



Research article

Afghan EFL instructors' perceptions of English textbooks

Sayeed Naqibullah Orfan^{*}, Abdul Qawi Noori, Sayeed Asif Akramy

English Department, Takhar University, Afghanistan



ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Textbook
Internationally-published
Locally-published
Instructional materials
EFL

ABSTRACT

The study examined EFL instructors' perceptions of English textbooks. It also investigated whether the instructors' gender and the type of textbooks they used had a significant impact on their responses. A survey questionnaire with 30 closed-ended items was utilized to collect the data from 60 randomly selected EFL instructors who were teaching English in higher education institutions and English language centers. SPSS version 26.0 was used to analyze the data. The findings showed that the instructors had positive perceptions about English textbooks. They also believed that four skills of English were equally represented in the textbooks, and they contained adequate listening, speaking, reading and writing activities. In addition, the textbooks were enriched with the cultural issues of the target language and that they were appropriate for the Afghan context. The results also showed that textbooks served various roles in EFL classrooms, for instance, as a source of assessment and assignment. There were not statistically significant differences between female and male instructors' responses. However, the type of textbooks they used significantly impacted their perceptions of English textbooks. EFL Programs are recommended to encourage and support their instructors to use other English learning resources to optimize their students' learning.

1. Introduction

Language instructional materials are of various types such as printed materials (e.g., textbooks, workbooks and non-printed materials e.g., audios, videos, Internet/computer based materials). However, EFL textbooks are widely used in English classes particularly in countries like Afghanistan where there are not enough English learning materials. They are the major source of language input for EFL learners in and outside the classroom. EFL instructors plan learning outcomes, learning activities, assessment and assignments based on the textbooks they utilize in their classes (Alhamami and Ahmad, 2018).

The learning and use of English became very widespread following the arrival of the international community in Afghanistan in 2001 before which English education was banned by the Taliban Regime who barred girls and women from going to schools let alone universities (Noori, 2021; Orfan, 2021a; Noori et al., 2020). English is learned and taught as a foreign language in Afghanistan (Akramy, 2020; Orfan, 2020a), and it is widely used in education, business, economy, governmental and nongovernmental organizations (Orfan, 2020b). Two types of EFL textbooks have been used to teach English to Afghan English learners. A wide variety of textbooks authored and published by well-known authors and publishers such as Headway, Interchange, American File have been

shipped into Afghanistan for teaching English since 2001. These textbooks have been widely adopted by universities to teach English to both English and non-English majors. English language centers around the country use these textbooks to provide English education for Afghan English learners. Furthermore, many English language centers throughout the country use locally-published textbooks. English instructors in English language departments of universities use EFL textbooks to teach major skills of English in addition to other courses, for instance, linguistics, translation, teaching methods. Furthermore, the EFL textbooks are used to teach only four skills of English to non-English majors such as engineering, agriculture, economics. Similarly, EFL instructors in private English language centers use the textbooks to teach four skills of English to Afghan English learners. In terms of use of EFL textbooks, there are not differences between EFL instructors of universities and those of private English language centers. They use EFL textbooks for similar purposes: teaching four skills of English to EFL learners.

Instructors' perceptions of EFL textbooks are of significance; they influence how instructors use the textbooks, which affects learners' attitudes and their learning (Khosiyono et al., 2019; McGrath, 2006). Negative perceptions may lead to less or ineffective use of the textbooks, which may have negative impact on the learning outcomes. On the other hand, positive perceptions may motivate the instructor to effectively use

^{*} Corresponding author.

E-mail address: sayeed.naqibullah@fulbrightmail.org (S.N. Orfan).

textbooks for planning the learning outcomes, activities and assessment (Alhamami and Ahmad, 2018). English textbooks have been used to deliver English education for almost two decades in Afghanistan, and no studies have addressed the instructors' perceptions of the textbooks, which are two important elements in EFL programs. On the one hand, the current study aims to provide insights on the use of English textbooks in Afghanistan, and on the other hand, it is an attempt to fill the gap in the literature in the context of Afghanistan. The findings of the study will be of interest to EFL programs at the universities and English language centers. They may motivate the stakeholders of the EFL programs to involve instructors in textbooks selection. It may, in turn, drive the instructors to effectively use the textbooks in English classes. Perceptions about textbooks can be influenced by various factors, for example, gender, educational level, teaching experiences, and the type of textbooks (Khosiyono et al., 2019; Lee and Bathmaker, 2007). Therefore, the study examines the impact of the participants' gender and the type of textbooks on their responses.

1.1. Purpose of the study

The current study investigates EFL instructors' perceptions of English textbooks. It seeks to address the following research questions.

1. What are the EFL instructors' perceptions of English textbooks?
2. What are their perceptions about reflection of English skills in the textbooks?
3. What are their views of representation of the target culture in the textbooks?
4. What functions do English textbooks serve in English classes?
5. Are there any statistically significant differences between the participants' responses by their gender and the type of textbooks they used (locally-published, internationally-published)?

2. Literature review

Textbooks play a crucial role in teaching English particularly in countries where English is taught as a foreign language. They are systematically designed and developed that serve as syllabi for English teachers (Ebrahimi and Sahragard, 2017; Vettorel and Lopriore, 2013; Gholami et al., 2012; Azizfar, 2009; Riazi, 2003). They continue to play a key part in English classrooms around the globe (Guilloteaux, 2013). English textbooks contain pre-determined learning outcomes, and they provide instructors and students with what they did in the past sessions and what they would be doing in the following session (Ur, 2005). Textbooks can also provide directions and hints on how to deliver English lessons (Ayu and Indrawati, 2019; Tomlinson, 2008; Razmjoo, 2010; Paul, 2003). Ansary and Babaii (2003) assert that English textbooks provide support, directions and security for EFL instructors in particular for the novice ones. They further stated that textbooks could organize the program effectively and that they could save a great deal of time for the EFL instructors since they spend less time to prepare teaching materials. Newton and Newton (2009) believe that the quality of English textbooks can have a great impact on students' learning experiences, and therefore, they should facilitate students' English learning rather than hindering it (Tomlinson, 2011; Chien and Young, 2007).

Textbooks are effective tools for saving time and money. They decrease instructors' time in preparing teaching materials. Furthermore, textbooks are fairly cheap compared to computer softwares, handout printouts and learning kits (Smith, 2014). They are an efficient means of transferring language content and information to students (Ahmadi, 2012), and they can motivate or demotivate EFL students, which depends on their content (Zohrabi et al., 2014). Ramazani (2013) considers textbooks as a working relationship between the instructor and the learners. They function as a framework for EFL instructors and they may be the most crucial source of English input for EFL learners (Hutchinson and Torres, 1994). Crawford (1995) asserted that textbooks can be used

as a means of scaffolding for learning activities. Brophy (1982) found that novice instructors heavily relied on the textbooks for instruction while experienced instructors utilized other resources in order to meet their students' needs.

However, some researchers criticized the extensive use of textbooks in English classes. Swales (1980) considers the massive use of textbooks as an educational failure. Richards (2001) argued that many textbooks lack authentic language, which does not represent the real use of the target language. It is very true in the context of Afghanistan where some English language centers have developed their own English textbooks that lack authentic language as well as coherence and consistency since the authors lack the expertise of textbook development. Porreca (1984) argued that many EFL textbooks promoted gender bias, sexism and gender stereotypes since they were biased towards women. For instance, a study by Orfan (2021b) revealed that women were substantially underrepresented in all types of gender categories: texts, illustrations, social and domestic roles in high school English textbooks. Furthermore, too much reliance and focus on EFL textbooks results in teaching textbooks rather than teaching the language itself (McGrath, 2002). Using English textbooks as the sole source of English teaching and learning will lead to a failure particularly when they fail to put equal emphasis on language skills and to match the goals and needs of both the instructor and the learners (Ulla and Winitkun, 2017; Casta and Hufana, 2016; Gak, 2011).

Muzakky and Albiansyah (2021) studied EFL instructors' perceptions of an English textbook called "Beyond" published by an international publisher. The authors reported that the participants had positive attitudes towards the textbook. They stated that the textbook equally focused on four skills and was aligned with the Indonesian curriculum. Septiana et al. (2020) investigated EFL teachers' perceptions towards Super Mind Textbook. The results showed that EFL teachers had positive perceptions about the textbook. They stated the textbook was an effective and engaging source for learners in the classroom. Dinh and Le (2020) explored EFL teachers' perceptions about the use of e-textbooks. They found that the participants held highly positive attitudes towards the e-textbooks. They stated that the e-textbooks enhanced learners' vocabulary, pronunciation and communication competence. Khosiyono et al. (2019) studied EFL teachers' attitudes towards the use of Martime English textbooks. They concluded that teachers held positive attitudes towards the textbooks. Other studies (e.g., Khosiyono et al., 2019; Okitasari and Palupi, 2019; Khodabandeh and Mombini, 2018; Tawalbeh, 2018) came to similar conclusions. They reported that EFL teachers considered textbooks an effective source for learners. On the other hand, a small number of research found that EFL instructors had negative perceptions about English textbooks. For instance, Alhamami and Ahmad (2018) investigated perceptions of forty-three Saudi EFL instructors towards textbooks in EFL programs. They reported that their participants had negative attitudes towards the textbooks, and they did not meet EFL learners' needs, the courses' learning outcomes and did not help students improve their proficiency level.

3. Methods

3.1. Participants

Participants of the study were 60 randomly selected EFL instructors who were teaching English at Takhar University, private universities and English language centers based in Taloqan City, the capital city of Takhar Province located in the northeast of Afghanistan. Simple random sampling technique was used to choose 74 participants. The population of the study was around 90 instructors. The lists of EFL instructors from universities and English language centers were obtained and 74 instructors were selected from a container. Out of 74 participants, seven of them dropped out of the study and seven of them did not appropriately complete the questionnaire. The majority of the participants were male (78%) while around 28% of them were female. The participants of the study held a bachelor's degree (75%), master's degree (3.3%) and

community college degree (21.7%) at the time of the study. Around 65% of the participants used internationally-published textbooks (i.e., American headway Series, Interchange Series, American Files Series, Touch Stone) and 35% used locally-published textbooks to teach English to Afghan English learners.

3.2. Instrument

A survey questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The questionnaire was developed after conducting a thorough literature review, and 30 questionnaire items were adapted from Tawalbeh (2018), Hammad (2014), Ramazani (2013) and Wongkaew (2009). The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first section sought the participants' demographic information. The second part elicited the participants' responses about their perceptions of EFL textbooks, reflection of language skills and the culture as well as the roles served by the textbooks. To ensure its clarity and comprehensibility, the questionnaire was given to three of the authors' colleagues in the English Department. The problematic items were identified and revised based on their comments. A pilot test with 10 EFL instructors was conducted to ensure the consistency and reliability of the questionnaire items. They were required to respond to 30 items on a five-point Likert scale. The reliability test was conducted. As Table 1 shows, the value of Cronbach's alpha is over 0.8 coefficient for each category of the questionnaire, which indicates high internal consistency of the questionnaire items; therefore, it was concluded that the questionnaire items were appropriate for the study.

3.3. Procedure

The data were collected from EFL instructors who were teaching English at the universities and English language centers. The study and its purpose were explained to the participants and they were asked whether they were willing to take part in the research. Before the completion of the questionnaire, they were required to read and sign the consent letter, which ensured them that their participation was voluntary and that their responses were confidential. The participants were requested to read the instruction and complete the questionnaire accordingly. They were encouraged to inquire about any unclear items in the questionnaire.

3.4. Analysis

Right after data collection, the questionnaires were closely examined to make sure the participants completed them appropriately. Seven questionnaires were not considered for the analysis since they were not completed thoroughly. The data were numerically coded in an Excel spread sheet. The coded data were compared along with the questionnaires to ensure the accurate entering of the data. They were imported to SPSS version 26.0 for further analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to determine the frequency, percentage and mean of the data as Kaur et al. (2018) and Fisher and Marshall (2009) stated that descriptive statistics are useful tools for analyzing, organizing and presenting data and uncovering patterns within the data. Moreover, Mann-Whitney *U* test was utilized to explore the differences between the participants' responses by their gender and the type of textbooks they used. According to Milenovic (2011), Mann-Whitney *U* test is a nonparametric test used to examine the differences in ordinal data.

Table 1. Reliability value of questionnaire items.

Category	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
General perceptions	10	0.858
Language skills	10	0.865
Culture	4	0.834
Functions	6	0.861
Total	30	0.854

4. Results

4.1. General perceptions on textbooks

Descriptive statistics were utilized to answer the first research question "what are the EFL instructors' perceptions of English textbooks?" The overall mean score is 3.7 (Table 2), which indicates that EFL instructors have positive perceptions towards English textbooks. Furthermore, over 81% of the participants believed that topics and activities were interesting, instructions were clear and the layout of the textbooks were easy to read. Over 70% stated that the approach used by textbooks was acceptable, topics and tasks were varied, the contents were related to students' needs and authentic language was sufficient. Moreover, around 62% and 63% believed that the textbooks had clear organization and that the objectives were explicit.

4.2. Perceptions on language skills

Descriptive statistical analysis was run to answer the second research question "what are their perceptions about representation of English skills in the textbooks?" As Table 3 shows, 78% stated that there was a balanced share of four skills in the textbooks. Furthermore, over 80% believed that the textbooks contained adequate vocabulary, reading, speaking, listening and pronunciation activities in the textbooks. Around 77% and 67% believed that there were appropriate grammar and writing activities in the textbooks, respectively. Almost 72% stated that the activities in the textbooks were engaging and promoted interaction between students.

4.3. Perceptions on culture representation in textbooks

Descriptive analyses were carried out to answer the third research question "what are their views of the representation of the target culture in the textbooks?" As Table 4 demonstrates, around 83% of the participants stated that the English textbooks were enriched with the culture of the target language and almost 81% believed that the cultural issues presented in textbooks were appropriate for the Afghan context (Table 4). Over 80% of the instructors stated that they fully understood the cultural issues while 73% believed that understanding cultural issues was easy for students.

4.4. Perceptions on functions of EFL textbooks

Descriptive statistics were utilized to examine the fourth research question "what functions do English textbooks serve in English classes?"

Table 2. EFL Instructors' general perceptions of English textbooks.

No	Statement	% A & SA	Mean
1	The topics and tasks are interesting and motivating.	88.3	3.93
2	The instructions are clearly stated.	86.7	4.03
3	The layout and design are attractive and easy to read.	81.7	4.07
4	The approach recommended in the textbooks is educationally and socially acceptable to the target community.	76.7	3.75
5	There is a variety of topics and tasks provided for different learning styles and interests.	76.7	3.75
6	The subjects and content are relevant to learners' needs.	75	3.75
7	There are periodic review and test sections.	72.3	3.63
8	There is plenty of authentic language.	70.94	3.43
9	The objectives are explicitly laid out in an introduction and implemented in the textbooks.	63.3	3.37
10	The content is clearly organized (sequenced by difficulty).	61.7	3.4
Overall perceptions			3.7

Note: A = Agree SA = Strongly agree.

Table 3. EFL instructors' perceptions of representation of skills.

No	Statement	% A & SA	Mean
11	There is an appropriate balance of the four language skills.	78.3	4.02
12	Vocabulary explanation and practices are clearly presented.	85	4.22
13	Reading activities spark English learners' curiosity, which lead to further research outside the class.	85	4.1
14	The textbooks provide adequate listening activities and practices.	83.3	4
15	Speaking activities are incorporated in reading, listening and writing.	81.7	3.7
16	Rich reading activities are presented in the textbooks.	81	3.71
17	Pronunciation explanation and practices are suitably presented.	80.7	3.63
18	Grammar presentation and practices are clearly presented.	76.7	3.93
19	There are appropriate writing activities.	66.7	3.97
20	The activities in the textbooks promote interaction between students.	71.7	3.73

Table 4. Instructors' views of culture representation in textbooks.

No	Statement	% A & SA	Mean
21	The textbooks are enriched with the target language culture.	82.73	3.88
22	The culture issues presented in the textbooks are appropriate for the Afghan context.	80.93	3.85
23	I fully understand cultural issues presented in the textbooks.	81.7	4.17
24	It is easy for students to understand cultural issues.	73.3	3.93

As Table 5 shows, instructors believed that English textbooks had various roles. Over 91% stated that the textbooks served as a homework source and a source for learners. Furthermore, 78% believed that textbooks served as a syllabus and an assessment source. Around 77% and 67% stated the textbooks served as source for instructors and helped planning daily instruction.

4.5. Participants' demographic profile

Mann-Whitney U test was used to explore the differences between the participants' responses by their gender and the type of textbooks they used. As Table 6 shows, the p-value (0.623) for gender is greater than the alpha level (0.05), which indicates that the participants' gender did not have any significant impact on their responses. That is, both female and male participants had similar perceptions towards English textbooks and they were of similar views about reflection of English language skills and the culture of the target language. Moreover, they used English textbooks for similar purposes. On the other hand, the type of the textbooks the instructors used had a significant impact on their responses. The p-value (0.000) for perceptions, language skills, culture and functions with respect to textbooks is less than the alpha level (0.05) (Table 6). In other words, instructors who used internationally-published textbooks had more positive perceptions towards English

Table 5. EFL instructors' views of use of English textbooks.

No	Statement	% A & SA	Mean
25	The textbooks serve as an essential source for learners.	93.3	4.03
26	The textbooks serve as a source of homework.	91.7	4.07
27	The textbooks serve as a syllabus.	78.3	3.72
28	The textbooks serve as a source of assessment.	78.3	4.02
29	The textbooks serve as an essential source for instructors.	76.7	3.78
30	The textbooks help planning daily instruction.	66.7	3.52

Table 6. Participants' differences by gender and the type of textbooks.

Category		N	Median	Z	P-value
Perceptions					
Gender	Male	47	4	-0.492	0.623
	Female	13	4.2		
Textbooks	Internationally-published	39	4.2	-6.531	0.000
	Locally-published	21	2.7		
Language skills in textbooks					
Gender	Male	47	4	-0.512	0.608
	Female	13	4.3		
Textbooks	Internationally-published	39	4.3	-3.809	0.000
	Locally-published	21	3.1		
Culture in textbooks					
Gender	Male	47	4	-1.571	0.116
	Female	13	4		
Textbooks	Internationally-published	39	4.5	-5.001	0.000
	Locally-published	21	3.5		
Textbook functions					
Gender	Male	47	4	-1.96	0.073
	Female	13	4		
Textbooks	Internationally-published	39	4.3	-4.041	0.000
	Locally-published	21	3.2		

textbooks than those who used locally-published textbooks. Compared to instructors who used locally-published textbooks, instructors using internationally-published ones believed that the textbooks contained adequate activities and practices for English language skills and they were more enriched with the culture of the target language. Furthermore, internationally-published textbooks served more purposes than locally-published ones.

5. Discussion

The study investigated Afghan EFL instructors' perceptions of English textbooks. The findings revealed that they had positive perceptions about English textbooks. Moreover, the majority of the participants believed that the topics presented in the textbooks were relevant to the participants' needs and they were motivating. They believed that the objectives and instructions were clear in the textbooks and there was plenty of authentic language. It is in line with the findings of the study by Muzakky and Albiansyah (2021), Dinh and Le (2020) and Ulla (2019) who reported that instructors had positive perceptions about English textbooks. The participants of these studies believed that textbooks met the needs of their students. However, it contradicts that of the study by Alhamami and Ahmad (2018) who reported that instructors had negative attitudes towards English textbooks. Instructors believed that textbooks did not meet the learners' English proficiency and that they did not match the current level of English learners.

In addition, the instructors believed that there was a balance of four skills and the supplementary skills in the textbooks. Most of the instructors believed that the English textbooks contained adequate listening, speaking, reading and writing activities. The results are similar to other studies (e.g., Khodabandeh and Mombini, 2018; Tawalbeh, 2018; Hussain and Bakhsh, 2011; Sari, 2018; Brown, 2007; Ur, 2005) whose participants believed that the textbooks contained activities and exercises with major language skills. However, it is inconsistent with the results of the study by Sadeghi (2020) whose participants believed that the textbook failed to have an appropriate balance of four skills and did not include skills that EFL students needed to improve their English proficiency. Furthermore, the instructors stated that the activities were engaging and promoted interaction between learners, which play a key role in language learning. It corroborates that of the study by Khodabandeh and Mombini (2018) and Riasati and Zare (2010) who reported

that the activities and exercises in the EFL textbooks were engaging and they encouraged students' interaction.

The vast majority of the participants believed that the textbooks were enriched with the culture of the target language and they were appropriate with the Afghan culture. It is consistent with the findings of the study carried out by Muzakky and Albiansyah (2021) and Tawalbeh (2018) who found that the target language culture was sufficiently represented in EFL textbooks, and it was culturally appropriate. On the other hand, it is inconsistent with the results of the study by Khodabandeh and Mombini (2018), Pouranshirvani (2017) and Ajideh and Panahi (2016) who found that the textbooks did not contain the target language cultural issues that would encourage positive attitudes towards the target community. It is also inconsistent with the findings of the study by Johar and Aziz (2019) whose participants believed that the textbooks particularly the internationally-published ones failed to represent local culture. Furthermore, the Afghan EFL instructors understood the cultural aspects of the target language in the textbooks. They stated that it was easy for the students to understand the cultural issues as well. It can be accounted for by the fact that the textbooks present superficial aspects of the target culture (clothing, appearance, sports).

In addition, the instructors believed that English textbooks played various roles in EFL classes. They served as an essential source for both instructors and EFL learners. They were used as a source of assessment and homework. Moreover, the majority of the instructors believed that textbooks served as a syllabus in English teaching. The findings support those of the studies by Okitasari and Palupi (2019), Ayu and Indrawati (2019), Ahmadi and Derakhshan (2016), Seferaj (2015), and Cheng et al. (2011) who reported that English textbooks functioned as a plan for lessons, a source of assessment and assignments and a plan for instructors' daily instructions. It is inconsistent with the findings of the study by Vanha (2017) and Guerrettaz and Johnston (2013) whose participants stated that the textbooks had a restricting role. They restricted instructors' creativity and that they felt pressure to cover as much of the textbook content as possible. Furthermore, they found that the instructors had to leave out more engaging and effective activities such as group work in favor of textbook content.

The results also showed that the participants' gender did not have any significant impact on their responses. However, the type of the textbooks instructors used significantly impacted their responses. Instructors using internationally-published textbooks had more positive perceptions about English textbooks than those using locally-published textbooks. Compared to instructors using locally-published textbooks, they believed that the textbooks contained adequate activities with respect to four language skills and they were sufficiently enriched with the culture of the target language. They also believed that English textbooks played more various roles in their classes than instructors using locally-published English textbooks. It can be accounted for by the fact that international textbooks are far more systematic, interactive, student-centered, focus on four skills of English and less gender-biased compared to locally-published English textbooks, which are highly gender-biased. For instance, Orfan (2021b) found that women were substantially under-represented in locally-published English textbooks for high school. It is on a par with the results of the study by Sadeghi (2020) whose participants believed that the language used in locally-published textbooks (Prospects 3) was not authentic. The instructors stated that the names were localized; therefore, they were not authentic. It is also consistent with the results of the study by Zacharias (2005) who reported that the instructors preferred internationally-published textbooks because they provided authentic and natural language and appropriate cultural background to language teaching.

6. Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that the participants carried positive perceptions about EFL textbooks and that they served various roles in EFL classes. EFL textbooks particularly the international ones are

designed to be taught in different countries, and no EFL textbook can be perfect to fit every EFL program and meet the needs of learners with different backgrounds and different learning styles. Furthermore, locally-published textbooks are biased towards one particular gender (women), and there is not sufficient representation of the culture of the target language, which is crucial for learning a language. Therefore, the study suggests EFL programs to encourage and support the EFL instructors to make use of other English materials in order to maximize their students' English learning. Moreover, EFL instructors are recommended to avoid sticking to one textbook. They should avoid teaching parts of the textbook that they believe are not helpful for EFL learners. They should be creative in their use of English learning materials.

Further studies on a much larger sample of EFL instructors are recommended to substantiate the findings of the current study. Other instruments such as interviews and class observations should be employed to obtain richer data in order to gain a deeper insight about instructors' perceptions about EFL textbooks. Future studies can focus on EFL learners' perceptions of English textbooks, representation of local and the target language culture and the impact of the internationally-published textbooks on EFL learners' worldview.

Declarations

Author contribution statement

Sayeed Naqibullah Orfan: Conceived and designed the experiments; Analyzed and interpreted the data; Wrote the paper.

Abdul Qawi Noori and Sayeed Asif Akramy: Performed the experiments; Analyzed and interpreted the data; Contributed reagents, materials, analysis tools or data.

Funding statement

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Data availability statement

Data will be made available on request.

Declaration of interests statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Additional information

No additional information is available for this paper.

References

- Ahmadi, E., 2012. Retrospective evaluation of textbook "Summit 2B" for its suitability for EFL undergraduate students. *J. Educat. Soci. Res.* 2 (5), 195–202. Retrieved from. <https://www.richtmann.org/journal/index.php/jesr/article/view/11950>.
- Ahmadi, A., Derakhshan, A., 2016. EFL teachers' perceptions towards textbook evaluation. *Theor. Pract. Lang. Stud.* 6 (2), 260–267.
- Ajideh, P., Panahi, M., 2016. An analysis of culture-related content in English textbooks for Iranian students entitled 'Prospect' and 'Vision' series. *Int. J. Lang. Ling.* 3 (6), 87–93. Retrieved from. <http://ijllnet.com/journal/index/2337>.
- Akramy, S.A., 2020. Speaking Anxiety in an Afghan EFL Setting: A Case Study of an Afghan University. *Language in India*, 20(12). Retrieved from. <http://www.languageinindia.com/dec2020/akramyspeakinganxietyafghanuniversity1.pdf>.
- Alhamami, M., Ahmad, J., 2018. EFL teachers' attitudes toward commercial textbooks in EFL programs. *EFL Programs* (December 31, 2018). *Arab World Engl. J.* 9.
- Ansary, H., Babaii, E., 2003. Subliminal sexism in current ESL/EFL textbooks. *Asian EFL J.* 5 (1), 1–11.
- Ayu, M., Indrawati, R., 2019. EFL textbook evaluation: the analysis of tasks presented in English textbook. *Teknosastik: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra* 16 (1), 21–25.
- Azizfar, A., 2009. An analytical evaluation of Iranian high school: ELT textbooks from 1970 to 2010. *J. Appl. Ling.* 2 (2), 52–79.
- Brophy, J.E., 1982. How teachers influence what is taught and learned in classrooms. *Elem. Sch. J.* 83 (1), 1–12.

- Brown, H.D., 2007. *Teaching by Principles: an Interactive Approach to Language*. Pearson Longman.
- Casta, J.S., Hufana, E.R., 2016. Language functions in ESL textbooks. *TESOL International Journal* 11 (1), 65–80. Retrieved from. <https://www.tesol-international-journal.com/volume-11-issue-1-2016/>.
- Cheng, W., Hung, L., Chieh, L., 2011. Thinking of the textbook in the ESL/EFL classroom. *Engl. Lang. Teach.* 4 (2).
- Chien, C.C., Young, K., 2007. The centrality of textbooks in teachers' work: perceptions and use of textbooks in a Hong Kong Primary School. *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher* 16 (2), 155–164.
- Crawford, J., 1995. The role of materials in the language classroom: finding the balance. *TESOL in Context* 5 (1), 25–33.
- Dinh, T.H., Le, X.M., 2020. EFL teachers' perceptions of the use of e-textbooks at secondary schools in Dong Thap province. *Can Tho University Journal of Science* 12 (2), 15–24.
- Ebrahimi, F., Sahragard, R., 2017. Teachers' perceptions of the new English textbooks in Iranian junior high schools. *The Journal of Asia TEFL* 14 (2), 355–363.
- Fisher, M.J., Marshall, A.P., 2009. Understanding descriptive statistics. *Aust. Crit. Care* 22 (2), 93–97.
- Gak, D.M., 2011. Textbook-An important element in the teaching process. *Hatchaba Journal* 19 (2), 78–82.
- Gholami, J., Niko, F., Soultanpour, A., 2012. A retrospective-comparative evaluation of textbooks developed by native and non-native English speakers. *J. Acad. Appl. Stud.* 2 (11), 35–42. Retrieved from. www.academians.org/Articles/November2012-4.pdf.
- Guerrertaz, A.M., Johnston, B., 2013. Materials in the classroom ecology. *Mod. Lang. J.* 97 (3), 779–796.
- Guilloteaux, M., 2013. Language textbook selection: using materials analysis from the perspective of SLA principles. *Asia-Pacific Edu Res.* 22 (3), 231–239.
- Hammad, E.A.R., 2014. Palestinian EFL teachers' attitudes towards English textbooks used at the first three grades of elementary school. *Electron. J. English Second Lang.* 18 (1), 1–18.
- Hussain, L., Bakhs, K., 2011. The effects of classroom interaction on students' academic achievement at secondary school level. *Mediterr. J. Soc. Sci.* 2 (3).
- Hutchinson, T., Torres, E., 1994. The textbook as agent of change. *ELT J.* 48 (4), 315–328.
- Johar, N.A., Aziz, A.A., 2019. Teachers' perceptions on using the Pulse 2 textbook. *J. Educat. Res. Indig. Stud.* 2 (1), 1–15. Retrieved from. https://static.s123-cdn-static-d.com/uploads/1759562/normal_5d7c40da6128a.pdf.
- Kaur, P., Stoltzfus, J., Yellapu, V., 2018. Descriptive statistics. *Int. J. Acad. Med.* 4 (1), 60.
- Khodabandeh, F., Mombini, R., 2018. Iranian EFL teachers' and students' perceptions towards the first grade high school English textbook (Vision1). *J. Eng. Lang. Pedagog. Pract.* 11 (22), 141–167.
- Khosiyono, B.H.C., Pardjono, Priyana, J., 2019. Teachers' perceptions towards the use of maritime English textbooks in vocational school. *J. Asia TEFL* 16 (3), 1042.
- Lee, R., Bathmaker, A., 2007. The use of English textbooks for teaching English to 'Vocational' students in Singapore Secondary Schools: a survey of teachers' beliefs. *REL C* 38 (3), 350–375.
- McGrath, I., 2002. *Materials Evaluation and Design for Language Teaching*. Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.
- McGrath, I., 2006. Teachers' and learners' images for course books. *ELT J.* 60 (2), 171–180.
- Milenovic, Z.M., 2011. Application of Mann-Whitney U test in research of professional training of primary school teachers. *Metodicki Obz.* 6 (1), 73–79.
- Muzakky, M., Albiansyah, A., 2021. EFL teachers' perception toward the use of "beyond" international textbook. *Lang. Circle: J. Lang. Lit.* 15 (2), 177–182.
- Newton, D.P., Newton, L.D., 2009. A procedure for assessing textbook support for reasoned thinking. *Asia Pacif. Educ. Res.* 18 (1), 109–115.
- Noori, A.Q., 2021. The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on students' learning in higher education in Afghanistan. *Heliyon* 7 (10), e08113.
- Noori, A.Q., Said, H., Nor, F.M., Abd Ghani, F., 2020. The relationship between university lecturers' behaviour and students' motivation. *Univer. J. Educat. Res.* 8 (11C), 15–22.
- Okitasari, I., Palupi, D., 2019. Teachers' perceptions toward EFL textbook. *ELT in Focus* 2 (2), 77–86.
- Orfan, S.N., 2020a. Afghan EFL students' difficulties and strategies in learning and understanding English idioms. *Cogent Arts Human.* 7 (1), 1796228.
- Orfan, S.N., 2020b. Afghan undergraduate students' attitudes towards learning English. *Cogent Arts Human.* 7 (1), 1723831.
- Orfan, S.N., 2021a. Political participation of Afghan youths on facebook: a case study of northeastern Afghanistan. *Cog. Soci. Sci.* 7 (1), 1857916.
- Orfan, S.N., 2021b. High School English Textbooks Promote Gender Inequality in Afghanistan. *Pedagogy. Culture & Society*, pp. 1–16.
- Paul, D., 2003. *Teaching English to Children in Asia*. Pearson Education Asia, Hong Kong.
- Porreca, K.L., 1984. Sexism in current ESL textbooks. *Tesol Q.* 18 (4), 705–724.
- Pouranshirvani, M., 2017. The internal evaluation of new English textbook "Vision1" for tenth – grade students in Iranian high schools from teachers' perspectives. *Sci. Arena Publ. Spe. J. Lang. Stud. Lite.* 1 (1), 38–51. Retrieved from. <https://sciarena.com/en/issue/specialty-journal-of-language-studies-and-literature-2017-vol-1-no-1>.
- Ramazani, M., 2013. Teachers' perceptions of using English textbooks for Iranian technical and vocational college students. *Proc. Soc. Behav. Sci.* 70, 1748–1762 (2013).
- Razmjoo, S.A., 2010. Developing a textbook evaluation scheme for the expanding circle. *Iran. J. Appl. Lang. Stud.* 2 (1), 121–136.
- Riasati, M.J., Zare, P., 2010. EFL teachers' perspectives on "New interchange. *Stud. Lit. Lang.* 1 (8), 54–60.
- Riazi, A.M., 2003. What textbook evaluation schemes tell us? A study of the textbook evaluation schemes of three decades. In: Renandya, W.A. (Ed.), *Methodology And Materials Design in Language Teaching* (52-68). SEAMEO Regional Center, Singapore.
- Richards, J.C., 2001. *Curriculum Development in Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Sadeghi, S., 2020. Evaluation of EFL textbooks from teachers viewpoints on the ninth grade high school Prospect3 based on ghorbani's checklist. *J. Appl. Lingu. Lang. Res.* 7 (3), 47–61. Retrieved from. <https://www.jallr.com/index.php/JALLR/article/view/1112/1274>.
- Sari, F.M., 2018. Patterns of teaching-learning interaction in the EFL classroom. *TEKNOSASTIK* 16 (2), 41–48.
- Seferaj, K., 2015. *Investigating Four EFL Teachers' Decisions on the Use of CLT-Oriented Textbooks*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Aston, Birmingham, UK. Retrieved from. <http://asian-efl-journal.com/9544/thesis/2016/05/investigating-four-efl-teachers-decisions-on-the-use-of-clt-oriented-textbooks/>.
- Septiana, E., Mujiyanto, J., Sutopo, D., 2020. Teachers' perception, plan, implementation, and evaluation toward the use of super minds textbook in EFL classroom. *Engl. Educ. J.* 10 (3), 321–330.
- Smith, S.A., 2014. *The Relationship between Teacher Perceptions of Textbooks and Their Teaching Practice: Chinese as a Foreign Language Teaching in the NSW Context*. Master's thesis. Macquarie University, Sydney.
- Swales, J., 1980. ESP: the textbook problem. *ESP J.* 1 (1), 11–23.
- Tawalbeh, T.I., 2018. Instructors' perceptions of English for academic purposes textbooks at university level. *High Educ. Stud.* 8 (4), 153–161.
- Tomlinson, B. (Ed.), 2008. *English Language Learning Materials: A Critical Review*. Continuum, London.
- Tomlinson, B., 2011. Introduction: principles and procedures of materials development. In: Tomlinson, B. (Ed.), *Materials Development in English Teaching*, second ed. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, pp. 1–34.
- Ulla, M.B., 2019. Western-published ELT textbooks: teacher perceptions and use in Thai classrooms. *J. Asia TEFL* 16 (3), 970–977.
- Ulla, M.B., Winitkun, D., 2017. Thai learners' linguistic needs and language skills: implications for curriculum development. *Int. J. InStruct.* 10 (4), 203–220.
- Ur, P., 2005. *A Course in Language Teaching: Practice and Theory*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Vanha, L., 2017. *Teachers' Perspectives on the Role of Textbooks in English Language Learning and Teaching in Finland*. Unpublished Master's Thesis. University of Oulu, Finland.
- Vettorel, P., Lopriore, L., 2013. Is there ELF in ELT course books? *Stud. Sec. Lang. Learn. Teach.* 3 (4), 483–504.
- Wongkaew, A., 2009. *An Analysis of Teachers' Textbook Use Behaviors and the Effects on Student Behaviors: Mixed-Method Research*. Unpublished Master's Thesis. Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok.
- Zacharias, N.T., 2005. Teachers' beliefs about internationally-published materials: a survey of tertiary English teachers in Indonesia. *REL C* 36 (1), 23–37.
- Zohrabi, M., Sabouri, H., Kheradmand, M., 2014. Comparative study of Interchange1 and English book1 of Iranian high schools. *Educ. Int. J. Eng.* 3 (2), 95–104. Retrieved from. www.ijee.org/yahoo_site_admin/assets/docs/8.83201452.pdf.