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Evaluation of Iranian Junior High school English Textbook (Prospect 1): Teachers' Perspectives of the EFL Developed English Textbook

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ABSTRACT

Objective: Textbooks play an important role and possess a chief standing in educational process in EFL contexts, in particular. They are assumed as the pivotal ingredient of language teaching program. It is, therefore, imperative to analyze and evaluate them to guarantee their efficiency and consistency with the objectives set and expected in language classes. Hence, this study aimed to examine the merits and demerits of the EFL English textbook titled *Prospect 1*, used as a junior high school textbook in Iran.

Methods: It was conducted with 30 English teachers from different schools in the East of Gilan, Iran, during the schooling year 2023-2024.The main question this study aimed to answer was to what extent the whole book was effective in terms of the six criteria targeted for the analysis.

Result: In this analysis, the textbook was evaluated based on 'Teacher Textbook Evaluation Scale' (TTES) developed by Sung Kyun Kwan University (2000), in terms of the criteria of 'layout and design', 'activities', 'skills', 'language type', 'subject content', and 'whole aspect'.

Conclusion: The results of the evaluation revealed that the respondents were satisfied with most crucial aspects of 'Prospect 1'. It was also revealed that *the intended* textbook possessed some good characteristics and that the positive attributes far out-weighed the negative ones. The findings of the study have pedagogical implications to material developers, teachers, and students.

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1. Introduction

In many foreign language classrooms around the world textbook is the authorized source of information around which all teaching is centered. One reason for relying on the textbook is that many teachers, in particular, EFL contexts teachers find textbook as a completely trustworthy authority for teaching required and specified materials to students (Almatard, 2019; Ünver, 2018). They maintain that through the use of the textbook, teachers seek and hope to deal with what is required to be covered in the national curriculum and syllabus design of the educational domain. Another explanation is that the textbook along with its accompanying workbook and teacher's guide is useful as a timesaver for teachers, who are more often obliged to purse required materials within a specified timetable. Likewise, according to Sengsouliya, Soukhavong, Phonekeo, Sengsouliya, and Xaixanith (2021) and Littlejohn (2022), in many parts of the world in which English is taught as a foreign language program, the textbook and English classes in school are considered as the only linguistic input learners receive. Accordingly, it is of utmost importance that textbooks be of high quality and helpful in the acquisition of the new language.

Matsuoka and Hirsh (2010) and Martinez (2018) attest that textbooks play a very important and positive role in teaching and learning of English. They argue that textbooks supply the necessary input into classroom lessons and expose learners to various exercises, activities, readings and explanations. Textbooks are effective and survive on the grounds that they can meet certain needs. Mishan And Timmis (2015) consider textbooks as being of utmost important and inseparable components in the language teaching process and the significant source of input for language learners in EFL contexts. Nordlund (2016) and Ornstein (2013) hold the view that an educational course or a learning program may not have any impact if they do not have textbooks. They acknowledge that textbooks provide a structure and a syllabus of the course and program. In addition, the application of textbooks in classes can ensure that students in different fields receive a similar content and, therefore, can be evaluated through the same way. As Richards (2014) asserts, textbooks supply both teachers and learners with a map that lays out the general content of lessons and a prestructured presentation of materials that create coherence among individual lessons.

Teachers, students, materials, teaching method and evaluation are viewed as the five determining factors and components in language instruction. In language learning programs, curriculum, materials, teaching methods, and evaluation are designed based on learners' needs. In some countries, teachers have no role in selecting textbooks since a unified series of textbooks is developed and introduced for use all across the country via an administrative process at the ministerial level (Bobkina & Dominguez, 2014; Romney & Holsworth, 2016)). The textbooks which are usually designed and published by the Ministry of Education as unified textbooks for use throughout the country, may adhere to curriculum outlines, but they might not meet the set objectives. As Lopez-Medina (2021) suggests, teachers are supposed to evaluate the textbooks because, like students, they are the consumers of textbooks; therefore, they may have different views on the quality of the textbooks and instructional materials. Khodadady and Mehrazmay (2017) are of the view that by means of evaluation, teachers can undergo a decision-making process.

1.1 Statement of the Problem and Purpose of the Study

For the sake of proper implementation of any curriculum in educational settings, textbooks become a practical medium and instrument of the education system. In developing countries, in particular, it has been a regular practice to regard and make use of textbooks as the major source of teaching in educational settings (Asadi, Kiany, Akbari & Ghafar Samar, 2016). Given this trend and in line with this view, the EFL textbook of the first grade of junior high school in Iran (Prospect 1) has undergone radical changes. According to Nation and Macalister (2010), evaluation of a new textbook becomes essential as a need to evaluate the extent to which it benefits innovation and to make sure that it is a real improvement over past course books of similar nature. Taking a glance at the literature of the textbook, we perceive that most of the approaches to material evaluation are product based (Stufflebeam, 2002; Wang, Yang & Wen, 2009; Zhang, Zeller, Griffith, Metcalf, Williams, Shea & Misulis, 2011). As argued by Guilani, Yasin, and Hua (2011), one of the main drawbacks in the area of materials

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evaluation is a much more preference and tendency to the final product as opposed to the processes involved in the design of the materials.

In Iran, textbooks are prepared by the Ministry of Education; this, however, doesn't mean that teachers should be passive and avoid giving their ideas in their career. Rather, they can evaluate books and find the most suitable techniques to apply in classrooms and at the same time they can provide feedback to the Ministry of Education in order to improve the textbooks. One of the textbooks that has recently been modified and changed by the Ministry of Education is *Prospect 1* which has just been taught for some year as a unified English textbook to the grade one Iranian junior high school students. Although this textbook, as a new version of English textbook has attempted to remove some of the shortcomings of the previous one, it requires evaluation to determine the level of the quality of the book and its appropriateness to the learners. In this regard, the aim of this study was to evaluate the overall pedagogical value and suitability of the textbook to the students. To fill this gap, this study aimed at taking a process-oriented approach towards textbook evaluation by using the TTES (in terms of the criteria of 'layout and design', 'activities', 'skills', 'language type', 'subject content', and 'whole aspect) program evaluation model by Sung Kyun Kwan University (2000), which provides the opportunity to scrutinize the quality of the textbook in view of the model. Therefore, the following research questions were formulated.

1.2. Research Questions of the Study

Considering the evaluation framework applied in this study, the following questions were posed:

RQ1: To what extent is the textbook effective according to the layout and design?

RQ2: To what extent is the textbook effective according to the activities?

RQ3: To what extent is the textbook effective according to the skills?

RQ4: To what extent is the textbook effective according to the language type?

RQ5: To what extent is the textbook effective according to the subject and content?

RQ6: To what extent is the textbook effective according to whole Aspect?

RQ7: Is there a statistically significant difference in the rank ordering of the six evaluation criteria (Layout and Design, Activities, Skills, Language Type, Subject and Content, and Whole Aspect) for the textbook *Prospect 1,* and which specific criteria are ranked significantly higher or lower than others are?

2. Review of the Literature

2.1 Importance of Textbook and Textbook Evaluation

Textbooks are the widely used teaching and learning materials for both teachers and the learners. As Bergström, Norberg, and Nordlund (2023) and Nordlund (2016) indicate, they not only supply a framework for teachers in achieving the aims and meeting the objectives of the course, but they also play an important role for the teacher in conducting the lesson. They, furthermore, note that a textbook affects learners' attitudes and performance to the lesson throughout the course, arguing that when learners like their books, they like the course, and become active participants in the lesson.

Tomlinson (2012) pays attention to textbook evaluation. He believes that we need to evaluate textbooks for two reasons. First, the evaluation of a textbook enables teachers or program developers to make decisions on selecting the appropriate textbook. Second, the evaluation of the merits and demerits of a textbook will have the teacher get known with its probable merits and demerits. This will help teachers to make suitable adaptations to the material in their future instruction. According to Robinson (2009), ELT materials can be evaluated in order to measure various characteristics

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such as being credible, valid, flexible, authentic, practical, and many other characteristics that teachers, learners, and administrators look for.

Considering the significant role played by textbooks in educational programs and their effects on second or foreign language learners from the cognitive, affective, and educational point of view, Nunan (1999), Williams (1983), Shak, Albakri, Shukor, and Tahir (2022) recommend that teachers and instructors in educational contexts choose solely those textbooks and materials which are produced and developed in accordance with sound linguistic and pedagogical principles. They maintain that the criteria in the evaluation of textbooks and materials vary based on each setting of educational program with regard to syllabus, the background of the school, ability, and also the need of the students.

Breen and Candline's (1987) model of textbook evaluation is a very complex approach in that his model makes critical evaluation of materials' aims, appropriateness and utility. Likewise, Sheldon's (1988) model of evaluation comprises a variety of elements and factors pertaining to all aspects of content from graphics to flexibility.

As Shafiee Nahrkhalaji (2012) mention, textbooks often contain ideological values, cultural orientation and tendency, and social stereotypes. Richards (2014) asserts that they may distort content of textbooks targeted at certain learning program. A number of studies have revealed that some internal content-based features such as racist attitudes, linguistics biases, gender dominance and cultural prejudices shape and constitute part of the unrealistic view of the textbooks (Ansary & Babaii, 2003; Cahyadi, 2024). Some authors tend to undermine and criticize the textbooks in that they represent unnatural and inauthentic language which does not contribute to communicative practice.

Evaluation plays an effective role and determining part in education and provides valuable information. Therefore, to use the textbooks effectively, it is appropriate for the practitioners and instructors to evaluate the materials. Accepting the value of textbooks in ELT contexts, we must make sure of the usefulness of the textbooks and their being appropriate for the context and people with whom they are used (Moghtadi, 2014; Tajeddi &, Pakzadian, 2020). Furthermore, evaluation will provide a sense of familiarity with a book's content, and assist educators to identify the particular strengths and shortcomings in textbooks already in use.

2.2. Textbook Evaluation Orientations and Checklists

The evaluation models which are offered by different scholars are different in their orientation concerning the analysis of the components they take into account. Ellis (1997) named three different types of material evaluation, which he calls as 'predictive' 'in-use' and 'retrospective' evaluations. The predictive evaluation is carried out to examine the future or potential performance of a textbook. The second type examines the quality and effectiveness of the materials currently being used in educational contexts; and the retrospective evaluation of a textbook is suitable for the books that are used for some time in an institution.

Some evaluation models embrace a very detailed examination and analysis of the textbooks, for example, linguistic context, aims, design, methodology, skills, and teacher's book. Breen and Candline's (1987) model is revealed as a really complex approach, which is concerned with critical evaluation of the materials in terms of their aims, appropriateness and utility. Chall and Conard (1991) provided an evaluation framework, based on which the affective processes and cognitive skills that textbook activities require the learners to apply, are assessed through a special rating scale called 'Question Complexity Rating Scale.' McDonough and Shaw (1993) developed a two-stage framework that included a brief external overview to adopt a textbook followed by a concise internal evaluation to adapt the textbook. Littlejohn and Windeat's (1989) model of evaluation goes beyond the goals of language learning itself. His model, as described by Nunan (1991), offered a different way to the evaluation of materials and defines language learning in the wider context of all learning with a focus on cognitive abilities. Garinger (2002) proposed a four-component classification for the

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purpose of textbook evaluation. His classification consists of 'program and course', 'skills', 'exercises and activities', and 'practical concerns.'

On the underlying reasons for doing book evaluation, Budiarsih (2022) and Mukundan, Hajimohammadi, and Nimehchisalem (2011) specify three major types of textbook evaluation, involving a)pre-use evaluation whose purpose is to help the teacher with the selection of a textbook to be suited to the needs of students and meet their requirements in their language classes; b) in-use evaluation which is conducted during the usage of the textbook, through which teachers and instructors may keep an close eye and observe the strengths as well as the weaknesses of the textbook as being used in the language classroom; c)the last but not the least type of evaluation is referred to as post use evaluation, via which the teacher is supposed to reflect his experience after using the textbook and also show the degree of the quality of the textbook.

Checklists are the most widely used instruments for textbooks and materials evaluation (Mukundan & Ahour, 2010). As a tool of textbook evaluation, experts often use a checklist for selecting a textbook. The ELT textbook and material evaluation checklists possess a global set of features that help teachers evaluate teaching-learning materials and textbooks and, hereby, select appropriate books for their learners (Byrd & Schuemann, 2014; Mann & Copland, 2015). Cunningsworth's (1995) checklist consists of components such as aims and approaches, design and organization, language content, skills, topic, methodology, and practical considerations. Skierso's (1991) checklist is concerned with some characteristics related to bibliographical data, aims and goals, subject matter, vocabulary and structures, exercises and activities, and layout and physical makeup. Mukundan, Hajimohammadi, and Nimehchisalem (2011) propose a checklist which deals with some features such as content, design, methodology, physical attributes, and supplementary exercises. Another checklist was given by Daoud and Celce-Murcia (1979), which is divided into two sections, each of which includes some subcategories. Review of the available checklists indicates their validity, reliability or practicality problems.

As shown by Zokaeieh, Karimi, Nouri, and Hakimzadeh (2019), checklists are one of the reliable instruments for gathering systematic data, consisting of qualitative and quantitative sources of information. Qualitative checklists are typically administered through open-ended questions or questionnaires, via which thorough and in-depth information about a textbook are obtained. Different from the former, the quantitative checklists are represented mostly through criteria-based points, the Likert-rating scales, and scoring mechanisms, the results of which are extracted and employed as source-based criteria for the sake of textbook or instructional material evaluation (Budiarsih, 2022; Mukundan et al., 2011).

2.3 Empirical Studies on the Textbook

A number of evaluation studies were done on this textbook (Prospect 1as the junior high school textbook) in light of different scales and measuring criteria. Janfashan and Nosrati (2014) evaluated this textbook based on Fiorella Biocchi checklist in order to illustrate the positive and negative characteristics of the core source of instruction used to Iranian junior high school students. They also aimed to determine how well the communicative language teaching method could be utilized in real classroom experiences. The results of their evaluation revealed that grammatical points are not represented directly, rather they are taught through functions. Furthermore, the problem-solving practices given in the lessons helps students extract the new points in grammar. Categorization of good levels of appropriate activities was another advantage of the book. This textbook is provided with supplementary materials such as a workbook, an audio CD and teachers' guide. Students get benefit from real life materials and everyday language functions. The result of this evaluation, likewise, revealed some disadvantages. Written activities are not dealt with in the student book, but they are limited to workbook as a side activity which asks students to do at home. Classroom activities do not give priority written

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activities. The language used in the textbook is more concerned with the culture of students' society, and the culture of English language countries is ignored.

Evaluation of the authenticity of Prospect 1 was another study which was taken into consideration. Naser-Abadi (2014) reported that the textbook, Prospect 1, is adapted to Notional-Functional approach and its content paves the path to instructional objectives of the approach. He, however, argued that the textbook materials do not possess sufficient authenticity and contexts, and that teacher talking time and the use of L1 in instruction process are not sufficient.

Kheirabadi and Alavi Moghadam (2014) referred to the application and introduction of Prospect 1 into the junior high school program as a new step in teaching English in Iran, and a movement from reading-oriented method to communicative approach. They supported the positive features of the textbook as a newly published communicative book which may have valuable influence on Iranian educational system.

Kiyani (2016) conducted an evaluation of the new textbook (Prospect 1) to get insights into its strengths and weaknesses. His evaluation was completed based on teachers' perspectives of the newly developed English textbook, out of which he reported some demerits of the course book, including applying an unsuitable method of literacy instruction, over-attention to the communication skills at the expense of literacy skills, over-localization of the content, overlooking the development of intercultural competence in students, and lack of authenticity in the presentation of the content.

Asadi, Kiyani, Akbari, and Ghafar Samar (2016) did an evaluation study of the textbook (prospect) as the First-grade Junior High school English book by applying CIPP (context, input, process, and product) evaluation model. The participants of the study were English teachers at junior high school. Through the evaluation, they reported some pitfalls, namely, unsuitable method of literacy instruction, over-localizing the content, complete abandoning of grammatical structures, and setting unrealistic objectives considering the time and resources constraints.

Salehi and Amini (2016) evaluation program was completed by using an eight-component scale including eight major criteria such as layout and physical appearance, content, objectives, language type, skills, activities and tasks, culture value, and teacher's needs. The data were collected through a questionnaire administered to teachers and conducting interview with them. The results of the evaluation indicated positive aspects of the textbook based on the criteria.

Ahour and Golpour (2016) evaluated the Iranian EFL junior high school English textbook titled Prospect 1 quantitatively by applying a five-point Likert scale containing seven criteria, i.e., subject and content, activities, skills, physical layout, practical consideration, language and general criteria. The evaluation questionnaire was administered to English teachers. Screening the teachers' perspectives indicated positive perceptions towards the book in terms of the criteria.

Similarly, Tavakoli Gheinani, Tabatabaei, and Chakhorzade (2017) conducted a critical evaluation on Prospect 1 through embarking on teachers' point of view. The researchers, to this end, employed questionnaire-based instrument in order to explore the English teachers' attitudes towards the potentials of the book 'Prospect' series, and any probable differences among their attitudes. The results manifested that the participants' attitudes towards the intended textbooks was positive.

Goodarzi, Weisi, and Yousofi (2020) evaluation of Prospect 1 sought to investigate the effectiveness of the textbook in terms of cognitive, communicative, and creative potentials using Communicative Language Teaching model, the results of which manifested the lack of the potentials of the core educational textbook to meet the full requirements of students in these areas. The researchers mentioned the positive features of the textbook in other respects.

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Isaee, Barjesteh, and Nasrollahi Mouziraji (2023) evaluated Prospect 1 from the point of view of junior high school teachers through an emulated evaluation model suggested by McDonough and Shaw (1993) on the basis of two criteria of external and internal features. The findings of the evaluation analysis revealed that the textbook suffered from some weakness both from internal and external features.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

This study was done with 30 English teachers. The questionnaire titled 'Teacher Textbook Evaluation Scale' (TTES) was given to 30 English teachers in the East of Gilan, Iran, out of whom 17 were male and 13 were female. They were all junior high school English teachers with BA and MA degrees in teaching English who were involved in teaching this textbook to students. Their teaching experience was between 5 to 25 years. Their age range was between 38 and 46. 34% of participants had 5 to 10 years of experience in teaching, 50% of the participants had 11 to 20 years of experience in teaching, and a total of 16% of the participants, as the subject group, experienced 21 to 25 years of teaching in junior high school level in various junior high schools in the East of Guilan.

3.2 Design and Method of the Study

This research was designed and completed through a descriptive research model by using the TTES six-criteria program evaluation model (in terms of the criteria of 'layout and design', 'activities', 'skills', 'language type', 'subject content', and 'whole aspect). The data about the assessment of the textbook used in the first grade of junior high, as the codified textbook, consist of the English teachers working in various primary schools. The data about the evaluation and assessment of Junior High-school English Textbook (Prospect 1), taught to junior high-school students, were made from 30 English teachers' perspectives based on the results of the data collection instrument titled Teacher Textbook Evaluation Scale (TTES) developed by Sung Kyun Kwan University in 2000.

3.3 Material

The material of the current study was the English textbook titled English for Schools Prospect 1. This textbook was prepared by ministry of education for junior high school students and taught by teachers at school all across the country. In general, the book includes eight complete lessons, each of which is divided into seven sections. Each lesson of the textbook has a consistent design and structure, containing an introductory section titled conversation, followed by two separate parts named as practice 1 and practice 2. A complete single page of each lesson is devoted to introducing sounds and letters pertaining to each lesson requirement, supplying students with inner-class, teacher-controlled practice for pronunciation. Sections titled Listening and Reading, Speaking and Writing, and finally a Role play exercise are inserted as the terminating activities.

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3.4 Instruments for Data Collection

The data collection instrument in the current study included two forms. The first one was about the subjects' personal information. It was given to the participants to complete their personal information. The second form was Likert-Scale questionnaire known as Teacher Textbook Evaluation Scale (TTES) developed by Sung Kyun Kwan University in 2000. The checklist, containing six-component criteria titled as 'layout and design', 'activities', 'skills', 'language type', 'subject content', and 'whole aspect', consisted of 30 items, was divided into six dimensions: The questions (1-8) were designed to elicit information about layout and design, (9-15) to obtain information about activities,(16-20) about skills,(21-24) information about language type,(25-30) information about subject and content. The responses in this questionnaire were arranged into "strongly Agree (5)", "Agree (4)", "Partly Agree (3)", "Disagree(2)", and "strongly Disagree (1)", respectively.

3.5 Procedure

Each section of the target textbook in the study was investigated in terms of the six-component selected criteria and the subdivided related questions in the checklist in the form of elaborated analysis to see whether or not each section of the textbook was compatible with the selected criteria. Therefore, the general procedures of the current study were outlined as follows:

1) Selection of the participants
2) Designation of the questionnaire
3) Distribution of the questionnaire
4) Collection of the questionnaire
5) Analysis of the questionnaire

This study was a descriptive one. The data were collected from 13 female and 17 male EFL teachers of public and private junior high schools in different urban and rural schools of the eastern section of Gilan Provinces in Iran in the academic year of 2025-2026. As mentioned earlier, the EFL questionnaire was posted virtually through the email correspondence because of the conformity in the way of distributing the data-collecting instrument. The teachers, as the respondents of the evaluation work, were informed in advance of the purpose of the study. Each of them was sent two forms, including one personal information form and one evaluation form (questionnaire). Through the personal information form, the respondents were asked to complete their personal information, and the second evaluation form, composed of seven evaluation criteria, asked them to show their own responses to the various items of the questionnaire by providing "strongly Agree (5)", "Agree (4)", "Partly Agree (3)", "Disagree (2)", and "strongly Disagree (1)" responses. They were informed that they had, the peak, two weeks to complete and return the two required forms. Finally, the completed questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS Statistical Software version 16 in order to find the answers to the research questions. In this regard, descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were employed because the 5-point Likert scale is an interval scale in which the mean is very significant.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data collected of this study were analyzed quantitatively using SPSS software version 16 to measure the features of frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation.

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4. Results

4.1 Results of the Descriptive Statistics

To address the first research question concerning the textbook's effectiveness according to layout and design, descriptive statistics were computed for the eight items that constituted this subscale. As it was shown in Table 1, the overall mean score for the Layout and Design criterion was 3.18 (SD = 0.90), which indicated a moderate level of perceived effectiveness. The highest mean score in this subscale was for Item 3 (M = 3.73, SD = 1.04), which suggested that teachers found the textbook to be organized effectively. For example, each lesson in *Prospect 1* has a consistent structure, which moves from a Conversation section to Practices and then to Speaking and Writing. This pattern can be seen across all eight lessons. A similarly high score was observed for Item 8 (M = 3.66, SD = 1.18), which reflected an agreement that the materials' objectives are clear to both the teacher and student. In contrast, the lowest mean was for Item 6, which concerns the inclusion of an adequate set of evaluation quizzes or testing suggestions (M = 2.56, SD = 1.25). This perception is consistent with the textbook's structure because the review sections (pages 14, 26, 36, and 46) are presented at the end of lessons in the form of checklists rather than as formal quizzes. Regarding the visual elements of the layout (Item 2), teachers perceived the layout and design to be only moderately appropriate (M = 3.23, SD = 1.00). For example, although the textbook uses the same colors and pictures throughout lessons, the Photo Dictionary pages (page 48 to page 76) put many vocabulary items in a single page. This may have made teachers feel the layout was only somewhat clear (See Table 1).

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Table 1. Item statistics for the layout and design criterion

	Mean	SD	N
1. The textbook includes a detailed overview of the functions, structures, and vocabulary that will be taught in each unit.	3.10	.80	30
2. The layout and design is appropriate and clear.	3.23	1.00	30
3. The textbook is organized effectively.	3.73	1.04	30
4. An adequate vocabulary list or glossary is included.	3.00	.74	30
5. Adequate review sections and exercises are included.	3.20	.99	30
6. An adequate set of evaluation quizzes or testing suggestions is included.	2.56	1.25	30
7. The teacher's book contains guidance about how the textbook can be used to the utmost advantage.	2.96	1.24	30
8. The materials objectives are apparent to both the teacher and student.	3.66	1.18	30
Total layout & Design	3.18	.90	30

As regards the overview of functions, structures, and vocabulary (Item 1), the textbook design, which provides a macro-level overview in the table of contents but not micro-level previews at the start of each lesson, can be the reason for the moderate score for this item. The main tool for the overview is the table of contents, which lists the title, topic, vocabulary, and expressions for each lesson, but at the lesson level, there is no introductory page to list the target functions, structures, and vocabulary before the lesson begins.

With respect to clarity of the visual layout and design (Item 2), an examination of the textbook reveals both the strengths and weaknesses that may have contributed to moderate rating. On the positive side, the textbook uses a consistent and restrained color. Lesson numbers are displayed in large colored numerals, which make it easy to move through the book. Illustrations and photographs are used to support the text. For instance, in Lesson 5 (page 29), labeled clothing items accompany the vocabulary presentation. However, certain pages have a density of visual information

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that may be the reason for the moderate rating. These pages may overwhelm the students, particularly younger learners in grade 7.

Concerning the overall organization and structural consistency (Item 3), the analysis of the textbook showed that it comprises eight lessons and has three parts across all of them. Every lesson opens with a Conversation section that introduces the target language functions through a contextualized dialogue. It is followed by two structured practice stages. Then, the lesson progresses to a Speaking and Writing section, which typically features a group work table for information exchange (e.g., Lesson 1, page 9; Lesson 2, page 13), and follows by a Your Conversation or Role Play pair work activity. This pattern is repeated with small variation across all eight lessons, which provides teachers and students with a lesson map. Furthermore, the textbook has Review section after every two lessons, which offers review at regular points.

The item related to the glossary and reference materials (Item 4), received a moderate mean. The analysis of the textbook confirmed that it does not contain an alphabetic glossary or word list with definitions or translations. Instead, vocabulary support is mainly provided through photo dictionary section, which covers only a subset of the target vocabulary and are not organized alphabetically. The absence of an alphabetical glossary where students can quickly locate the words might be the reason for the relatively modest rating.

Item 5, concerning whether adequate review sections and exercises are included, received a moderate-to-positive mean score that aligns with the textbook's structured approach to review. The four review sections appear at regular intervals after every two lessons, which provide systematic opportunities for learning. However, the exercises are mainly self-assessment checklists and written vocabulary recall tasks. The lack of variety of review exercise types such as gap-fills, matching exercises, multiple-choice questions, or games might explain why the score was not high.

As regards the evaluation and assessment materials (Item 6), the examination of the textbook's assessment structure showed that *Prospect 1* does not contain formal quizzes, tests, mid-term examinations, or summative assessment tools. Instead, the evaluation is done through the four review sections that take the form of Checklist. While these checklists serve as a useful formative self-assessment, they lack the structured format of formal achievement tests.

Item 7, which asks if the teacher's book contains guidance about how the textbook can be used to the utmost advantage, received a low mean score. The lower rating can be attributed to the fact that the student book *Prospect 1,* does not itself contain the teacher's guide. The preface strongly recommends that teachers study the teacher's guide. However, the actual teacher's guide is the package that is available only through the foreign languages department website. Thus, the teacher's guide is not easily at hand, which lowered the rating for this item.

With respect to clarity of objectives (Item 8), it could be said that the transparency is achieved through some design features. The table of contents provides a roadmap of the entire book. Each lesson is listed with its title and a description of the target functions, vocabulary, and expressions. In each lesson, the instructional goal is shown by headers. The top of each lesson's first page includes the lesson number and title, while the practice sections are labeled with their communicative purpose, such as Practice 1: Talking about Your Age (Lesson 3, page 17). These labels provide information about what students are expected to learn and practice.

For the second research question regarding the effectiveness of the activities, the six items were analyzed. The mean for the overall scale was 3.28 (SD = 1.03), which put it in the moderate range. Within this subscale, Item 14, which asked about the ease of modifying or supplementing activities, received the highest rating (M = 3.80, SD = 1.09). Teachers might find the Pair Work or Group Work activities in sections like Your Conversation (e.g., Lesson 1, page 9) flexible for adaptation. The second-highest mean was for Item 11, regarding the incorporation of individual, pair, and group work (M = 3.53, SD = 0.97), which showed the textbook's consistent inclusion of these interaction

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patterns in each lesson. Conversely, the lowest mean in this subscale was for Item 13, which evaluates whether activities promote creative, original, and independent responses (M = 2.70, SD = 1.23). The nature of many exercises, such as the scripted Listen to the examples. Then ask and answer with a friend (e.g., Practice 1 and 2, page 29), may lead teachers to perceive that there is a limited scope for student-generated language. The balance of activities, specifically an even distribution of free versus controlled exercises (Item 9), was also rated only moderately (M = 3.13, SD = 1.13), which aligned with the observation that the practices in each lesson are highly controlled, and the focus is on repetition of a model (See Table 2).

Table 2. Item statistics for the activities evaluation

	Mean	SD	N
9. The textbook provides a balance of activities (Ex. There is an even distribution of free vs. controlled exercises and tasks that focus on both fluent and accurate production).	3.13	1.13	30
10. The activities encourage sufficient communicative and meaningful practice.	3.16	1.14	30
11. The activities incorporate individual pair and group work.	3.53	.97	30
12. The grammar points and vocabulary items are introduced in motivating and realistic contexts.	3.36	1.15	30
13. The activities promote creative original and independent responses.	2.70	1.23	30
14. The textbook's activities can be modified or supplemented easily.	3.80	1.09	30
Total Activities Evaluation	3.28	1.03	30

Item 9, which evaluates whether the textbook provides a balance of activities, received a moderately positive score. The structural analysis of the textbook's activity progression shows that each lesson follows a sequence that first begins with controlled practice. After the initial Conversation, a page is devoted to Practice 1 and Practice 2, which are highly structured. These practice sections have a model and ask for repetition. For example, in Lesson 3, Practice 1 (page 17) provides the model (*How old are you? I'm 12).* Practice 2 provides the model (*When is your birthday? It's in Bahman).* These can be considered contextualized substitution drills where accuracy of the form is the main objective. Then, free production is included in a small section at the end of each lesson in section (Your Conversation), where students are asked to use the language. The ratio of the controlled to free practice pages within each lesson is about 3 to1 or 4 to 1 in favor of the controlled practice. A teacher who values structured accuracy building might view this form-focused instruction is appropriate but the teacher who prioritizes communicative fluency might perceive that the opportunities for students to use the language freely are insufficient. Thus, the textbook's design pushes is mainly controlled practice but the stated goal of the textbook is communicative.

Item 10, which evaluates whether the activities encourage sufficient communicative and meaningful practice, received a moderate mean score. The analysis revealed that the main activity sequence that is Conversation, Practices, Speaking and Writing, and Your Conversation is designed to move students from receptive exposure to productive and personalized communication. The Conversation section places students in a contextualized dialogue that models the target language in a social situation. For example, Lesson 2 (page 10) models a schoolyard introduction between three students. However, the practice stages that precede the communicative tasks are more structurally. The Practice 1 and Practice 2 sections use a pattern: (Listen to the examples. Then ask and answer with a friend) and the language produced is simply a substitution of lexical items within a fixed syntactic model. This structural pattern, where controlled practice dominates the meaningful communication might be the reason for the moderate rather than high rating for Item 10.

The integration of interaction patterns (Item 11) received a positive evaluation, which reflected that the textbook included varied interaction patterns in each lesson. The analysis showed that every lesson includes at least one activity that is labeled as Pair Work. Moreover, Group Work is included as a standard activity format. The Speaking and Writing sections, which appear in every lesson, are mainly labeled as Group Work. Individual Work, while it was less

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explicitly labeled, is also included in the textbook through the Listening and Reading and Speaking and Writing sections. When students are asked to Listen to the examples (e.g., Lesson 1, page 9; Lesson 2, page 3), this can be considered as an individual act before the pair or group interaction begins. The Check (✓) the words you know activities in the introductory section (pages 2-4) are individual tasks and the review sections (pages 14, 26, 36, 46) require individual written responses. The analysis revealed that the textbook had balanced integration of individual, paired, and group work activities across all eight lessons.

Item 12, which addressed whether the grammar points and vocabulary items are introduced in motivating and realistic contexts, received moderate-to-positive rating that might be related to the textbook's use of contextualized conversations. Each lesson's vocabulary and target structures are included within the Conversation that provides a situational context. For example, Lesson 5, which introduces clothing vocabulary and the present continuous for describing appearance, opens with a dialogue on page 28 where a teacher helps a student name clothing items. The vocabulary emerges from a realistic classroom situation. A student asks the teacher for an English word, which is highly motivating because it mirrors exactly what students themselves need to do. This design, which contextualizes new language within a social situation, is an effective pedagogical approach that enhances both motivation and acquisition.

The lowest mean in the Activities subscale was for Item 13, which evaluates whether activities promote creative, original, and independent responses. This shows a perceived limitation in the textbook's activity design. The examination of the task types shows that many activities in *Prospect 1* do not consider student creativity or originality. The dominant activity format across all eight lessons is the model-based substitution practice. For example, when students engage with Practice 1 and Practice 2, their task is to replicate the model sentences with different vocabulary items. The student's task is just retrieval and accurate placement, not linguistic creativity. In Lesson 4 (page 37), the table headings are Name, Relationship, Age. The questions that the students ask to fill this table are taught in the preceding practices. The activity is communicatively meaningful, but it is not creative because students do not express personal opinions. The Your Conversation activities also operate within highly scaffolded pattern. The dialogue frame is provided, and students fill in personal information in the blank spaces. No activity can be seen that asks students to construct a new dialogue, to write a short paragraph about a topic of their choice, to describe a picture using their own words, to role-play an unscripted scenario, or to express and defend a personal opinion. The low score for Item 13 indicates that teachers perceive a lack of opportunities for students to go beyond the provided models and to use English in original ways. The large standard deviation of 1.23 suggests that some perhaps consider the controlled nature of the activities developmentally necessary and others find it highly restrictive.

The mean for the flexibility and ease of adaptation (Item 14) shows that the activity framework in *Prospect 1* is perceived by teachers to be adaptable. The examination of the tasks shows the features that facilitate this flexibility. First, the Your Conversation sections (e.g., lesson five, page 31) provide a dialogue framework rather than a fully scripted exchange. Second, the Speaking and Writing sections that precede the Your Conversation tasks (e.g., lesson seven, page 41) include information-gathering tables that are designed for group work. These tables can work as semi-structured interview protocols that can be conducted with classmates. Third, the Role Play activities (e.g., lesson two, page 13) provide further opportunities for adaptation.

Regarding the third research question on the effectiveness of skills, the four items had an overall mean of (M=3.16; SD = 1.08). The highest-rated feature was the materials' focus on the skills students need (Item 15: M = 3.43, SD = 1.04). The textbook includes Listening and Reading and Speaking and Writing sections, which indicates an attempt to address these skills. The emphasis on natural pronunciation (Item 18) also received a moderately high mean score (M = 3.30, SD = 1.11). This is an important pedagogical objective of the book, as it is evidenced by the sections on sounds and letters, such as the instruction on the /w/ versus /v/ sound in Lesson 6 (page 34). However,

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teachers perceived a less than ideal balance of the four language skills (Item 16: M = 3.03, SD = 1.15). While all four skills are named, the speaking and listening skills occupy more instructional time than reading and writing. The attention paid to sub-skills like listening for gist or skimming (Item 17) was viewed as the weakest element in this subscale (M = 2.90, SD = 1.18). Although the textbook implicitly involves such sub-skills, they are not systematically taught as explicit strategies and task instructions are direct rather than strategic (e.g., Listen to the students talking in the schoolyard, Lesson 2, page 10) (See Table 3).

Table 3. Item statistics for the effectiveness of skills

	Mean	SD	N
15. The materials include and focus on the skills that students need to practice.	3.43	1.04	30
16. The materials provide an appropriate balance of the four language skills.	3.03	1.15	30
17. The textbook pays attention to sub skills, that is, listening for gist, note taking, skimming for information. etc.	2.90	1.18	30
18. The textbook highlights and practices natural pronunciation (that is, stress and intonation).	3.30	1.11	30
Total Effectiveness of Skills	3.16	1.08	30

The highest-rated feature in this sub scale was Item 15, which evaluates whether the materials focus on the skills that students need to practice. This moderately strong agreement suggests that teachers see an alignment between the skill emphases in Prospect 1 and their students' needs. An examination of the textbook's content shows that the entire pedagogical sequence depends on listening as the main channel for new language input. Every Conversation section begins with the instruction Listen to... This consistent instruction places listening comprehension at the starting point of every lesson. Moreover, the Practice 1 and Practice 2 sections begin with Listen to the examples (e.g., Lesson 2, page 11; Lesson 3, page 17), which means that before students produce any language orally, they first hear it as a model. For grade 7 language learners, this emphasis on listening input is developmentally important and aligns with principles of second language acquisition that emphasize the importance of aural input in the early stages of learning. Regarding speaking, the textbook's entire activity structure is mainly oriented toward oral production.

The Conversation, Practice 1, Practice 2, Role Play, and Your Conversation sections are all designed to improve student's speech. Regarding reading, the textbook integrates reading skill development in several ways, though it is less emphasized than listening and speaking. Each lesson's Conversation section is presented both as an auditory script and as a written text on the page, which means that students simultaneously read while they listen. Regarding writing, the textbook includes writing skill in two formats. First, each lesson's Speaking and Writing section requires students to write information in tables. For example, In Lesson 1 (page 9), the table asks students to write classmates' names and spellings. Second, the review sections include direct writing prompts. The Review for Lessons 1-2 (page 15) asks students to say and write one word for each of the letters.

Item 16, which evaluates whether the materials provide an appropriate balance of the four language skills, received a relatively low mean score, which meant the actual distribution of the instructional attention is not equal across the four skills. Listening and speaking are the dominant skills in terms of both page space and the instructional prominence. Writing is limited to specific tasks such as completing information tables in the Speaking and Writing sections and writing individual words or short phrases in the review checklists. The writing tasks are only at the word or phrase level and there are not paragraph-level writing activities, guided compositions, sentence-combining exercises, and free writing. Similarly, Reading is present but is lesser than the listening and speaking functions. The main reading material in each lesson is the conversation script, which students read as they listen. There are not

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extended reading passages and no explicit reading strategy instruction. The preface acknowledges that some skills in the first-level books are emphasized and asks readers to remember that the collection is a connected six-volume set whose final judgment and examination should be done holistically. In other words, the emphasis on oral skills in Prospect 1 is part of a planned developmental progression across the six-book series and reading and writing receive more emphasis in later volumes.

Item 17, which evaluates whether the textbook pays attention to sub-skills, received the lowest mean score. An examination of the textbook shows that sub-skills are not systematically taught. The instructional language that is used to frame listening and reading tasks is direct rather than strategic. Similarly, the listening tasks do not direct students to employ specific listening strategies. The sub-skills of listening for gist, listening for detail, making inferences, predicting content, and note-taking are implicitly activated through the task design but never explicitly named as metacognitive strategies. For example, when students listen to the family conversation in Lesson 4 (page 22), they may engage in listening for specific information such as the father's age, the mother's job if the teacher directs them to do so, but the textbook itself does not mention this strategic listening. Thus, the teacher is responsible for teaching sub-skills and s/he may or may not have the training or willingness to use sub-skill instruction into the lesson. Similarly, no activities were found that explicitly teach the sub-skills of speaking, such as turn-taking strategies, clarification requests (except Pardon? Can you say that again? prompt in Lesson 6, page 34).

Moreover, the writing tasks do not include instruction in the sub-skills of writing, such as brainstorming, organizing ideas, drafting, or revising and the reading tasks do not address skimming, scanning, reading for detail, making inferences, or using context clues to guess unknown vocabulary. However, the textbook addresses spelling as a communicative strategy. Across multiple lessons, the Talk to Your Teacher section teaches students to ask for the spelling of unknown words. Furthermore, the review sections have Check if format and can be seen as a form of self-assessment strategy training. Importantly, the instructions such as "you can spell and write your name (page 15), you can say and write one word for each of the following letters (page 47), and you can say and write the English alphabet (page 47)" help students monitor their learning, which is a metacognitive sub-skill. Nevertheless, the overall picture is that limited attention is paid to sub-skills.

Item 18, which evaluates whether the textbook highlights and practices pronunciation, received a moderately high mean score, which reflects a pedagogical feature that is, according to the textbook's preface, a defining innovation of Prospect 1. The preface states that one of the textbook's distinctive features is the method of teaching the alphabet and literacy, which has differences from the traditional methods in previous books. In teaching the alphabet, a single page is devoted to Sounds and Letters that appears in every lesson. For example, in Lesson 1, the sounds and letters page introduces the alphabet through the Talk to Your Teacher prompt Can you spell your name? and How do you spell... (Page 8). This lesson-by-lesson attention to the sounds and letters of English provides systematic pronunciation practice.

Pronunciation is also addressed within the conversational practice. The audio component of the textbook provides models of natural speech for every conversation. The emphasis on listening before speaking in every lesson emphasizes pronunciation as a main component of oral production. Additionally, the textbook's treatment of contractions and reduced forms is seen in the conversational models. For instance, Lesson 3 (page 16) includes the contracted form alongside the full form: When is your birthday? When's your birthday? The textbook exposes students to the way English is actually spoken by modeling the contracted forms in the written dialogues. However, it should be noted that while contractions are modeled, there is no explicit instruction on sentence-level stress patterns, intonation, or the rhythmic structure of English.

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For the fourth research question, language type was evaluated through four items, which had a moderate mean of 3.12 (SD = 1.09). The strongest aspect was the progression of grammar points and vocabulary items (Item 21: M = 3.50, SD = 1.07). The textbook's progression from My Name (Lesson 1) to more complex language like My Favorite Food (Lesson 8) was viewed as appropriate. The presentation of grammar points with brief and easy examples (Item 22) was also perceived relatively well (M = 3.23, SD = 1.10). Grammar is presented inductively through conversation models, such as the use of present continuous in the context of a family home in Lesson 6 (page 33). In contrast, the perceived authenticity of the language used (Item 19: M = 2.83, SD = 1.23) and the appropriateness of the language level for students' current English ability (Item 20: M = 2.93, SD = 1.31) were seen as weaker aspects (See Table 4).

Table 4. Item statistics for the language type

	Mean	SD	N
19. The language used in the textbook is authentic, that is, like real-life English.	2.83	1.23	30
20. The language used is at the right level for students' current English ability.	2.93	1.31	30
21. The progression of grammar points and vocabulary items is appropriate.	3.50	1.07	30
22. The grammar points are presented with brief and easy examples and explanations.	3.23	1.10	30
Total Language Type	3.12	1.09	30

Item 19, which evaluates whether the language used in the textbook is authentic, received the lowest mean score. This indicates that many teachers perceive language authenticity as a significant concern. The analysis of the language used in the Conversation models shows that it is grammatically, communicatively, and pedagogically appropriate, but it is not aligned with the features of native-speaker discourse. Some characteristics contribute to this perception. First, the conversational exchanges in Prospect 1 are unusually complete and explicit compared to the real-life spoken interaction. In authentic conversation, speakers frequently use ellipsis, incomplete sentences, false starts, and overlaps but the dialogues in the textbook present an idealized version of the spoken English. Second, the question-and-answer patterns in the Practice sections are predictable unlike real conversation. Third, the dialogues lack discourse markers or fillers that are used in natural conversation. Fourth, the pronunciation focus sometimes results in unnatural exchanges. However, Prospect 1 is designed for beginners who are encountering English for the first time and high authenticity might be incomprehensible and demotivating for these learners.

Item 20, which evaluates whether the language used is at the right level for students' English ability, received a low mean score. The analysis of the linguistic demands across the eight lessons suggests that some lessons present language at appropriate levels and other lessons introduce linguistic content that may challenge students. The preface mentions that the target learners begin learning a foreign language from the age of above twelve, which implies that the students have no prior English instruction. Therefore, the textbook is designed for beginners. However, the pace and density of new language introduction in some lessons may present difficulties. In the early lessons, the linguistic load is carefully controlled. Lesson 1 introduces about 10 vocabulary items and a single grammatical pattern (the verb to be in first and second person). Lesson 2 adds 8 new words and the third-person form. This pace is manageable for the beginners. However, by Lesson 5, the vocabulary demand highly increases.

In a single lesson, students should learn four adjectives for physical description (tall, short, young, old), ten clothing items (suit, shirt, jacket, trousers/pants, manteau, scarf, chador, shoes, gloves), and ten color words (black, white, red, blue, yellow, green, brown, gray, orange, pink). While some of these items are cognates or culturally familiar (e.g., manteau, chador, scarf), the volume of new vocabulary introduced in Lesson 5 is higher than in earlier lessons. Similarly, Lesson 6 introduces eight new room names and ten new action verbs, and the grammatical expansion of the present continuous. Lesson 7 introduces telling time, which requires mastery of numbers 1-59, the concepts of a.m. and p.m., and the functional phrases At 5:45 in the afternoon, addresses, and telephone numbers.

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However, some aspects of the textbook are designed to reduce the linguistic demand. The use of visual support provides non-linguistic cues that lower the cognitive load. The inclusion of culturally familiar items like chador and manteau also reduce the conceptual burden of new vocabulary and the predictable structure of the practice activities lowers the productive demands on students.

The highest mean score within the Language Type subscale was for Item 21, which evaluates whether the progression of grammar points and vocabulary items is appropriate. This relatively high rating indicates that teachers recognize a carefully sequenced developmental process in the linguistic content of Prospect 1. The eight lessons follow a logical path in teaching language. The first four lessons use only the verb to be to build basic communication. Students learn to introduce themselves (Lesson 1), introduce others (Lesson 2), talk about age and birthdays by using the Persian calendar (Lesson 3), and describe family members with possessive words and use job titles (Lesson 4). In Lesson 5, the present continuous is introduced through a simple chunk (He's wearing a gray suit) to describe appearance, and Lesson 6 expands this to action verbs. Lesson 7 teaches giving addresses, phone numbers, and telling time, and adds the "going to" form as a fixed expression. Finally, Lesson 8 has food words and friendly suggestions with Let's and I'd like. In fact, the textbook moves gradually from simple self‐introduction to slightly more everyday talk and keeps the structures clear and the vocabulary is related to the students' own world.

Item 22, which evaluates whether the grammar points are presented with brief and easy examples and explanations, received a moderate-to-positive mean score. This score reflects the textbook's use of an inductive, exemplar-based approach to grammar presentation, which aligns with the communicative methodology that was stated in the preface. A main characteristic of grammar presentation in *Prospect 1* is the complete absence of explicit grammar rules, metalinguistic terminology, or grammar reference boxes. For example, the present continuous is introduced in Lesson 5 (page 28) not through a rule but through four parallel examples. The student's task is to induce the pattern from the examples, not to learn an explicit rule. The simplicity of the examples are also consistent across the eight lessons.

To address the fifth research question, the Subject and Content subscale was examined. It achieved the highest overall mean score among the six criteria (M = 3.55, SD = 0.95). The highest-rated item was Item 27 (M = 3.93, SD = 1.01), which states that materials are not culturally biased and do not portray negative stereotypes. Teachers strongly agreed with this design principle of the series, which incorporates Iranian-Islamic cultural elements such as vocabulary for manteau, scarf, and chador (Lesson 5, page 29) and uses Persian names and culturally familiar locations like Azadi Street (Lesson 7, page 38). The subject and content were also viewed as highly relevant to students' needs (Item 23: M = 3.66, SD = 0.95) and generally realistic (Item 24: M = 3.56, SD = 0.97). The weakest aspect of this subscale was the perception that the content is interesting, challenging, and motivating (Item 25: M = 3.30, SD = 1.08), and that there is sufficient variety (Item 26: M = 3.30, SD = 1.11) (See Table 5).

Table 5. Item statistics for the subject and content

	Mean	SD	N
23. The subject and content of the textbook is relevant to students' needs as an English language learner(s).	3.66	.95	30
24. The subject and content of the textbook is generally realistic.	3.56	.97	30
25. The subject and content of the textbook is interesting, challenging, and motivating.	3.30	1.08	30
26. There is sufficient variety in the subject and content of the textbook.	3.30	1.11	30
27. The materials are not culturally biased and they do not portray any negative stereotypes.	3.93	1.01	30
Total Subject and Content	3.55	.95	30

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The highest-rated item was Item 27, which states that the materials are not culturally biased and they do not portray any negative stereotypes. The high mean indicates that teachers accept the cultural integrity of *Prospect 1*. The examination of the textbook's textual and visual content reveals the mechanisms through which cultural neutrality is achieved. The most visible manifestation is the use of Iranian-Islamic cultural referents throughout all eight lessons. The selection of personal names throughout the textbook is Iranian and there is not a single English name in the student book. The vocabulary for culturally specific clothing items is an example of cultural embedding. Lesson 5 (page 29) teaches the words manteau, scarf, and chador alongside internationally common clothing terms like suit, shirt, and jacket. The geographical and residential references are localized. Lesson 7 (page 38) teaches addresses by using Iranian street names such as 5 Azadi Street, 15 Shahid Hakim Street.

Moreover, the cultural calendar is used in teaching of dates and birthdays. Lesson 3 (pages 19-20) teaches months using the Persian calendar. Students learn to talk about their birthdays using their real calendar, which enhances the authenticity of communication. The family structures and roles that are shown in the textbook reflect Iranian social norms. Lesson 4 presents a family with a father who is a mechanic and a mother who is a housewife. While the occupation list also includes doctor, nurse, teacher, and dentist for men and women (page 23), the inclusion of housewife reflects the Iranian social reality where many mothers do not work outside the home. The photographs and illustrations throughout the book show individuals in Iranian-Islamic dress. The classroom scenes (e.g., Lesson 1, page 8) show female students who are wearing headscarves. The food items presented in Lesson 8 (page 43) include Iranian foods such as kebab, rice, dates, and tea and internationally common items like cake, milk, orange juice, and ice-cream. Importantly, the textbook's cultural representation is without portraying any culture negatively.

The evaluation of *Prospect 1* according to its subject and content reveals a textbook that is highly strong in its cultural integrity and appropriateness, highly relevant to students' lives, but somewhat limited in its capacity to interest, challenge, and motivate students. The highest-rated item is the cultural neutrality and absence of negative stereotypes, which represents the textbook's successful implementation of its main design philosophy that is embedding English language learning within an authentic Iranian-Islamic cultural framework that normalizes students' own identities and experiences as it is stated in the preface.

The high ratings for relevance (Item 23) and realism (Item 24) also show that the textbook's focus on the student's personal world such as name, classmates, age, family, appearance, house, address, and food meets the main communicative needs of the beginners. The consistent use of Persian names, the Iranian calendar, culturally specific clothing vocabulary, and Iranian addresses creates a linguistic environment where English can be used for expressing one's own identity rather than for imitating a foreign one. However, the moderate ratings for interest, challenge, and motivation (Item 25) and variety (Item 26) show that these areas of the textbook content cannot fully engage young learners. The focus on familiar personal topics, the uniformity of task types across lessons, the limited range of text types, and the absence of novel content may lower the textbook's motivational element.

Concerning the sixth research question, the Whole Aspect subscale, consisted of three items, which had an overall mean of 3.38 (SD = 1.08). Teachers agreed that the textbook is appropriate for the language learning aims of their institution (Item 28: M = 3.43, SD = 0.97). However, the strongest indicator of teacher agreement came from Item 30, I would choose to teach this textbook again (M = 3.60, SD = 1.10). The high mean score for Item 30 and the low mean for its ability to raise students' interest in language study (Item 29: M = 3.13, SD = 1.27), suggests that teachers see the textbook as a suitable and potentially reusable tool, but not as the main tool that can motivate students to continue learning English on their own (See Table 6).

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Table 6. Item statistics for the whole aspect

	Mean	SD	N
28. The textbook is appropriate for the language learning aims of my institution.	3.43	.97	30
29. The textbook raises my (students') interest in further English language study.	3.13	1.27	30
30. I would choose to study/teach this textbook again.	3.60	1.10	30

Item 28, which evaluates whether the textbook is appropriate for the language learning aims of institution, received high rating, which reflects the textbook's alignment with the national curriculum objectives that is suggested by the Ministry of Education. The institutional aims for grade 7 English instruction, which can be inferred from the preface, are several. First, the curriculum aims to develop basic communicative competence across all four skills. Second, the curriculum aims to ground English learning in Iranian-Islamic cultural values. Third, the curriculum aims to provide a localized approach to communicative language teaching that is not a mere utilization of Western researchers' opinions in the domain of communicative approach and method. The positive rating indicates that the textbook is appropriate for delivering the nationally prescribed English curriculum at the grade 7 level.

Item 29, which evaluates whether the textbook raises students' interest in further English language study, received the lowest mean score. This relatively low rating for the motivational impact can be understood by examining the textbook's content, tasks, and design through the lens of student engagement and the fostering of a desire for continued English study. Several factors explain why teachers might view the textbook has limited capacity to strengthen students' motivation. First, while topics are highly relevant and culturally appropriate, operate within a familiar personal domain that may not attract them. Second, the activity types are mainly reproductive and scaffolded and there are limited chances for creative, original, or self-directed language use. Third, the lack of variety in text types and task formats may result in predictability that lowers curiosity. Moreover, every lesson follows the same structural pattern. Fourth, there are no suggestions for supplementary reading, no recommendations for English-language media such as songs, videos, websites, and no activities that relate classroom learning to the students' lives. However, certain elements of the textbook have motivational potential. For example, the "Your Conversation" activities, which allow students to insert their own real information into conversational frames, present a kind of personalization that can be engaging.

Item 30, which asks teachers whether they would choose to teach this textbook again, received the highest mean score within the Whole Aspect subscale. Many teachers expressed a willingness to continue using *Prospect 1* as their teaching material, which suggests that the textbook, in the eyes of the teachers, is basically a desirable teaching tool. The textbook may have limited creative activities, an imperfect skill balance, inauthentic language, and predictable content, but it is organized, it is culturally appropriate, it is aligned with institutional goals, and it is teachable. Thus, the textbook is designed in a way that is suitable for teaching, and this encourages teachers' willingness to use it again. A summary of the mean scores for all six criteria is presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Descriptive statistics for the six criteria

	Criterion 1	Criterion 2	Criterion 3	Criterion 4	Criterion 5	Criterion 6	Total
N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Mean	3.18	3.28	3.16	3.12	3.55	3.38	3.27
SD	.90	1.03	1.08	1.09	.95	1.08	.98

Note: 1=Layout & Design; 2= Activities Evaluation; 3=effectiveness of skills; 4=language type; 5= subject & content; 6=Whole Aspect

The Subject and Content criterion (M = 3.55; SD= .95) scored the highest, followed by the Whole Aspect (M = 3.38; SD= 1.08), Activities (M = 3.28; SD=1.03), Layout and Design (M = 3.18; SD=.90), Skills (M = 3.16; SD=1.08),

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and finally, Language Type (M = 3.12; SD=1.09). The overall effectiveness score that was calculated as the mean of all 30 items on the scale, was 3.27 (SD = 0.98), which indicated that from the teachers' perspectives, the *Prospect 1* textbook achieves a moderate level of overall effectiveness (See Figure 1).



Figure 1. Teachers' evaluation of the six aspects of the textbook

4.2 Results of the Inferential Statistics

To answer the seventh research question that examined whether there is a statistically significant difference in the rank ordering of the six evaluation criteria for the textbook *Prospect 1*, a Friedman's Two-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks was conducted to test for the overall differences across the six evaluation criteria. This non-parametric test was selected over a one-way repeated measures ANOVA because the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality indicated that the scores for two of the six subscales deviated significantly from a normal distribution (See Table 8).

Table 8. Shapiro- Wilk Test for normality

	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	**df**	**Sig.**
Layout and Design	.95	30	.16
Activities Evaluation	.94	30	.12
effectiveness of skills	.94	30	.10
language type	.92	30	.04
subject and content	.96	30	.30
overall effectiveness	.95	30	.19
Whole Aspect	.92	30	.02

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The results showed that the Shapiro-Wilk tests for Language Type (W (30) = 0.92, p = 0.04) and Whole Aspect (W (30) = 0.92, p = 0.02) were statistically significant. Therefore, the Friedman test provided a robust, distribution-free analysis that was appropriate for the study's ordinal data and sample size (See Table 9).

Table 9. Friedman test

Test Statistics	
N	30
Chi-Square	50.15
df	
Asymp. Sig.	.00

The results for the Friedman test showed that the teachers' ratings were not equal across the six aspects, χ^2 (5, N = 30) = 50.15, p < .00. Since the p-value is less than 0.00, the idea that all six criteria were rated similarly is rejected and it is concluded that there is a significant difference in how teachers evaluated different dimensions of the textbook. Teachers considered some parts of the book like subject and content as far stronger than others like language type. To identify the exact location of these differences, post-hoc pairwise comparisons were conducted using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test with a Bonferroni correction that was applied to control for Type I error inflation. With six criteria, a total of 15 pairwise comparisons were made. The Bonferroni-adjusted alpha level was set at 0.00 (0.05 / 15). The results of these post-hoc comparisons are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test

	Z	**Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)**
Activities Evaluation – Layout and Design	-1.82	.06
Effectiveness of Skills - Layout and Design	-.15	.87
language type - Layout and Design	-.55	.58
Subject and content - Layout and Design	-4.27	.00
Whole Aspect - Layout and Design	-2.82	.00
Effectiveness of Skills - Activities Evaluation	-1.55	.12
language type - Activities Evaluation	-2.44	.01
subject and content - Activities Evaluation	-3.72	.00
Whole Aspect - Activities Evaluation	-1.96	.05
language type - Effectiveness of Skills	-.60	.54
subject and content - Effectiveness of Skills	-4.01	.00
Whole Aspect - Effectiveness of Skills	-3.29	.00
subject and content - language type	-4.00	.00
Whole Aspect - language type	-4.15	.00
Whole Aspect- subject and content	-2.19	.02

After applying a Bonferroni correction to control for multiple comparisons (adjusted alpha = .0033), the Wilcoxon signed-rank post-hoc tests revealed significant differences among the criteria. The subject and content criterion was rated significantly higher than four other aspects: layout and design (Z = –4.27, p < .00), activities (Z = –3.72, p < .00), skills (Z = –4.01, p < .00), and language type (Z = –4.00, p < .00). The whole aspect criterion was rated significantly higher than skills (Z = –3.29, p = .00), language type (Z = –4.15, p < .00), and subject and content (Z = –2.19, p = .02). No other pairwise comparisons were statistically significant at the corrected level. These results indicate that teachers

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perceived the culturally adapted content and the overall worth of the textbook as its strongest features, while language type and skills were viewed as significantly weaker dimensions.

6. Discussion

Prospect 1 is the ELT textbook developed for first grade of junior high school students in Iran. According to Richards (2014), as a textbook comes into existence and is introduced into an ELT context, its evaluation is imperative and even more important in order to determine its pedagogical value and the degree of its consistency with the educational objectives. As Tomlinson (2012) highlights, through the evaluation of educational materials, evaluators largely draw attention to the needs of the materials users and make subjective judgments about their impacts on the same materials users.

In order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Iranian EFL junior high school textbook, Prospect 1, the researcher through the current study attempted to evaluate the overall quality of EFL textbook based on the model provided by Sung Kyun Kwan University (2000) through screening EFL teachers' perceptions from six different but interrelated aspects, including 1) layout and design, 2) activities, 3) skills, 4) language type, 5) subject content, and 6) whole aspect.

The evaluation of this textbook revealed that the positive attributes far out-weighed the negative ones. The textbook *Prospect* 1 has been modified by the Iranian Ministry of Education as a unified textbook to the Iranian students as a junior high school program. After ten years, a fairly attractive and different textbook has been designed and introduced to Iranian English teachers and students. This production turns out to possess some practical advantages over the previously published textbook which was introduced and taught to the students. The old textbook designed for this level aimed at teaching English by focusing primarily on reading, writing, and grammar with no attention to listening and speaking. The pronunciation and meaningful fluency practice were of little concern in the teaching methodology. The new textbook has enough supplementary materials for teachers, for, example, Teacher's Book and class audio CD which includes listening and pronunciation program for the Student Book activity. The book is also organized in a clear and coherent manner.

The goal of this organization is to facilitate communicative competence, and its ultimate goal is to raise and promote students' communication skills. Likewise, this textbook illustrates a multi-skills syllabus, and is designed differently in that it integrates the four language skills without neglecting other important aspects of ELT such as vocabulary development. The productive and receptive skills are represented by means of a variety of teaching and learning strategies that are in accordance with the fundamental principles of TEFL such as top-down and bottom-up exercises. Vocabulary skills are covered through a variety of reliable techniques which help students learn meaning and store words and phrases in their long-term memories, the examples of which are the clearly illustrated vocabulary and a supplementary photo dictionary provided in the book. Some further features of this textbook are its focus on accuracy and fluency through natural conversational language, fun personalized speaking activities. Grammar is introduced in communicative contexts.

Sheldon (1988) maintains that layout, format, and typography are as three essential features for a successful and appropriate course book. Cunningsworth (1995) asserts that ELT textbooks need to possess multiple roles, namely, vocabulary and grammar, as a source for inner-classroom activities and self-directed learning fortune. The findings of this study on the features of layout and design and language, elicited primarily from the teachers' point of view completed by questionnaire, are in consistence with what Sheldon (1988) and Cunningsworth (1995) maintained .

McDonough and Shaw (2003) hold the view that materials in appropriate course books need to supply the students with the effective use of the integration of the four skills in an appropriate context. This is how teachers can involve

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the learners in authentic tasks and increase their motivation. In addition, Nunan (1999) highlights the way and sequence of materials organization and presentation besides the frequency of content and activities in the production of course books to involve students in learning. In light of the guidelines by McDonough and Shaw (2003) and Nunan (1999), the findings of the current evaluation work, given two features of content and activities, appear as being consistent. Screening the respondents' perceptions, based on the findings of this study, showed that the activities presented in the textbook of Prospect 1 yield to a flexible range of individual activities, pair works, and group activities and lead to creating meaningful communications among students.

Through some similar studies, Tavakoli Gheinani, Tabatabaei, and Chakhorzade's (2017) critical evaluation on Prospect 1 through screening teachers' point of view and employing questionnaire-based instrument, and Goodarzi, Weisi, and Yousofi's (2020) evaluation of Prospect 1 on the cognitive, communicative, and creative potentials attested positive results and attitudes towards the intended textbook. Embarking on these results, the findings of this study are, to some extent, in line with what they reported.

Despite having some notable advantages and merits, *Prospect 1* has some shortcomings. Because the intended textbook adheres to the 'Communicative Approach' and features a multi-skills curriculum and follows a topical/functional format, students in class environment need to have sufficient practice and pair work activities. Hence, the English class should be controlled in population. Any class which is occupied by more than 15 students will not be an effective learning environment in that students may not be given nearly equal chance or opportunity to get involved in speaking activities fostered by teachers. Given the primary focus of the book on two skills of speaking and listening and the demanding need for using CD, English classes must be, at least, equipped with electronic facilities and services so that teachers and students get benefit from the audio-visual teaching aids. A matter of great concern is schools' availability and accessibility to audio-visual services.

Some inconsistent results were reported, too. Isaee, Barjesteh, and Nasrollahi Mouziraji (2023) reported some weak features of Prospect 1 in light of two criteria of external and internal features, claiming that the textbook suffered from some weakness both from internal and external features. Asadi, Kiyani, Akbari, and Ghafar Samar (2016) reported some weak aspects of the textbook (prospect) as the First-grade Junior High school English book, assuming that the elements of method of literacy instruction, some grammatical structures, and setting objectives had not been attended as adequately as possible.

7. Conclusion and Pedagogical Implications

The present study, via the application of Sung Kyun Kwan University's (2000) evaluation model, demonstrated that the locally developed ELT textbook used in Iranian schools of the public ELT sector meet mostly the features of the criteria of layout and design, activities, skills, language type, subject content, and the whole aspect.

Textbooks must be designed to meet the instructional objectives of the communities under education and the needs of language learning. The value of language programs in the primary education period is known for every government and educational policy maker. In recent years, a number of educational programs and teaching approaches were introduced to help students and language learners achieve the aim of effective English learning as a foreign language. Many of them, however, were useless and could not bring about influential effects on students learning English as a foreign language. The main reasons why such a failure occurred may be rooted in the lack of appropriate theoretical foundations, lack of or less attention to the necessity and needs of language learning, inappropriate methods, loss of motivation and creative environment for learning, etc. The textbook *Prospect* 1 which was designed and introduced by the Iranian Ministry of Education was as a unified textbook taught to the Iranian students all across the country as a junior high school program. The primary purpose for the application of Prospect 1, as a new textbook, was the tendency of transition from a reading-based program to a new era of communicative approach. This turning

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point can bring about positive reflection towards language learning in that students will be motivated to pave the ground to achieve their instructional objectives, and teachers feel fresh to move away from the traditional teaching to communicative approach.

The findings of the current study can have pedagogical implications to material developers, teachers, and students. The findings of the current scrutiny of the locally produced ELT textbooks, used as the core educational source for Iranian junior high school students, can be useful for the material developers. They can be acquainted with the merits and demerits of their textbooks and eliminate the probable shortcomings and weaknesses to improve them for the next editions in terms of the objectives set. They can also design more fruitful materials to be more consistent with the communicative claim of the textbooks. Additionally, the findings of the current evaluation work are pedagogically beneficial for two other groups of stakeholders, i. e., teachers and students. It is supposed that the locally EFL developed textbook and its underlying materials can boost the communicative competence of the students and help teachers meet the educational objectives set through the educational program. Teachers, furthermore, will be informed of the fact that the extent to which their communicative claim and linguistic needs along with educational goals and objectives could be met through developing the new generation of ELT textbooks for junior high schools students (i.e., Prospect 1).

Finally, it is to suggest the future studies of similar nature incorporate further participants, through whom necessary data can be collected. Through the incorporation of a big number of participants, more valid generalizability can be elicited. Moreover, future studies of similar nature can expand their area of evaluation through fulfilling and including the other recently published volumes of Prospect series, namely Prospect 2 and 3 to generate a more thorough comparison.

The present study had some limitations that might restrict the generalizability of the findings and should be considered. The first limitation was that the present study evaluated the textbook just through incorporating teachers' viewpoints and that the students' opinions were not considered in this study. The second limitation of the study was the number of the subject group. The required data of the evaluation work was elicited through the responses of thirty teachers in junior high school level in the east of Guilan province that might restrict the generalizability of the findings. In addition, this study was not accompanied by an interview and the data collected was limited to a quantitative questionnaire-based data. The results would be more precise if we could use both qualitative and triangulated data collection approaches.

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