA results are displayed in Table 8.

Table 8
MANOVA Results for the Domains Representing the Books Vision 1 and Vision 2

Book	Effect	Wilks' Lambda Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Vision 1	Intercept	.951	1111.158	4.000	228.000	.000	.951
	User	.781	16.026	4.000	228.000	.000	.219
Vision 2	Intercept	.947	1701.571	4.000	180.000	.000	.974
	User	.939	2.946	4.000	180.000	.022	.061

According to the results in Table 8, there was a significant difference between the teachers' and students' attitudes towards *Vision 1* , Wilk's Λ = .781, F (4, 228) = 16.026, p < .001, multivariate η^2 = .219, and *Vision 2* ,Wilk's Λ = .939, F (4, 180) = 2.946, p < .05, multivariate η^2 = .061, on a linear combination of the four domains of the materials. To determine the domains that caused the significant difference between the users' attitudes, tests of between-subjects' effects were performed. The results are displayed in Table 9.

Table 9
Tests of Between-Subjects Effects on the Domains Representing the Textbooks

Book	Domain	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Vision 1	Subjects and Contents	978.545	1	978.545	37.536	.000	.140
	Skills and Sub-skills	1106.374	1	1106.374	6.355	.013	.027
	Layout and Physical Make-up	0.496	1	0.496	0.27	.869	.000
	Practical Considerations	2.508	1	2.508	0.246	.620	.001
Vision 2	Subjects and Contents	138.456	1	138.456	4.246	.041	.023
	Skills and Sub-skills	33.326	1	33.326	0.204	.652	.001
	Layout and Physical Make-up	14.909	1	14.909	0.786	.376	.004
	Practical Considerations	1.026	1	1.026	0.226	.635	.001

As displayed in Table 9, the only significant difference was found between the teachers' and learners' attitudes towards the skills and sub-skills domain of the book *Vision 1, F* (1, 231) = 37.536, *p* < .0125, *η²* = .140. The specified level of significance (.05) was modified being divided by the number of dependent variables (4) to eliminate the possibility of the error caused as a result of running multiple ANOVAs.

Generally, the pair-wise comparison of the teachers' and learners' attitudes towards the textbooks revealed that there was a significant difference in terms of the linear combination of the four domains explored in the study.

Discussion

The first question of the study was intended to explore teachers' attitudes towards the textbooks. The statistical analysis of the questionnaire data revealed that the teachers shared remarkably similar attitudes towards the textbooks, on both macro (domains) and micro (features) levels. The textbooks were perceived negatively in terms of the appropriateness of the subjects covered by the materials, and the content thereof. The item analysis results revealed that although the content was presumed to be comprehensible, culturally-appropriate, and discrimination-free by the vast majority of the teachers, more than half of the teachers believed that the tasks do not provide room for exposure to a variety of motivating cross-cultural themes. The incapability of the materials to cover a cross-cultural content lent additional support to the previous studies carried out on *Vision* textbooks (e.g., Ajideh & Panahi, 2016; Khodabandeh & Mombini, 2018; Pouranshirvani, 2017b). The results drawn from almost all of these studies revealed that the developers of *Vision* books have neglected the target culture, at the expense of addressing a thematic content mainly oriented to the source culture. Such deficiency may provide an adequate explanation of why such textbooks hardly provide students with the content required to provide intercultural communication, as claimed by Ajideh and Panahi (2016).

The teachers' negative attitude towards the content was found to be in disagreement with the finding of the study carried out by Khodabandeh and Mombini (2018) and Pouranshirvani (2017b) which introduced this domain as a favored feature of the book *Vision 1*. The comparative item analysis results revealed that contrary to what has been found in the current study,

the teacher sample of Khodabandeh and Mombini's (2018) study agreed that the book is realistic, challenging, and interesting concerning its subject and content. One possible explanation for such a differential attitude may be the fact that teachers' expectations of the desired content will approximate to the optimum status as time goes by.

Regarding the features representing the physical layout, most of the teachers agreed with the acceptable printing quality, the adequacy of visual aids, the appropriateness of the content-based overview, and the convenient use (in terms of size and weight). Despite the teachers' agreement with the overall layout of the textbooks, the overall appearance was presumed to be uninteresting. The partially positive attitude of the teachers towards the overall layout of the textbooks also corroborated the findings of Pouranshirvani's (2017a) study of the textbook *Vision 1*. The results were in line with those of other studies in which the teachers were in favor of these textbooks in terms of physical appearance and content (Salehi & Amini, 2016; Torki & Chalak, 2017).

Based on a detailed item analysis of the features representing the appropriateness of the listening materials, the teachers mostly agreed with the quality of the recordings, the appropriateness of the follow-up activities, and the level-appropriate nature of the tasks. Concerning the other skills and sub-skills, the teachers mostly confirmed the appropriateness of the speaking materials to the target students' background, the achievable nature of the writing materials, the reasonable load of the new vocabulary items, the context-based approach to vocabulary and grammar presentation, and the comprehensiveness of the pronunciation tasks. On the other hand, most of the teachers believed in an apparent lack of authentic reading materials concerning various topics, adequate individual and group-based speaking tasks, and purposeful writing materials to foster guided writing. The distribution of the vocabulary items across the lessons, the approach adopted to vocabulary and grammar reinforcement, and the implicit method of grammar presentation were also criticized by the majority of the teacher respondents.

The second question of the study entailed a quest for students' perceptions. Although the first-grade users of the book *Vision 1* evaluated

the subjects and content of the book more positive compared to the other domains, the majority of the second-grade senior high school students contradicted the appropriateness of the subjects and content of the book *Vision 2*. Based on the results drawn from the detailed item analysis, the majority of the students surveyed about the book *Vision 2* wondered whether the content serves as a window into English learning, believing that the limited number of the subjects, and the content thereof, are hardly motivating and challenging enough to foster learning. Both groups of the learners, however, admired the culturally-appropriate and discrimination-free content of the two textbooks. The students' favorable attitude towards the subjects and content of the book *Vision 1* corroborated the claim made by Khodabandeh and Mombini (2018) that the subject is satisfactory to first-grade senior high school students. This finding, in line with Pouranshirvani's idea (2017b), is supported by Richards (2001) who insists on the idea that the content of the textbooks should be sufficiently various to meet different learning styles.

Concerning the physical appearance, there was a widely-shared attitude towards the two textbooks. The students mostly agreed with the convenient use, the printing quality, the detailed content-based overview, and the visually-aided nature of the books. The other features which delved into the quality of the illustrations, the overall appearance of the book, the consideration for students' desirable layout, and the appropriateness of the syllabus design were perceived somehow neutrally by the two samples of the student respondents. There were slight differences between the current study and that of Khodabandeh and Mombini (2018) in terms of the items intended to explore the domain; both of the studies revealed an overall agreement with the practical considerations of the book *Vision 1*. The results concerning this property are well confirmed by Pouranshirvani (2017a).

The last domain investigated referred to the appropriateness of the materials intended to develop different language learning skills and sub-skills. While the materials used in *Vision 1* to develop reading, vocabulary, and grammar were confirmed by the majority of the first-grade students, the second-grade students only expressed a partially positive attitude towards the tasks targeted at vocabulary development. On the other hand, although the pronunciation and speaking materials were the only sub-domains

perceived as unsatisfactory by a large proportion of the first-graders, an overwhelming percent of the second-graders disagreed with the materials intended to develop all language learning skills, sub-skills, and strategies, except for vocabulary. The fairly positive attitude of the first-graders towards the materials intended to develop most of the skills and sub-skills bears a substantial resemblance to the corresponding findings of Khodabandeh and Mombini's (2018) study. Concerning this aspect, teachers and students agreed upon the idea that the textbook is of a favorable status and provides a balance of variant activities that encourage students to practice communicatively. The findings are in line with the idea of Tomlinson (2003) about activities and tasks in textbooks generally and Pouranshirvani (2017b) in *Vision 1* particularly.

Based on the results drawn from the follow-up item analysis, the negative perception of the second-grades towards the materials used in *Vision 2* to develop different skills and sub-skills stemmed from their direct contradiction to the approach adopted to recycle and reinforce the previously-learned grammar and pronunciation points; the method of grammar presentation; the type of the grammar, reading, and writing tasks; the load of the new vocabulary items, and the quality of the listening materials. As the least-favored features of the book *Vision 1*, the students only referred to the poor quality of the recordings, the negligence in recycling and reinforcing the previously-learned pronunciation points, unreasonable load of vocabulary, and the absence of speaking materials targeted at initiating communications. The disagreement between the first- and second-grade students over the necessity of including initiation-based communicative tasks may be attributed to the fact that the first-graders are not as aware as their second-grade counterparts of the final examinations' focus on linguistic areas.

Having explored the teachers' and students' attitudes towards the two textbooks under investigation, the study sought to ascertain whether there is any significant difference between the teachers and students. Based on the results, it was found that there was a significant difference between the learners' and teachers' attitudes towards both of the books, based on a linear combination of the four domains.

The descriptive analysis of the survey data revealed that although the content and subjects of the two textbooks, as well as the tasks intended to develop different skills and sub-skills in the textbook *Vision 2*, were perceived much more negatively by the teachers in comparison with the students, the other domains were perceived somehow identical by the two groups of the participants.

The post-hoc analysis results revealed that the significant disagreement between the teachers and students over the subjects and content caused the overall teacher-student disagreement towards the book *Vision 1*; however, no specific domain-oriented difference was directly in charge of the significant difference in the teachers' and students' overall attitude towards the textbook *Vision 2*. Nonetheless, a linear combination of the respondents' responses to the items representing all the four domains led to a significant difference between the teachers and students in terms of their perception towards the book *Vision 2*. In simpler terms, the teachers' and students' overall perception of the textbooks differed significantly as claimed by Ajideh and Panahi (2016). The findings are in line with the idea of Tomlinson (2003) about activities and tasks in textbooks generally and Pouranshirvani (2017b) in *Vision 1* particularly.

Relying upon the results drawn from the evaluation of the books, it can be concluded that the layout, and physical appearance as well as the practical considerations of the materials are partially satisfactory to both teachers and learners. Moreover, the subjects and the contents were found to be an area of disagreement between teachers and students. Such a differential view; however, was exclusive to the book *Vision 1*, and the subjects and content of the book *Vision 2* failed to attract the attention of both groups of the participants. The peak extent of the teacher-learner disagreement was witnessed regarding the materials targeted at different skills and sub-skills. While the materials intended to develop listening and learning strategies were satisfactory to the teachers, vocabulary, grammar, and reading materials were the favored elements of the textbooks for the students. The cumulative effect of these differences led to a significant difference between teachers' and students' overall attitudes towards the textbooks.

Like any other study, the current study suffered from a multiplicity of limitations, the most noteworthy one included the impracticality of a

random selection of the participants (both teachers and students). Furthermore, the learner's age, social classes, and cultural beliefs were not considered while sampling. Moreover, the subjects' cognitive styles, intelligence quotients and learning strategies could not be controlled. In addition to the restrictions mentioned above which might have called the validity of the research findings into doubt, there were a couple of delimitations imposed by the authors to narrow down the variables of the study. Since attention to all kinds of grades of high schools was impractical, the authors focused on senior high school grades. Deciding on the books *Vision 1* and *Vision 2* from among different English textbooks was another delimitation of the research.

Meanwhile, the pros and cons of the textbooks could shed light on the revision project, helping the developers to enrich the materials while retaining the favored features. Such a comprehensive project seems very likely to consolidate the pedagogical worth of the textbooks as the only source of English teaching/learning in the Iranian high school context. Given the significant difference between teachers' and students in the way they generally perceive the appropriateness of the textbooks for the specific context of use, those who are in charge of the modification are recommended to take care of the needs, desires, and expectations of both teachers and learners. Senior high school English teachers and students nationwide may also benefit indirectly from the modifications and amendments made according to their impression.

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