

A Retrospective Evaluation of Iranian Third Grade Junior High School English Textbook

Elham Taghipour Ahangar¹ Shaban Najafi Karimi^{2*}

¹Ph.D. Candidate, Department of English Language Teaching, Qaemshahr Branch, Islamic Azad University, Qameshahr, Iran
ordibehesht2425@gmail.com

²Assistant Professor, Department of English Language Teaching, Qaemshahr Branch, Islamic Azad University, Qameshahr, Iran
s.najafi.k@qaem.iau.ac.ir

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the third-grade junior high school English course book in Iran which was implemented in 2017 by the ministry of education. The study was done in order to find out whether its contents match the authors' claim. To do this, the researcher used quantitative research design to evaluate the Course Book (CB). A sample of 200 teachers participated in this study for answering the questionnaire who were chosen randomly from different state and private schools in Mazandaran province. They participated in the online and paper and pencil survey. The survey was developed by Cunnings Worth (1995). The items of the questionnaire were based on the characteristic of a good textbook and included 14 categories as content, grammar, vocabulary, phonology, language skills, methodology, study skills, objectives, content selection, gradation and recycling, visuals, practices and testing, supplementary materials and teacher manual. In short, the results indicated that *Prospect 3* was perceived as moderately adequate since the mean composite scores for each category exceeded 2, except for gradation and recycling which scored 2.10. Gradation and recycling and study skills category were two categories that scored a mean of 2.13 and 2.10. They gained the least support by the respondents.

Keywords: Textbook, Retrospective Evaluation, Content, EFL Learners

ارزوایی بازنگرانه کتاب انگلیسی پایه سوم متوسطه اول ایران

این پژوهش به ارزیابی کتاب زبان انگلیسی پایه سوم راهنمایی در ایران که در سال 1396 توسط وزارت آموزش و پرورش اجرا شد، پرداخته است. این تحقیق به منظور بررسی اینکه آیا محتوای کتاب با ادعای نویسندگان مطابقت دارد یا خیر انجام شد. برای انجام این کار، محقق از طرح تحقیق کمی برای ارزیابی این کتاب درسی استفاده کرد. نمونه تحقیق متشکل از 200 معلم بود که برای پاسخ به پرسشنامه در این پژوهش شرکت کردند که به صورت تصادفی از مدارس مختلف دولتی و غیردولتی استان مازندران انتخاب شدند. آنها در پرسشنامه آنلاین و کاغذی شرکت کردند. این پرسشنامه توسط Cunnings Worth سال 1995 طراحی شد. آیتم های این پرسشنامه بر اساس ویژگی های کتاب درسی خوب و شامل 14 دسته به عنوان محتوا، دستور زبان، واژگان، واج شناسی، مهارت های زبانی، روش شناسی، مهارت های مطالعه، اهداف، انتخاب محتوا، درجه بندی و بازنگاری، تمرین و تست، مواد تکمیلی و راهنمای معلم بود. به طور خلاصه، نتایج ارزیابی نشان داد که محتوای این کتاب نسبتاً مناسب است. زیرا میانگین نمرات ترکیبی برای هر دسته از 2 نمرات رفته است، به جز برای درجه بندی و بازنگاری که امتیاز 2.10 را کسب کردند. مقوله درجه بندی و بازنگاری و مهارت های مطالعه دو مقوله بودند که میانگین 2/13 و 2/10 را کسب کردند. آنها کمترین درجه را از سوی پاسخ دهندگان به دست آوردند.

کلیدواژه ها: کتاب درسی، ارزیابی، بازنگرانه، محتوا، زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی

INTRODUCTION

Over the world, English has become the center of attention as it is most widely used for international communication. English is perceived as the passport to global communication and in most educational settings English has become a medium of communication (Kamyabi Gol & Baghaeeyan, 2015). English language learners expect high standards of presentation through different instruction media such as films, audios, and computerized materials. Among all these materials textbooks or course books play a crucial role in EFL/ESL classes. During educational innovation, textbooks play a corner stone role as they provide a picture of what the change is going to look like, Hutchinson and Torres (1994). In many classes ELT textbooks are basic elements for teachers and learners. They are used in schools, institutions, colleges and language schools all over the world. As Cunnings Worth (1995) mentioned, in process of learning and teaching, textbooks play a prominent role. He also discussed that textbooks are useful sources for self –directed learning and a syllabus to reflect the objectives of learning. Some textbooks are basic element of teaching and learning. They should have some basic criteria. As Tomlinson (2003) states, materials should raise learners` curiosity, interest and attention. He provides some examples of these features such as attractive colors, photographs and interesting topics. In order to have an effective class, a teacher should have an appropriate textbook.

The government and policy makers, after the Islamic Revolution, found the vital role of ELT in the Iranian educational system and English as an International Language. According to Kheirabadi and Alavi Moghaddam (2014), it was for the first time during the age of ELT in Iranian public schools that a set of objectives for teaching English was formally designated and announced by the Ministry of Education. In fact, teaching foreign languages constituted the 11th domain of the 12 domains which expressed the national curriculum. The 11th domain which was devoted to ELT stated its objectives as: Teaching foreign languages should set the scene for reception, perception, and the cultural transmission as well as the scientific achievements by means of the linguistic communication. In addition to the intercultural and interpersonal functions, the economic developments including tourism industry, IT science, and so on should be achieved through a focus on teaching foreign languages.

Course books have important effects as a guide to teachers in conducting a lesson. A course book also affects learners` attitudes and performances. Course books are the most widely used materials in teaching and learning procedure. They provide a framework in order to achieve the aims and objectives of the course by teachers. It is true that if learners like their textbooks, they will like the course and become active participants in the classroom, because mostly the teachers use course books in classes at schools in Iran, the Course book is a crucial source of input and a great opportunity for EFL learners` communication in target language. As there are some special forms for textbook analysis at schools, teachers should evaluate their textbooks, especially newly edited ones, in order to explore their practicality and their strengths and weaknesses. Evaluation can help teachers in teaching procedure and emphasize important points in teaching process and to find out which lesson need more time for learners to understand. Although as Grant (1987) claims "perfect book does not exist" (p.8), teachers and authors seek to find the best possible one that may be appropriate to learners.

Prospect 3 is the last book of new series of English for schools for the third grade of junior high school students. This book contains six lessons which is claimed to be on the basis of communicative language teaching. As *prospect 3* has been taught for two years in all junior high schools in Iran, this



paper aimed at evaluating the book in order to find out whether its contents match the authors' claim. To do this, two research questions have been formed;

1. To what extent does the content of Prospect 3 enjoy the general features of an ESL textbook?
2. What are the strengths and weaknesses of *Prospect 3* textbook?

Significance of the Study

As there are some special forms for textbook analysis at schools, teachers should evaluate their textbooks, especially newly edited ones, in order to explore their practicality and their strengths and weaknesses. Evaluation can help teachers in teaching procedure and emphasize important points in teaching process and to find out which lesson need more time for learners to understand. Although as Grant (1987) claims "perfect book does not exist" (p.8), teachers and authors seek to find the best possible one that may be appropriate to learners. This study examined the new ELT third grade course book as it was thought to be a worthwhile task to carry out in this evaluation. For teachers and students, the evaluation of course materials are a major component of syllabus design. While textbooks are central to how EFL teaching is done in Iran, there is a need for an evaluation of their contents and to investigate their role in teaching and methodology. This study can be very important in order to achieve the designed learning goals. As state schools are the main places where learners and course books are the main instrument for teaching the language, such studies can help materials developers to consider the needs of teachers and learners in designing and developing the content.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Jahangard (2007) evaluated high school textbooks and he concluded, concerning tasks and topics, the textbooks were quite interesting and useful; however, the major pitfall of the textbooks under his study lacked sufficient context for learners to comprehend the new vocabulary provided to them. Another major weak point of high school text books was that the listening skill was completely ignored in those textbooks. In the realm of task- based and pragmatics Iraj (2007) conducts research and makes a careful analysis on New Interchange series based on the principles of communicative and task-based approach to investigate to what extent the principles of CLT and TBLT approaches have been regarded. In this regard, she employs Ellis's model (2003). Iraj (2007) criticizes the book because the series do not follow the principles of communicative and task-based approaches as the author claimed. It has no frequency of meta-pragmatic information. In the area of pragmatics one study has been conducted by Darali (2007). She made a careful analysis on Spectrum series with the application of six models proposed by Searle (1976), Leech (1983), Matreyek (1990), Holms (1990), Thomas (1983), and Halliday (1978). She reported that the series have provided a variety of language functions, but some important language functions that are used in everyday conversation more frequently, e.g., promising, vowing, and threatening, not only were in the form of unintended function, but also, they were not as frequent as others.

Razmjoo (2007) investigated the extent to which the Iranian high school and private institute textbooks represent the CLT principles. To this end, the textbooks of the Iranian high schools and private institutes were analyzed descriptively and inferentially. The analysis of the data indicated that while high



school textbooks are not conducive to CLT implementation, private institute textbooks represent the CLT principles to a great extent. In the same year, Zare Moayed (2007) carried out an evaluation on a series of ELT materials namely, Interchange third edition. For this purpose, Littlejohn's (1998) detailed framework was employed in this attempt. Results indicated that the Interchange series are not completely in line with the objectives intended for it. They do not use learners or even the teachers as a source for its content.

Gordani (2010) explored different types of learning objectives inherent in Iranian guidance school English textbooks from the viewpoint of Bloom's taxonomy. The primary data in this study were the English textbooks taught in Iranian guidance schools at the present time. The study used Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives (1956) in analyzing the material found in Iranian guidance school English textbooks. The results showed that all of the items were concentrated in the first three levels of Bloom's taxonomy which are referred to as the lower levels of cognitive skills. In addition, a significant difference was found between the textbooks in their inclusion of different levels of cognitive skills. Besides, Rashidi and Bahrami (2012) attempted to conduct an in-depth evaluation of intermediate Top Notch based on Littlejohn's (1998) evaluative framework. The results showed the strengths and weaknesses of these intermediate textbooks which might give them some insights into the course book they use and how they can exploit it better.

METHOD

A sample of 200 teachers participated in this study for answering the questionnaire who were chosen randomly from different state and private schools in Mazandaran province. Volunteered teachers participated in the on-line and paper and pencil survey. The checklist was developed primarily from Cunnings Worth (1995). The items of the questionnaire were based on the characteristic of a good textbook and included 50 criteria in 14 categories: content, grammar, vocabulary, phonology, language skills, methodology, study skills, objectives, content selection, gradation and recycling, visuals, practices and testing, supplementary materials and teacher manual. It was used to reflect participants' judgments and opinions about the course book. A four-point Likert scale format, ranging 1-4 was used to reflect participants' opinion and level of agreement with a list of statements.

The participants were given Cunnings Worth' checklist to answer. Before administering the questionnaire, the researcher explained in Persian on the process of the completion through explaining and exemplifying how to choose the answers. That is to say, this study provides a retrospective quantitative evaluation of the newly authored English textbook, *Prospect 3*, which is published by Ministry of education. The quantitative data was collected by the checklist developed by Cunnings Worth to investigate participants' judgment and opinions regarding the content of CB. Statistical Package for Statistical Science was used to analyze the quantitative data collected for this study. The reliability of textbook evaluation tool was measured by Cronbach's alpha. This process helped in making questionnaire as reliable as possible. Responses were analyzed in terms of descriptive statistics. The checklist-evaluation provided a descriptive analysis of *Prospect 3* through an in-depth investigation of its content (including aims and approaches, design and organization, language content, skills, topic, methodology, teachers' books, and other practical considerations). It also clarifies how the results are related to the literature review and previous research results.



RESULTS

In order to answer the research questions, to what extent the textbook has the general features of a good ESL textbook and what are the strengths and weaknesses of “Prospect 3”, the results of each of the 14 categories are presented: content, Supplementary, The teachers` Manual, Phonology, Practice and techniques, Visuals, objectives, Grammar, Language Skills, Methodology, Gradation and Recycling, Study Skills, and Vocabulary. The results of table 1 present internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha method and its 14 categories in separate. The results of the table show all Cronbach's alphas have acceptable amounts (higher 0.70); thus, it can be interfered that the questionnaire has an acceptable reliability.

Table 1

Reliability Test (Cronbach's alpha)

Category	Statements	N of Items	Cronbach's α
Content	1-7	7	0.83
Grammar	8-11	4	0.77
Vocabulary	12-13	2	0.74
Phonology	14-15	2	0.75
Language Skills	16-18	3	0.74
Methodology	19-21	3	0.78
Study Skills	22-25	4	0.78
Visuals	26-27	2	0.72
Practice and techniques	28-32	5	0.79
Supplementary	33	1	-
Objectives	34-37	4	0.75
Content Selection	38-40	3	0.72
Gradation and Recycling	41-42	2	0.70
The teachers` Manual	43-50	8	0.83
Total	1-50	50	0.87

Category 1 concerns with the content of CB. The table of contents shows that the topics are the main organizing principles. The variability of interesting and familiar topics increases learners` motivation, thereby contributing an important dimension that determines learning success. Content category was evaluated according to statements 1-7. Table 2 outlines frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations of each of the responses from the overall sample.



Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Content Category

Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. De
	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%		
The selected topics are familiar to the students.	10	5	15	7.5	102	51	73	36.5	3.19	.78
The selected topics enhance learners` motivation.	10	5	61	30.5	111	55.5	18	9	2.69	.71
The CB has a list at the end for new or difficult words.	4	2	20	10	46	23	130	65	3.51	.76
The CB contains self-check progress report.	56	28	111	55.5	23	11.5	10	5	1.94	.77
Pedagogic texts and dialogues include new vocabulary and grammatical structures.	11	5.5	46	23	111	55.5	32	16	2.82	.76
Language items are presented in context to make meaning clear.	8	4	36	18	123	61.5	33	16.5	2.91	.71
Pedagogic texts and dialogues include a variety of interesting subjects.	21	10.5	115	57.5	46	23	18	9	2.31	.78

The results of table 2 reveal that statement 3 has maximum and statement 4 has minimum mean in content category. In statements 3, 1, 6, 5, and 2 more than of half respondents "agree" and "strongly agree", respectively. In statements 4 and 7 more than of half respondents "disagree" and "strongly disagree", respectively. Category number 2 is concerned with grammar. Statement 8-11 attempted to evaluate the presentation of grammar in the CB in terms of the following the following four statement:

8. The paradigm used to introduce grammatical point is clear and simple.
9. Grammar items suit students` language needs.
10. There is a balance between form and use.
11. Sentences and examples use words that are known by learners.

Table 3 shows the frequency, percentage, means and standard deviation of each response from the entire sample.



Table 3*Descriptive Statistics of Grammar Category*

Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. Dev.
	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%		
The paradigm used to introduce grammatical rules is clear and simple.	9	4.5	61	30.5	109	54.5	21	10.5	2.71	.71
Grammar items suits students' language needs.	9	4.5	73	36.5	91	45.5	27	13.5	2.68	.76
There is a balance between form and use.	59	29.5	98	49	30	15	13	6.5	1.99	.84
Sentences and examples use words that are known by learners.	27	13.5	11	57.5	54	27	4	2	2.18	.68

The results of the above table reveal that statement 8 has maximum and statement 10 has minimum mean in Grammar category. In statements 8 and 9 more than of half respondents "agree" and "strongly agree", respectively. In statements 10 and 11 more than of half respondents "disagree" and "strongly disagree", respectively.

The 3rd category on textbook evaluation tool (TET) is vocabulary. With regard to vocabulary, respondents' ratings disagree and strongly disagree. It seems that the participants were unsure about the needs of the learners and they had different expectation about the type of vocabulary that learners mostly need.

Table 4*Descriptive Statistics of Vocabulary Category*

Statements	Strongly disagree		disagree		agree		Strongly agree		mean	Std. Dev.
	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%		
New lexical items are graded according to principles of immediate use.	36	18	105	52.5	40	20	19	9.5	2.21	.85
New lexical items appear in the following units.	37	18.5	95	47.5	53	26.5	15	7.5	2.23	.84



The results table 4 reveal that the mean of the statement 12 is 2.21 and the mean of the statement 13 is 2.23 in Vocabulary category. In both statements more than of half respondents "disagree" and "strongly disagree".

Phonology results show that in both statements more than of half respondents "agree" and "strongly agree" and shows that pronunciation is built through other types of activities such as listening, dialogue, etc. There is a clear dispute among respondents about the existence of varied pronunciation practice techniques. On the contrary, item 15 gained the least support by the respondents. 43.5 % of the respondents disagreed with the statement that cassettes are available for pronunciation practice. Table 5 shows the results.

Table 5*Descriptive Statistics of Phonology Category*

Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. De
	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%		
Pronunciation is built through different types of activities, such as listening, dialogue, practice etc.	19	9.5	61	30.5	96	48	24	12	2.63	.82
There are cassettes /CDs appropriate for pronunciation practice.	23	11.5	87	43.5	63	31.5	27	13.5	2.47	.87

The fifth category attempted to evaluate the way language skills are presented in CB. (Statement 16-18). The results of the above table reveal that statement 17 has maximum and statement 18 has minimum mean in Language Skills category. In statements 18, 16, and 17 more than of half respondents "disagree" and "strongly disagree. The Respondents' rating was with a mean score of 2.35, 2.47 and 2.30.

Table 6*Descriptive Statistics of Language Skills Category*

Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. De
	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%		
There is practice in the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.	31	15.5	96	48	45	22.5	28	14	2.35	.91
The course book uses authentic (real-world) reading materials at an appropriate level.	22	11	80	40	80	40	18	9	2.47	.81
The course book uses authentic materials at an appropriate level.	14	7	124	62	50	25	12	6	2.30	.69



The 6th category on TET is methodology of the CB. (Statements 19-21). When assessing syllabus aimed at developing an overall competence, one has to determine how priority is established among various aspects. The authors claim that communicative competence is a major objective of this book which can be attained by increasing number of activities. Table 6 shows that responses were with a mean composite score of 2.22. (SD= .67). More than half of the respondents were dissatisfied with the used methodology. 63.5% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that the CB identifies areas of students` need. Similarly, 61.5% and 52% of the respondents were against the claims of statements 20 and 21, respectively.

Table 7*Descriptive Statistics of Methodology Category*

Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. Dev
	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%		
The CB discusses and identifies areas of student needs.	23	11.5	127	63.5	36	18	14	7	2.21	.73
The CB encourages inductive approach to learning.	20	10	123	61.5	39	19.5	18	9	2.28	.76
Accuracy is balanced with fluency.	37	18.5	104	52	41	20.5	18	9	2.20	.84

Category 7 is concerned with study skills. Statements 22-25 aimed at finding whether the participants think the CB contains lessons that enhance learners` study skills or not. To achieve this, the following statements were designed:

22. The CB includes lessons that focus on study skills techniques.
23. The CB contains suggestion on study skills development.
24. Students are encouraged to take some responsibilities for their own learning.
25. There are some materials for independent activities.

Table 8 shows the frequencies, percentages, mean, and SD of each response.

Table 8*Descriptive Statistics of Study Skills Category*

Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. Dev
	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%		
The CB includes lessons that reflect on study techniques.	31	15.5	125	62.5	32	16	12	6	2.13	.74



The CB contains advices on Study skills development.	63	31.5	89	44.5	42	21	6	3	1.96	.80
Students are encouraging to take some degree of responsibility for their own learning.	36	18	116	58	36	18	12	6	2.12	.77
There are some materials for independent works.	25	12.5	119	59.5	43	21.5	13	6.5	2.22	.74

With regard to study skills, the respondents' rating were quite negative with a mean score of 2.10 (SD=.61). Statement 22 scored 2.13, where 62.5 participants disagreed with the statement. Statement 23 scored 1.96. It means which that 44.5 % disagreed with the statement. Responses to statements 24 and 25 were distributed quite equally among scores. The findings show that the CB does not contain lessons to enhance learners' study skills.

Category eight refers to visuals in the book. Visuals category was evaluated according to statements 26-27. Table 9 outlines frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations of each of the responses from the overall sample.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics of Visuals Category

Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. De
	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%		
The visuals used in the book are an integral part of teaching.	11	5.5	41	20.5	116	58	32	16	2.85	.75
The visuals are reasonably well produced and attractive.	71	35.5	74	37	42	21	13	6.5	1.99	.91

The results of table 9 reveal that the mean of the statement 26 is 2.85 and the mean of the statement 27 is 1.99 in Vocabulary category. In statement 26, more than of half of the respondents "agree" and "strongly agree". In statement 27 more than half of the respondents "disagree" and "strongly disagree".

The 9th category, practice and testing techniques contain five statements. The number of respondents who argued against the statements are out weighty those who gave their support. 47.5% were disagreed with statement 28. Statement 29 gave a score of 2.07. 128 participants agreed with statement thirty about the directions to explain how every exercise can be done. 61% agreed with the number of exercises while 57.5% of the respondents argued against the statement that Prospect 3 provides periodical revisions for diagnostic purposes. 20.5% supported the claim. Table 10 shows the frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations of teachers' responses related to Practice and techniques category.



Table 10*Descriptive Statistics of Practice and Techniques Category*

Statement	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. De
	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%		
The CB provides mechanical and meaningful exercises.	15	7.5	95	47.5	63	31.5	27	13.5	2.51	.82
The CB provides communicative exercise that enables learners to carry out their communicative tasks in real-life situations.	42	21	108	54	44	22	6	3	2.07	.74
There are directions to explain how every exercise can be done.	1	0.5	43	21.5	128	64	28	14	2.92	.61
The number of exercises is suitable.	19	9.5	25	12.5	122	61	34	17	2.86	.81
The textbook provides revisions for diagnostic purposes.	32	16	115	57.5	41	20.5	12	6	2.17	.76

The results of the above table reveal that statement 30 has maximum and statement 29 has minimum mean in Practice and techniques category. In statements 28, 31, and 30 more than of half respondents are "agree" and "strongly agree", respectively. In statements 29, and 32 more than of half respondents are "disagree" and "strongly disagree".

Supplementary category was evaluated according to statement 33. Table 11 outlines frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations of the responses from the sample.

Table 11*Descriptive Statistics of Supplementary Category*

Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. De
	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%		
The posters and flash cards accompanying the book are attractive and suitable.	22	11	40	20	120	60	18	9	2.67	.79

The results of table 11 reveal that the mean of the statement 33 is 2.67. In statement 33, more than of half respondents "agree" and "strongly agree". Over 120 participants agreed with the statement.



The 11th category is about the objectives of Prospect 3 and it was evaluated according the four statements. (34-37). Table 12 outlines frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations of each of the responses from the overall sample. The results of table 11 reveal that statement 35 has maximum and statement 34 has minimum mean in Objectives category. In statements 35 more than of half respondents "agree" and "strongly agree". In statements 36, 37, and 34 more than of half respondents "disagree" and "strongly disagree", respectively.

Table 12*Descriptive Statistics of Objectives Category*

Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. De
	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%		
The terminal goals are specified in the teachers' manual	34	17	90	45	65	32.5	11	5.5	2.27	.80
The developmental objectives are specified at the beginning of each lesson.	19	9.5	64	32	92	46	25	12.5	2.62	.82
Developmental objectives meet the needs of learners.	21	10.5	103	51.5	66	33	10	5	2.33	.73
Developmental objectives suit the level of learners.	23	11.5	106	53	49	24.5	22	11	2.35	.83

Over 45% of the teachers disagreed with the statement that said the terminal goals are specified in the teachers` manual. 92 participants agreed that the developmental adjectives are specified at the beginning of each lesson. Over 50% of the respondents either agreed or disagreed with 36 and 37, i.e., that the developmental objectives do not meet the needs of learners or suit their level of proficiency.

Category 12, content selection, was evaluated according to the three statements (38-40):

38. Item selection reflects the objectives of the course.

39. Item selection suits the level of the course.

40. Item selection suits the time limit allowed for the course.

Table 13 shows the frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviation of each of the responses from teachers.

Table 13*Descriptive Statistics of Content Selection Category*

Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. De
	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%		
Item selection reflects the objectives of the course.	22	11	121	60.5	48	24	9	4.5	2.22	.70



Item selection suits the level of the course.	19	9.5	114	57	52	26	15	7.5	2.32	.75
Item selection suits the time limit allowed for the course.	21	10.5	72	36	91	45.5	16	8	2.51	.79

Content selection was among the categories that gained the least support (Mean= 2.32, SD= .55). 60.5 % of the participants disagreed with the statement that item selection reflects the objectives of the course. Besides 57% of participants argued against the statement that item selection suits the level of the course. On the other hand, 36 % of the teachers disagreed with the statement that item selection suits the time limit allowed for the course while 45.5% agreed with time limitation. Therefore, with regard to content selection, respondents` rating were with a mean composite score of 2.32 (SD=.55).

The 13th category, gradation and recycling were evaluated according to the following two statements (41-42). Table14 outlines frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations of each of the responses from the overall sample.

Table 14

Descriptive Statistics of Gradation and Recycling Category

Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. De
	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%		
The grading of items is suitable for the learners.	34	17	99	49.5	64	32	3	1.5	2.18	.72
There is a systematic and balanced recycling of all items.	52	26	96	48	38	19	14	7	2.07	.85

The results of table 14 reveal that the mean of the statement 41 is 2.18 and the mean of the statement 42 is 2.07 in Vocabulary category. In statements 42 and 41 more than half of respondents "disagree" and "strongly disagree" respectively.

Category 14 was evaluated according the following statements.

1. All teachers are provided with the teachers` manual
2. The teacher's manual is informative.
3. The manual is written so as to be comprehensible enough for less experienced teachers.
4. The underlying learning approach of authors is expressed clearly and explicitly in the teachers` manual.
5. Learning difficulties are predicted and appropriate advice is given.
6. The manual provides keys to exercise and other activities.
7. The manual contains regular progress tests.
8. There are guidelines for evaluating how well lessons went.

With regard to teachers` manual, Table14 outlines frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations of each of the responses from the overall sample. Almost 44% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed with statements that all teachers are provided with the teachers' manual and the teacher's manual



is informative. 46.5 % of the respondents believe that the manual is written so as to be comprehensible enough for less experienced teachers. Also 58.5 % of participants believe that the underlying learning approach of authors is expressed clearly and explicitly in the teachers' manual. Statement 47 yield the mean 2.03, suggesting that the teacher's manual failed to predict learning difficulties and give appropriate advice. Besides, 59.5% of respondents believe that the teacher's manual provides keys to exercises and 55% disagreed with statement 49, which concerned with the point that the manual contains regular progress test. Finally, 59% strongly disagreed that teacher's manual provided guidelines for evaluating how lesson progress was went. To sum up, the results of table 14 reveal that statement 45 has maximum and statement 50 has minimum mean in Content Selection category. In statements 45, 43, 44, 48, and 46, more than half of the respondents "agree" and "strongly agree". In statements 50, 49, and 47 more than half of the respondents "disagree" and "strongly disagree", respectively.

Table 15

Descriptive Statistics of Teachers' Manual Category

Statements	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	Std. De
	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%		
All teachers are provided with the teachers' manual	13	6.5	20	10	88	44	79	39.5	3.17	.86
The teacher's manual is informative.	10	5	26	13	91	45.5	73	36.5	3.14	.82
The manual is written so as to be comprehensible enough for less experienced teachers.	6	3	34	17	67	33.5	93	46.5	3.24	.84
The underlying learning approach of authors is expressed clearly and explicitly in the teachers; manual.	16	8	44	22	117	58.5	23	11.5	2.74	.77
Learning difficulties are predicted and appropriate advice is given.	58	29	92	46	37	18.5	13	6.5	2.03	.86
The manual provides keys to exercise and other activities.	11	5.5	30	15	119	59.5	40	20	2.94	.75
The manual contains regular progress tests.	55	27.5	110	55	25	12.5	10	5	1.95	.77
There are guidelines for evaluating how well lessons went.	118	59	39	19.5	37	18.5	6	3	1.66	.88

The results of descriptive analysis show the mean and standard deviation for each statement and category. The mean for each category shows the general view toward that category. The quantitative results for each of the 14 composite measures of TET are outlined below, including responses from all teachers. (n=200). The results of table 15 show content, supplementary, the teachers` manual, phonology, practice and techniques, visuals, objectives, grammar, language skills, content selection, methodology, gradation and recycling, study skills, and vocabulary have the highest means respectively.

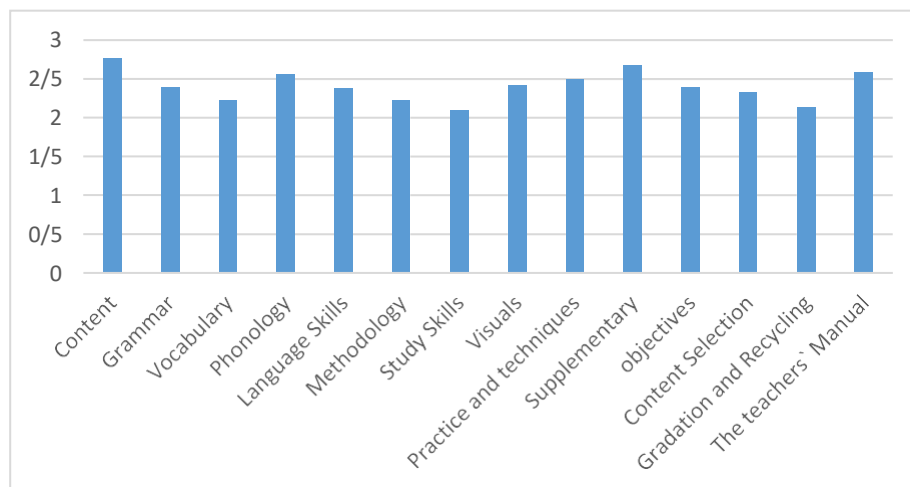
Table 16

Composite Measures and SD for the Categories of TET.

Category	Mean	SD	Rank
Content	2.76	0.41	1
Grammar	2.39	0.45	8
Vocabulary	2.22	0.70	14
Phonology	2.55	0.65	4
Language Skills	2.37	0.56	9
Methodology	2.22	0.67	11
Study Skills	2.10	0.61	13
Visuals	2.42	0.66	6
Practice and techniques	2.50	0.45	5
Supplementary	2.67	0.79	2
Objectives	2.39	0.59	7
Content Selection	2.32	0.55	10
Gradation and Recycling	2.13	0.64	12
The teachers` Manual	2.58	0.39	3

Figure 1

Composite Measures for the Categories of TET



CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The Present study provides a retrospective evaluation of Iranian third grade junior high school. This is a qualitative study and quantitative evaluation resulted from responses by 200 teachers to TET. The checklist-evaluation provided a descriptive analysis of Prospect 3 through an in-depth investigation of its content (including aims and approaches, design and organization, language content, skills, topic, methodology, teachers' books, and other practical considerations). In this part, descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation) related to each question of 14 categories of questionnaire were presented. The textbook evaluation tool includes 50 statements that covered 14 categories. The statements were based on the characteristics of a good CB described in the literature review.

In short, the result of TET showed that *Prospect 3* was perceived as moderately adequate since the mean composite scores for each category exceeded 2, except for gradation and recycling which scored 2.10. The purpose of the present study was to analyze the extent of consistency between the authors' claims and the activities through the book titled *Prospect 3* which was prepared by Ministry of National Education as an instructional material for the third grade of junior high schools in Iran. This analysis has been performed based on the model suggested by McDonough and Shaw (2006) in order to find out whether activities in a textbook practically prove authors' claim.

In conclusion, the findings of the present study shows that the perfect textbook is utopic and the imperfection can be corrected by completing it with materials or teachers' custom – made explanation, drills, and classroom tasks. The effectiveness of CB depends on the teachers believes about the nature of language and teaching/learning. Such awareness is important because teachers' actual practice may contradict their perceived methodological orientation. This is evident from the results of qualitative and quantitative evaluation analyses. It appears that there is an urgent need for training teachers on the use of communicative language syllabi. The ministry of education should adopt a long-term project that aims not only to improve teachers' performances but also to acquaint them with the methods of teaching communicative syllabi. Selected teachers also need to be involved in the future development of teaching materials in order to draw their knowledge of learner's needs. Finally, the supervisors also need to reconsider the present assessment modes and distribution of marks since we need more than marks in in-term quizzes and final exams.

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