Issues with the 'Time for English' Textbook Series at Egyptian Primary Schools: An Evaluative Study

By

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Abstract

This study mainly aims at evaluating 'Time for English', a new English language-learning (ELL) textbook series currently taught at mainstream Egyptian primary schools. This involves: (1) identifying – from senior and expert language teachers' perspectives – to what extent the textbook series (primary one to six) conform with the national ELL standards issued by MOE in 2003; (2) exploring the advantages and weaknesses of the series as well as the real problems encountered by primary teachers while teaching it; (3) providing some suggestions and guidelines that should help with improving textbooks delivery in the future. To reach these aims, this evaluative study employed: (a) a standards questionnaire administered – both face-to-face and online - to some expert English language teachers (n=55); (b) focus groups (both face-to-face and online) to enable both pre-service (n=50) and in-service (n=300) EFL primary teachers to discuss

freely many issues related to the series (i.e. mainly about strengths and weaknesses) as well as the teaching/learning problems encountered in classrooms; and (c) a selective content analysis assisted by computer as a confirmatory procedure for triangulation purposes – to understand and cross-check participants' accounts based on reviewing all textbooks, and thus provide more accurate and comprehensive results. Findings indicate variability in the achievement of the proposed standards in reality, and present many strengths and weaknesses of textbooks as well as problems related to teaching the series. Finally, based on results, some guidelines for improvement (i.e. improvement framework) are proposed.

1. Background

1.1 Introduction & Literature Review

For teaching and learning English as a foreign language (EFL), it is drastically important to select the effective medium or means (e.g. materials, textbooks and teaching aids) through which adequate linguistic content can be conveyed to learners. Despite arguments against the use of textbooks alone because they do not admit the winds of change from research and classroom feedback (Sheldon, 1988), or because they encourage stereotyping and include inherent social, cultural, pedagogic and linguistic biases (Allwright, 1982; Carrell & Korwitz, 1994), Hutchinson and Torres (1994: p317) argue for textbooks as 'the most convenient means of providing the structure' required by the teaching-learning system, especially during periods of change. Further, Richards (2001) and Kırkgöz (2009) argue that language textbooks are so critical within English non-speaking communities, mainly because they provide standardised instruction, appropriate linguistic input and effective language models.

More specifically, textbooks are an essential component of a foreign language curriculum, especially in eastern and Arab cultures where they create a clear structure and

a visible framework to follow (see also Ur, 1996; Khodabakhshi, 2014), and thus direct the whole teaching-learning process (e.g. by explaining the ELT methods/techniques to be used, and teachers' and learners' roles). In these contexts, they act as an embodiment of the aims and methods of the particular teaching/learning situation, and thus provide learners with a sense of security and independence.

Subsequently, since no textbook is ever perfect, efforts are needed to continuously evaluate them in terms of validity, suitability, and novelness. Such an evaluation, especially by teachers, is always needed to meet both teachers' and learners' needs, and thus, maximise learning potentials, and teachers' reflection and awareness of their teaching (Cunningsworth, 1984; Sheldon, 1988; Hutchinson & Torres, 1994).

Due to vast social, cultural, technological, and ethnographic changes going on, the need to examine textbooks in the practical field (e.g. schools) has become very compulsory and pressing. It is required to identify, for example, particular strengths and weaknesses in textbooks already in use (Cunningsworth, 1995), and check if any revisions, amendments, and/or changes are needed to improve the situation. Hence, as Richards (2001) indicate, if textbooks used in a programme are judged to have shortcomings or negative consequences, remedial action should be taken (e.g. providing appropriate guidance and support for teachers in how to use them properly).

This practice is particularly vital as far as EFL learning is concerned (Sheldon, 1988). Wang (1998) conducted a study to evaluate an English textbook called, 'A New English Course' used by university English majors in China, using both micro and macro perspectives. The paper concludes that even though materials evaluation is a complex issue, it does help us to: (1) learn more about teaching and learning; (2) select good teaching materials; and (3) adapt the unsatisfactory ones.

According to Franke-Wikberg and Lundgren (1980, p148), the course evaluation process aims to: (1) describe what actually happens in that which seems to happen; (2) tell why precisely this happens; and (3) to state the possibilities for something else to happen. Moreover, it can take many forms, such as checklist, framework or evaluation sheet (Dougill, 1987; Wang, 1998), provided that the highest degree of objectivity is realised.

For course/syllabus evaluation purposes, some previous studies employed many methods, which included: (1) selective content analysis (e.g. Wang, 1994); electronic surveys (e.g. Moss & Hendry, 2002); (2) interviews (e.g. Edström, 2008); (3) an objective criteria-based computer-aided evaluation system (Wang, Yang & Wen, 2009); document analysis and classroom observations (Huệ, 2010); and evaluative checklists (e.g. Ma, 2003; Jahangard, 2007; Abdelwahab, 2013).

Moreover, *standards-based evaluation* has become a preferred practice in education that should be used when obtaining a comprehensive picture of teaching and learning is the target (Porter, et al., 2001). In particular, it is drastically important to provide policy makers with valid empirical evidence that is justified with some criteria (Milanowski, et al., 2004). In this regard, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) describe course evaluation as a standard-based matching process which should be done as much objectively as possible by starting with defining some criteria. When teachers design standards-based curriculum and assessment, language learning becomes intentional and more purposeful than in most other curricula (NSPP, 2003).

Moreover, aims and standards of the language-learning programme act as a criterion to be used for evaluating textbooks (Cunningsworth, 1995). In this regard, Wang, Yang and Wen (2009) conducted a study to obtain some objective criteria for English textbook evaluation through computer-aided corpus. By analysis of evaluation theory, and based on data from 3 rounds of survey using Delphi Method, they obtained 70 evaluation criteria set out of 127 checklist items.

To ease the textbook evaluation process and to cope with global orientation, there has been a noticeable tendency in Egypt - towards the beginning of the 21st century - to base course instruction on some already specified standards. This was clearly represented in the learning standards document issued in 2003, and which included ELL standards for all school grades and stages – from primary-one to secondary-three (NSPP, 2003). It is a handbook issued by Egyptian Ministry of Education (MOE) where ELL standards were grouped under four domains that reflected the overarching areas in which learners need to develop competence and proficiency in EFL (see Appendix 1). Each domain consists of standards, which state more specifically, what learners should know and be able to do as

a result of instruction. Each standard is composed of some clear indicators, which should identify exactly to what extent that particular standard has been realized. Thus, indicators work as narrow expectations of pupils' performance, and are a reflection of what learners should do in the classroom to show their progress towards meeting a particular standard (Appendix 1).

More recently, this has also become evident in the currently used English language teaching (ELT) methodology called 'Standards-Based Communicative Language Teaching' (see, for example, Bates-Treloar, 2013). This is useful, especially as far as course evaluation is concerned, mainly due to existence of some clear and tangible indicators that should lead to optimum teaching-learning performance. Besides, these standards would establish a common ground or a stable reference nationwide that teachers, learners, policy makers, course evaluators, community leaders and all stake holders can consult (Harris & Carr, 1996).

Standards are important and effective as a good language learning tool because they express clear expectations of what all students should know and be able to do. In this regard, Huệ (2010) conducted a case study to evaluate an English textbook taught at a secondary school in Vietnam in terms of whether it complies with the objectives and standards prescribed by MOE, and to what extent it is suitable for students, teachers (especially in terms of methodology and content), and the target context. The study concludes with suggesting ways of improving the textbook.

The evaluation of EFL courses, especially at the primary stage, within English non-speaking communities was carried out by some studies (e.g. Ma, 2003; Allen, 2008; Kırkgöz, 2009; Khodabakhshi, 2014; Tsagari & Sifakis, 2014). In particular, Ma (2003) conducted an evaluation of the elementary English textbooks of the Nine-Year Integrated Curriculum. She used the ACTFL checklist as well as the Association of Language Testers in Europe as the framework to generate a set of textbook selecting criteria. Findings indicated an unequal distribution of the five Cs--Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons and Communities, and that the textbooks emphasized communication design.

Allen (2008) attempted to identify the ELT problems at primary schools in Tanzania by analysing the obstacles in the way of effective pupil-centred teaching and learning of English, and presented some recommendations. In the same vein, Kırkgöz (2009) conducted an evaluative study to 3 English textbooks within the Turkish context, and offered some useful suggestions for future revision and design of textbooks for young learners of English. In the Iranian EFL context, Khodabakhshi (2014) examined the advantages and disadvantages of 'Skyline', an English textbook series, and concluded some recommendations for improving it. Similarly, Tsagari and Sifakis (2014) attempted to evaluate EFL course book materials by considering their structure and effectiveness through survey questionnaires administered to teachers working in Greek state primary schools (4th and 5th grades) and via in-depth interviews with the book authors. Findings indicate that materials production can be a predominantly top-down process, in which policy makers, materials authors and teachers can draw independent pathways to developing and implementing the final product, i.e. the course book.

Although previous studies highlighted the importance of course evaluation – especially within foreign language-learning contexts, none of them attempted to employ the national language learning standards issued by MOE as assessment criteria to inform an ongoing textbook assessment process. Besides, none of them employed online groups on social media, which involve thousands of language teachers, for data collection purposes (e.g. online interviews or focus groups) to obtain deep and detailed contextual accounts. Besides, no attempts so far have been made to evaluate or improve the Egyptian series 'Time for English'.

1.2 Research Problem

'Time for English' is a quite new English language series that MOE prescribed for the primary stage in Egypt in 2010. Since its implementation, there have been many persistent issues and problems raised by supervisors, teachers, and sometimes pupils. Literature review indicates that no research studies at all were conducted with the

purpose of evaluating it. This seems surprising once we consider the various concerns and problematic issues that these new textbooks have raised nationwide.

What is particular about this new series is that it was suddenly stipulated by MOE in the school year 2011/12 at one go to all primary grades (i.e. from one to six all at once). This sudden decision, as many in-service English language teachers and inspectors complained, did not allow for a gradual substitution of 'Hand in Hand', the former series, with this new one.

Normally, at the first year when changing a series takes effect, the new series is first taught to primary-one pupils only, and then proceeds with them in the years to follow till they finish their primary education. This way, the old series stays with those senior pupils who have already started it till they finish school, while the new series gradually goes up with those who have already started studying it in primary one, until it is fully replaced. Unfortunately, this sudden change – as many primary teachers of English reported in the pilot study – had many negative outcomes (e.g. causing confusion to both teachers and pupils; not allowing in-service teachers to receive orientation and training in teaching the new series; and raising many socio-cultural problems).

Therefore, in August, 2014, a group of English language teachers affiliated with an Egyptian teachers' coalition had an official meeting with the MOE English language teaching consultant to suggest some improvements and modifications to be made to the series.

Throughout some informal talks with some senior EFL student teachers (Elementary Education section), many of them reported many difficulties with teaching this new series at Assiut primary schools. In particular, they noticed that some sections were too difficult and advanced for primary-stage pupils, especially the 'Phonic Time' section.

Moreover, a preliminary review of textbooks conducted by the researcher revealed that the series does not adequately reflect the real Egyptian culture. For example, there is a wide gap between the advanced content of the textbooks on one hand, and the poor conditions of many deprived local communities in Assiut, especially in rural areas. This does not help with making language learning more meaningful and relevant. In this

regard, some in-service teachers suggested that this series should have been designed to advanced pupils at language schools in Cairo and other big cities in Egypt. Thus, the actual local context and the specific national culture are not highly considered by (or reflected in) this series.

Further, from a curriculum design perspective, in order for any language course or syllabus to be strong and effective, it should meet some criteria (see Stevick, 1971; Allen, 2008), the most important of which are: (1) sustaining learners' motivation; (2) relevance to pupils' language needs; (3) completeness (i.e. including all the language necessary for the stated course aims); (4) authenticity (i.e. being realistic and authentic, both linguistically and culturally); (5) satisfaction (i.e. learners should feel that they have benefited from the lesson); (6) immediacy (i.e. pupils feel that they can use the studied material straight away).

The textbook review and classroom observations conducted by the researcher indicated inadequate level of those elements. Moreover, observations and informal talks with some Egyptian EFL inspectors, school supervisors, and expert teachers working at Assiut Educational Directorate indicate the existence of a persistent problem that makes things even worse: the majority of primary English language teachers lack the sufficient command of English required for teaching it appropriately and efficiently. In particular, they lack many of the phonological (e.g. pronunciation), communicative and pragmatic competencies and skills required for delivering this advanced series successfully and efficiently.

This research study aims at accomplishing a set of objectives:

1. Obtaining and phrasing a working list of standards of ELL at the primary stage based on official documents issued by Egyptian MOE in 2003;
2. Checking those standards against what goes on in reality by requesting expert and senior primary English-language teachers to state the extent to which each of them applies at schools;
3. Evaluating the new 'Time for English' series textbooks in terms of advantages, disadvantages and problems encountered in the field;

4. Providing some suggestions and guidelines (i.e. improvement framework) into how to improve teaching/learning the series at Egyptian primary schools.

1.3 Research Questions

Subsequently, the study attempts answering the following questions

1. To what extent does the 'Time for English' series comply with the primary-stage ELL standards defined by the Egyptian MOE?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the 'Time for English' series, and the common problems encountered while teaching/learning these textbooks?
3. Based on obtained data, which suggestions and guidelines - including aspects of improvement - to conclude so as to sustain an optimum language-learning environment while teaching this series?

2. Methodology

This is an evaluative study that belongs to the wide area of 'evaluation research', which Cohen et al. (2007: pp42-47) make a case of as a completely different enterprise where the researcher intends to solve a specific problem, and eventually present solutions/decisions to policy makers.

More specifically, *evaluation research* seeks findings that focus on the strengths and weaknesses of various aspects of innovations (e.g. new courses) as well of their overall 'outcome'. This information is, in turn, used to consider how such interventions might be modified, enhanced or even eliminated in the effort to provide a better service, fulfil a particular need or meet a specific challenge (Silver, 2004). Thus, evaluation research can act as a baseline on which decision-making can be done with the purpose of educational reformation, which might include the improvement of course delivery and the tools used in the teaching-learning process.

Throughout the procedures followed in this evaluative study, the researcher employs an *eclectic* approach that picks and chooses the best features in many models to provide stronger evidence in an attempt to reach the specified goals (Madaus & Kellaghan, 2000; Silver, 2004). More specifically, the study starts with a piloting stage to formulate the

research problem based on literature review, preliminary talks with teachers, and some online interactions (see Figure 1 below). Then, he intervenes by collecting data on how the new 'Time for English' series is being perceived by educators and received at schools, including: (1) the extent to which it complies with the MOE ELL standards; (2) how it is received and implemented by teachers; and (3) whether there are some improvements that could be made on it to be used to inform decision-makers on top of the educational hierarchy in Egypt. This endeavour is mainly motivated by preliminary data collected at the piloting stage, and which indicated the existence of many serious problems with teaching and learning this series at Egyptian primary schools (see Figure 1 below).

As far as curriculum or programme evaluation is concerned, evaluation methods might include obtaining teachers' and/or students' feedback on a new course – through questionnaires, interviews and focus groups, for example (Silver, 2004). This can be classified as a 'formative evaluation' procedure that aims at improving something (e.g. a course or a programme) while it is being implemented.

Here the researcher approaches the status-quo with a critical stance in an attempt to see the whole picture, and eventually provide an objective judgement. The main outcome of this evaluative study should take the form of some suggested guidelines/framework informed by the collected data (i.e. improvement plan).

To accomplish the research objectives, some tools were used for collecting data, which include: (1) questionnaires for identifying to what extent the ELL standards comply with reality; (2) focus groups of some pre-service and in-service primary English teachers (5 groups, each consisting of 10 teachers) to evaluate the series in the light of their viewpoints; and (3) selective content analysis of primary-one-to-six textbooks to support and check data obtained from participants in focus groups (see also Figure 1 below).

The main goal of the employed **Standards Questionnaire** was to assess the degree to which the main ELL standards suggested by Egyptian MOE, Curriculum & Learning Outcomes Committee (NSPP, 2003) – as indicated above – apply to reality. Thus, the questionnaire was designed simply by including indicators (corresponding to underlying standards and domains) as items. For each item (indicator), participants were asked to

11

state – on a 5-point Likert scale – to what extent they would agree or disagree that it was evident or applicable in the new series within ELL contexts at the primary schools they were dealing with (see Appendix 1).
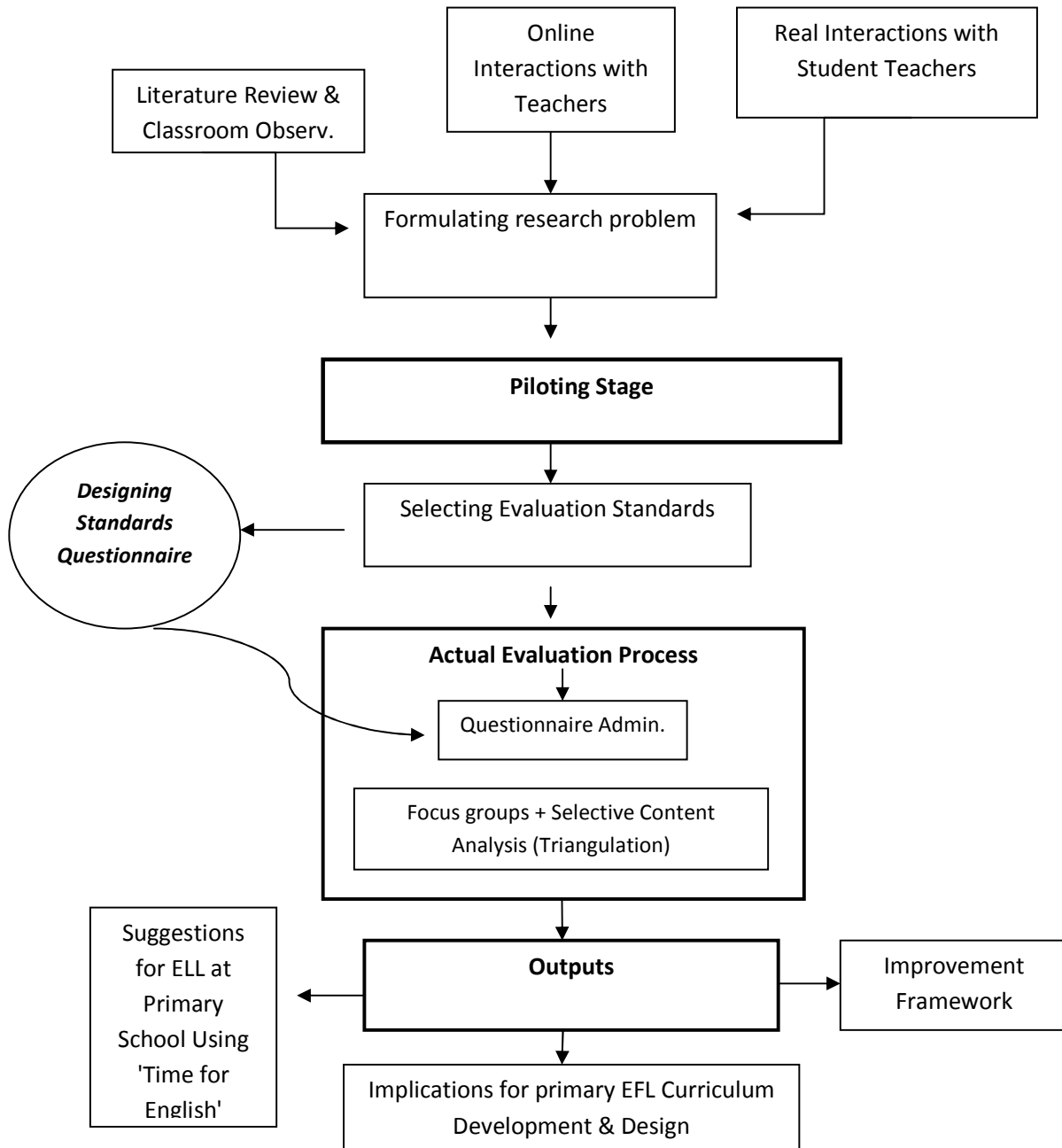
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┌─────────────────────┐   ┌─────────────────────┐
│  Literature Review &│   │   Online            │   ┌─────────────────────┐
│  Classroom Observ.  │   │ Interactions with   │   │ Real Interactions with│
└─────────────────────┘   │   Teachers          │   │  Student Teachers    │
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              ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
              │  Formulating research problem    │
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  │ Designing │   │  Selecting Evaluation Standards│
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              │    Actual Evaluation Process     │
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              │  │    Questionnaire Admin.     │ │
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              │  │ Focus groups + Selective    │ │
              │  │ Content Analysis (Triangulation)│
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 │Suggestions│  │   Outputs    │   │ Improvement  │
 │for ELL at │  └──────────────┘   │  Framework   │
 │Primary    │                     └──────────────┘
 │School Using│ ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
 │'Time for  │  │ Implications for primary EFL      │
 │English'   │  │ Curriculum Development & Design   │
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Figure 1: Evaluation Research Framework

Questionnaires were employed in the study as a quantitative method for collecting objective data from some EFL specialists (n=55). To reach a wide scope of audience, two versions of the questionnaire were used: a hardcopy and an online version that was administered through the SurveyMonkey website (see Appendix 1). The 55 Egyptian participants, who were mainly concerned with the new 'Time for English series', included: 6 ELT inspectors or supervisors; 12 experts and senior teachers; and 37 in-service teachers. Thirty of them (54.5%) were affiliated with Assiut Educational Directorate, while the remaining 25 participants (45.5%) were affiliated with MOE, but worked for educational directorates and schools in other Egyptian governorates. As far as number of years of experience in ELT was concerned, 33 participants (60%) reported spending between 10 and 35 years in their teaching and/or supervising career at the primary stage. Novice teachers who spent 5 years or less in teaching were much fewer (15 participants counting as 27.3%).

Focus groups as a qualitative research method is group interview that relies on the interaction within the group who discuss a topic supplied by the researcher yielding a collective rather than an individual view (Morgan, 1988: p9). Thus, a group of people are asked about their perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes towards a product, service, concept and/or idea. Questions are asked in an interactive group setting where participants are free to talk with other group members. It is from these interactions of the group that the data emerges (Cohen, et al., 2007).

There were two main reasons for choosing this type of interview: (1) the need to focus on specific themes/issues which would naturally emerge while participants openly and informally discussed together the process of teaching the new series; (2) allowing for a relaxed interactive atmosphere in which participants could easily share ideas and provide useful input while talking together and with the interviewer.

Focus groups were conducted both face-to-face (with pre-service EFL primary teachers), and online (with in-service EFL primary teachers nationwide). In the face-to-face mode, five focus groups were formed, with each consisting of 10 participants of EFL student teachers (primary education section), and who were required to talk about the course based on their ongoing teaching practice sessions at some primary schools in Assiut. In

the online mode, some groups of in-service primary English language teachers were approached through their online group pages already formed on Facebook (e.g. around 150 primary English language teachers all over Egypt participated in the online discussions) (see Table 1 below). Teachers contributed with their viewpoints and suggestions throughout online discussions following several posts made by the researcher and the page admins who could pin posts, and thus made them more visible to all group members. Based on each post, discussions were developed by a series of comments added by group members who wanted to share their opinions, experiences, and/or impressions about the new series, especially as far as the topic at hand (tackled in each post) was concerned.

All the data based on these contributions were collected and analysed qualitatively so that themes could freely emerge to fit under three main categories: advantages of the series, disadvantages, and real problems and/or experiences encountered by teachers.

Table 1: Data about Participants in Focus Groups

Category	*Mode*	*Number*
Pre-service Primary English teachers (EFL Student Teacher at Primary Education section, AUCOE)	Face-to-face mode or direct interactions	5 groups (each consisting of 10) = 50 participants
In-service English Language Teachers at Primary Schools	Online mode (interactions) through Facebook pages	Around 400 participants from all over the country

A computer-assisted selective content analysis technique was conducted while reviewing the textbooks of the new series. A detailed review of all six textbooks was a daunting task; therefore, it was useful to employ a qualitatively selective form of content analysis to choose specific representative instances and relevant samples to review (Silverman, 2005). Moreover, content analysis can be used if the purpose is to audit or review textbook contents against some specified standards (Cohen, et al. 2007). Hence, for triangulation purposes, selective content analysis was conducted simultaneously while

analysing focus group data. More specifically, the researcher employed content analysis assisted by computer software - which facilitated coding and annotating text as well as searching for specific words/phrases - to reinforce and double-check (i.e. conduct cross-checks against) participants' ideas and viewpoints. Therefore, the choice of the minor techniques to use for conducting this selective content analysis process (e.g. drawing comparisons, developing and testing hypotheses, generating themes and categories, identifying frequencies, finding relevance, and synthesising and reporting data) (see also Ezzy, 2002) relied mainly on the emerging objectives and needs that the focus-group data analysis process continuously raised. These included:

1. Reviewing course outline and objectives;
2. Understanding sequence and organisation of units;
3. Verifying the language-learning problems reported by participants;
4. Checking contents of textbooks for understanding some socio-cultural issues;
5. Identifying the nature and weight of the 'Phonic Time' section in early grades;
6. Reviewing the new 'Reading Time' section in the 5th and 6th grades' textbooks.

3. Results & Discussion

3.1Questionnaire Data Analysis Results

The main goal of the questionnaire was to identify (through expert teachers at the primary stage) to what extent the new 'Time for English' series comply with the EFL learning standards at the primary stage, and thus answer the 1st research question. To ensure reliability and internal consistency of each set of indicators composing each standard, and of each set of standards composing each domain, *Cronbach's Alpha* was used, and the following results were obtained:

DOMAIN ONE=0.85 (Standard1=0.81 - Standard2=0.79 - Standard3=0.78);

DOMAIN TWO=0.87 (Standard1=0.83 - Standard2=0.68 - Standard3=0.67 - Standard4=0.89);

DOMAIN THREE=0.90 (Standard1=0.72 - Standard2=0.90 - Standard3=0.82 - Standard4=0.85);

DOMAIN FOUR=0.75 (Standard1=0.69 – Standard2=0.78 – Standard3=0.86).

After calculating the mean of all those domains, the reliability index of the whole questionnaire was found to be 0.84, which is considered a very satisfactory value.

Throughout using SPSS for ranking all indicators representing those standards based on participants' viewpoints on the survey questionnaire, the following results were obtained:

For the main domains underlying the standards and indicators, results show that *Domain 3: LEARNING TO LEARN ENGLISH* had the highest means (3.71 with a standard deviation of 0.58). This means that, based on participants' ratings of all standards and their indicators, *Domain 3* was the one that applied most to the series (see Appendix 1). It was followed by *Domain 1*: *LEARNING* TO COMMUNICATE IN ENGLISH with the next highest means (3.68 with standard deviation of 0.55). Then, came *Domain 2: LEARNING LANGUAGE SYSTEM* (3.67 with a standard deviation of 0.56); and finally, *Domain 4: LEARNING VALUES* (3.64 with a standard deviation of 0.55).

For the standards, based on means, the standards were ranked as follows (see Table 2 below):

Table 2: Evaluation Standards Ordered by Means

Evaluation Standard	Mean	Standard Deviation
Standard 2 (Domain 2): *Pupils use their knowledge of the phonological system to interpret and communicate messages to others.*	4.15	0.59
Standard 3 (Domain 1): *Learners express facts, opinions and emotions in English.*	3.81	0.66
Standard 1 (Domain 3): *Learners exhibit positive attitudes towards the learning of English and display an enthusiasm for and enjoyment of English language learning.*	3.78	0.78
Standard 1 (Domain 1): *Learners use English to interact inside the classroom.*	3.77	0.58
Standard 4 (Domain 3): *Learners develop and use social strategies to aid them in their language learning.*	3.76	0.67

16

Evaluation Standard	Mean	Standard Deviation
Standard 1 (Domain 4): Pupils work cooperatively with peers to achieve common learning goals and help others in the process of learning.	3.69	0.70
Standard 3 (Domain 3): Learners develop and use meta-cognitive strategies, which facilitate language learning.	3.66	0.72
Standard 2 (Domain 4): Pupils interact politely with others taking into account the cultural norms of both Egyptian and English speaking society.	3.64	0.62
Standard 2 (Domain 3): Learners develop and use cognitive strategies to aid them in their language learning.	3.61	0.72
Standard 3 (Domain 4): Pupils use English to reinforce values relating to good citizenship.	3.59	0.75
Standard 4 (Domain 2): Pupils progressively become readers who are able to construct meaning from increasingly complex messages.	3.57	0.63
Standard 3 (Domain 2): Pupils use their knowledge of morphology and syntax to communicate meaning accurately and appropriately.	3.53	0.92
Standard 2 (Domain 1): Learners share and elicit personal information from others.	3.47	0.75
Standard 1 (Domain 2): Learners are aware of the differences between Arabic & English language systems.	3.46	0.67

Thus, based on participants' ratings, '*Domain 3: LEARNING TO LEARN ENGLISH'* came on top as the most applicable domain within Egyptian schools. This might be attributed to the current concern over giving young learners more opportunities to learn how to learn; memorisation of small linguistic pieces, grammatical points and isolated words has become an obsolete practice. Conversely, *'Domain 4: LEARNING VALUES'* came at the bottom, and this indicates very poor national consideration of many social values and cultural issues at primary schools in Egypt. It seems that still there is a weak link between teaching/learning English and the process of reinforcing many values, especially those relating to good citizenship. Also, it seems that ELL has not yet achieved some desired cultural values, such as polite social interaction, collaborative work, and understanding of different and varying cultural norms of both Egypt and English-speaking communities.

The standard with the highest means was '*Standard 2 (Domain 2): Pupils use their knowledge of the phonological system to interpret and communicate messages to others'.*

This indicates both learners' concern with phonological knowledge in the English language to produce accurate utterances and teachers' focus on (and worry over) phonological aspects.

This was followed by '*Standard 3 (Domain 1): Learners express facts, opinions and emotions in English*.' Although Domain 1 itself came third in the list, this particular standard came as the 2nd standard in the list. Generally, self-expression in English is a very important skill that needs to be developed in learners as early as possible. Therefore, this high rank is significant as it indicates that the new series considers it very well.

Then came '*Standard 1 (Domain 3)*' which is related to language learning motivation. If students already have positive attitudes towards English and show some enthusiasm while learning it, then it will be easy to adjust the course content in a way that stimulates them to learn and interact in English. This requires revisiting the teaching/learning methods currently used.

Finally, it is important to draw attention to the fact that '*Standard 1 (Domain 2): Learners are aware of the differences between Arabic & English language systems*' came at the bottom. This means that learners are not aware of the differences between the two language systems; thus, the series needs to establish a clear focus on this aspect.

3.2 Focus-Groups & Content Analysis Results

Results of the focus groups (both face-to-face and online), triangulated with the content analysis results, indicate the existence of many issues with teaching and learning the 'Time for English' series in reality. These issues can be classified into: advantages, disadvantages and problems, and aspects of improvement and/or change. Therefore, this section answers the 2nd research question on advantages, disadvantages and encountered problems.

For the advantages/strengths and disadvantages/weaknesses reported by participants in the focus groups, the ideas and issues raised were classified under 6 categories (see Table

3 below): (1) Socio-cultural issues; (2) Teacher training; (3) Layout & Sequence; (4) Teaching/Learning methods and techniques; (5) Literacy and main language skills; and (6) Technology, aids and facilities.

Table 3: Summary of Data Obtained from Focus Groups

Aspect	Advantages & Strengths	Disadvantages & Weaknesses
Socio-cultural Issues	• In general, the series attempts spreading brotherhood, mutual respect and cooperation among society members. • The series generally acquaint pupils with positive learning habits, such as: leadership, cooperation, turn-taking, and organisation. • The series includes many new activities, which help pupils to depend on themselves, exploit their potentials and energy, and develop a sense of responsibility. • The series exposes pupils to different cultures (i.e. expanding the child's comfort zone), and thus enables them to understand their own. •	• Some topics, words and phrases are not culturally appropriate to learners. For example, some words/phrases are not appropriate because they are: (1) too difficult (e.g. 'pickles' in year 4); (2) closely connected with the English context only (e.g. cherry and cherry pie); (3) or so informal/colloquial (e.g. 'yum!' which means delicious). • The whole series has many vocabulary-related issues which interfere with acquiring standard English (e.g. many words are purely American and colloquial); • There are many cultural issues that make the series incompatible with the national Egyptian context. • Sometimes the series is not adequate to pupils' ages and developmental stage (e.g. a big amount of difficult words is introduced to learners). • Contextual factors and conditions (e.g. urban vs. rural environments) are not highly considered. • It is hard to implement this series in many low-income and rural areas because of poor equipment and weak facilities. • The primary curriculum - in general – does not draw on learners' realistic hobbies, tendencies and attitudes. • Some topics in the primary-six course (e.g. 'History of Ice-cream' and 'History of New York') are not consistent with the Egyptian socio-cultural context. • Some children already have negative attitudes towards the English language in general, and 'Time for English' in particular. Those learners are hard to involve and satisfy during the English class.

Aspect	Advantages & Strengths	Disadvantages & Weaknesses
Teacher Training	• Some training (very limited) was made to familiarise primary English teachers with the new series. • Teachers might be able to understand what they will do if they review the teacher's guide and other supporting materials. • Novice teachers do not have any problems in teaching Time for English if they follow the steps in the teacher's book. • Audio materials can help teachers with modelling pronunciation properly. • Teachers receive help in teaching the new series through organized lesson plans, and interesting activities and games. • Review units, as well as test samples there act as very useful guides for teachers.	• Primary teachers did not receive enough training on teaching this new series. • Some in-service teachers prefer teaching another series called: Family & Friends'. • Teachers are not trained well in teaching this new series, especially as far as the new teaching methodologies required for the series delivery are concerned.

Aspect	Advantages & Strengths	Disadvantages & Weaknesses
Layout & Sequence	• It is an integrative series with a logical & consistent sequence. • Content organisation is good; each unit is built around a theme (e.g. food, music, clothes, etc.) to provide a real context to language learning and practice; each page presents a single language function in order to keep the focus clear. The 'Word Time' section presents a group of consistent words connected with the same theme or topic. These words are exploited well in the following section, 'Practice Time' for presenting the grammar of the unit. • Topics are attractive and interesting to learners. • There are revision lists that provide pupils with a chance to review what they have learned to gain confidence, and enable parents to follow their kids' progress. • Book design is simple, clear and attractive in a way that motivates learners, and help them to master different language items. • Materials are presented in a logical sequence that helps children to understand, remember and digest. • At the end of Student's Book, there is a word dictionary that helps pupils to review new vocabulary. • At the beginning of each course in the series, there is a review of previously-learned items/aspects so that learners can build upon them. • After every THREE UNITS, there is a general REVISION unit, along with some pages dedicated for drawing and colouring (especially at early levels); some participants prefer having this revision or REVIEW after each lesson. • Since the course is learner-centred, pupils are involved in each lesson (regardless of its type): In a READING lesson, a shared-reading technique is employed; and in a CONVERSATION lesson, Ss are required to act out the dialogue; in a PHONIC lesson, Ss mimic the audio or video clip to produce accurate utterances. • The existence of 'Phonics Time' in each unit helps Ss with producing accurate pronunciation of words and phrases. • Consistency between some lessons in the primary-5 course is very useful for meaningful language learning. • The primary-five course includes many exercises that consolidate the main 4 language skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing). • In the primary-six course, writing letters to others as a functional aspect of language is very useful. • In primary-five course, there are good grammar and vocabulary; it also includes different activities for carrying out each lesson. • The primary-six course includes a lot of situations and functional language that are valid for language practice in everyday life. • The short units help pupils to progress rapidly, and thus build their confidence and motivation. After	• The series places much cognitive loads on learners. • For the 4th, 5th, and 6th grades, pupils study two books instead of the one comprehensive textbook they used to study in the previous 3 years, which included everything. This change would distract and confuse pupils. • There are many serious phonological mistakes, especially as far as diphthongs are concerned. • Many parts/activities of the course are beyond pupils' understanding (e.g. primary-three course requires pupils to learn a huge amount of words. In one of the lessons, there is a conversation that requires pupils to learn days of the week, question words, and how to make suggestions all at once). • The new series is shocking for both teachers and learners, due to the sudden change of the old series with no gradual introduction. • The series does not include a punctuation question that assesses pupils' accurate language usage. • Primary-five course includes much listening. • Exam specifications need improvement because the testing system of the series is not compatible with the learners' mentality. • Assessment of primary-one Ss is done only orally, with no written tasks/tests at all; thus, testing procedures do not balance between oral performance and written performance. • Some words, especially in primary-four, are not consistently categorised/classified. For example, the word 'jacket' should be placed under 'clothes' not 'key'. • There are some abstract words which are too difficult. • Activities and tasks included in the series are not always consistent with the exam paper. • Pupils sometimes study complete words (e.g. arm) before studying letters composing them (r & m). • In terms of GRAMMAR, the primary-5 course, for example, focuses on ONE tense only: the present simple. • Model tests or exercises that train pupils on the final exam. • Songs and chants are not there in every unit. • For primary-three course, there are no tools that should help parents to understand the lessons well, and hence communicate them properly to their kids. • There are no ideal practical applications for the PHONEIC TIME, especially for primary-three. • For the primary-two course, there is no review at the beginning of the book to help pupils to remember previously-studied language items, and build on them. • For the primary-four course, pupils are newly introduced to two separate books; this might cause confusion to learners. • In the primary-five course, each lesson is independent; it is treated as a separate entity, and thus lessons are inconsistent and not gradually introduced to learners • In the primary-six course, class time is not always sufficient to carry out all activities and tasks in each lesson. • Also, in the primary-six course, grammar is not

Aspect	Advantages & Strengths	Disadvantages & Weaknesses
Teaching/Learning Methods & Techniques	• Language learning/teaching approaches are learner-centred, and thus care for pupils' multiple intelligences and varying learning styles. • The series considers the individual learner's physical and psychological aspects - both inside and outside the classroom - by highlighting fun through hands-on activities and games. • Reinforcement of the language taught is done throughout every unit so that new language is recycled many times which helps with retention. • Applying pair work and group work is good for large classes in Egypt; • It develops positive learning habits, such as turn taking, organisational skills, and cooperative learning. • One of the most interesting things about this series is encouraging pair and group work which suit our crowded classrooms, and encourage shy children to speak English. • It introduces words/expressions in context, not as isolated units (e.g. "write a letter" instead of 'write' and 'letter'; and 'make the bed' instead of 'make' and 'bed'). • It employs 'shared reading' as an effective collaborative learning strategy. • Semi-real life situations are used to support realistic language learning. • Teaching methods employed are diversified to cope with different learning styles.. • Using 'songs' and 'games' as main learning techniques at the primary-one stage creates an optimum and encouraging learning environment that includes joy and fun; this should help with breaking the ice. • Matching questions/exercises in the primary-one course is very useful. It helps pupils to understand and recognise words and consolidate word relationships/associations. • The warm-up activities are good and appropriate to learners' age levels, drawing on multiple intelligences and different learning styles (i.e. auditory, visual and tactile learners). • The employed teaching/learning methods and techniques (e.g. shared reading, acting out conversations, cooperative writing, modelling, etc.) actively involve learners in the lesson. • The series -in general- maximises students' participation during each lesson by drawing on different and varying learning styles (e.g. engaging learners orally, visually, logically, kinaesthetically, and musically). • A reading lesson is presented in the form of a story, and this makes the process funnier and more enjoyable. • The series caters for a variety of Ss with different language learning needs. • The series involves realistic language use, and encourages Ss to use language functionally in semi-real life situations;	• Teachers' methods and techniques are still highlighting memorisation of specific language items at the expense of communicative and pragmatic competences; many teachers still carry out many traditional, old-fashioned teaching-learning practices that focus on the memorisation of specific pieces of information. • Teaching methods and techniques are not suitable for low achievers. • Primary-one pupils are required to learn new vocab. just orally by reading and pronouncing words/items correctly, with no obligation to write them down. • There are no riddles, problems and quizzes that should stimulate learners' thinking and develop their creativity and effective language production. • For learners' assessment, the series relies heavily on traditional (oral and written) testing techniques/procedures. In particular, there are no follow-up tools or procedures, such as follow-up records and portfolios. •

22

Aspect	Advantages & Strengths	Disadvantages & Weaknesses
Literacy & Main Language Skills	• It lays solid foundations for the development of literacy skills in the English language. • There is a balanced focus on the main four language skills. • The new section, 'Phonic Time', is interesting; it helps with developing pupils' pronunciation skills. • It familiarises pupils with the English language – both orally and in writing - in a stress-free and fun-loaded atmosphere. • New vocabulary is presented through many techniques (e.g. real objects, modelling, visual stimuli, etc.).	• Sometimes the series creates a literacy gap for learners, who need to develop many basic literacy skills to get along with it. • Reading skills are not given adequate focus at early stages.
Technology, Aids & Facilities	• Teaching/learning aids employed are varied (e.g. CD's, drawings, cards, books, etc.) to cope with learners' individual differences. • The series employs many appropriate and effective visual aids to convey meaning and consolidate understanding. • Illustrations and pictures are always there side by side with new words/terms to enable learners to consolidate/master new vocabulary quickly and efficiently. • Teaching the English language through pictures and other tangible aids helps pupils to acquire vocabulary easily.	• Some schools lack technological facilities/tools that would help with listening to scripts and learning songs; not being exposed to real language might cause boredom and de-motivation. • Due to time limitations, language teachers do not prepare sufficient or effective teaching-learning aids (e.g. charts, pictures, real objects, etc.), and focus on lecturing and presentation. • Some photos, drawings and illustrations are not suitable for the lesson content. • CD's and flash cards accompanying the course have not reached schools yet.

In addition, participants in the focus groups reported some problems and difficulties associated with teaching/learning the new series. These are:

- Some pre-service and in-service teachers do not follow Teacher's Guide, and thus teach in a traditional boring way. In spite of the carefully planned steps there, some student teachers do not follow them; they just write new language items on the board with children repeating them, without using any visual aids to attract attention.

- Many novice teachers do not employ (or benefit from) classroom interactions for developing the English language;

- Classrooms lack audio facilities for children to listen to models (e.g. interesting stories and conversations) made by native speakers;

- Pupils' individual needs – especially in rural and deprived communities – are not highly considered by the series;

- Formal tests are not always consistent with the delivered content; in most cases, there is a wide gap between what pupils study in the textbooks and what the items they are required to answer in the tests/exams;

- Listening materials are not always available for teachers and pupils, and therefore, adequate training in listening comprehension is not always provided;

- Hard copies of the teacher's guide are not always available; some teachers do not prefer or use soft copies;

- Time for English focuses mainly on pronunciation, and gives little deal in communicative situations; CONVERSATIONS are too short and are related to certain places and situations that pupils are not familiar with.

- The excessive use of Arabic during the English class acts as a real problem with teaching this series. Many teachers and supervisors still insist on translating every word into Arabic. This would not help with establishing an effective language learning environment.

Further, in terms of suitability, many in-service teachers (n=95) reported the convenience of the new series with the target pupils at the primary stage. However, some of them (n=30) reported many cultural problems, and other issues associated with time, training and aids. For example, one of them argued:

> *The curriculum is suitable, but it should be related to the Egyptian environment in our villages, cities and deserted areas...There should be various teaching aids to be used by the teacher during the lesson...The curriculum is long and needs much time...six units a term. I suggest 6 units a school year...This enables the teacher to teach perfectly and also give the pupils the time to practise what they learn; English teachers should be specialists (FOE graduates), and should attend courses of training once or twice a year to refresh information and get acquainted with modern instructional techniques and strategies...There should be a CD to help the pupils to listen to correct pronunciation...I also suggest that the English subject should be in ONE book, including reading and activity.*

Some teachers reported that with time, teachers would get used to the new series as they could do with the previous ones. The main issue, as one of them reported below, lies in two important facts: (1) the large numbers of learners in classrooms, which is a persistent, long-standing problem at Egyptian schools, which would negatively influence

instruction, no matter how modern and innovative the employed teaching-learning methods might be; (2) when Egyptian teachers get used to do something in a specific way for a quite long time, it would be hard to change that. Many teachers do not exert the needed effort to reach more learners (especially low achievers), and depend on memorisation. They do not focus on modelling pupils' pronunciation or devote some time to allow for more elaboration and practice. In this regard, an in-service teacher commented:

> *I've been working for primary schools for 2 years and half. I taught HAND IN HAND 2 and 3, and HELLO 4, 5, and 6. We used to think that these were the best textbooks. When TIME FOR ENGLISH was introduced into schools to replace those textbooks, teachers kept saying: "It's a hard and bad curriculum!" Well, it's not so bad, but the exam questioning types focus on 'memorisation' except for the dialogue completion question. Usually, teachers don't give due time to the PHONICS section. Also, the lesson structure starts as a mechanical drill in which Ss are pushed to imitate the structure given in the textbook and produce it when provided with pictures presenting the structure...But this results in the Ss memorizing the structure, and later on, forgetting it.*

On the other extreme, some few teachers (n=5) were against teaching the 'Time for English' series altogether. They stated many socio-cultural, linguistic and curriculum design-related reasons, such as: (1) being socio-culturally inadequate to the Egyptian context; (2) including advanced and too difficult language; (3) being too demanding and exhausting to both teachers and learners; and (4) imposing much cognitive load on learners. In this regard, a teacher stated:

> *I think time for English is not suitable for our children; it is complex and has difficult words for learners. The book needs to be revised so as to be more suitable. There are many books which will be more useful; for me, I recommend 'Go Up' as a wonderful series.*

Other teachers suggest many ways to improve the situation. This includes: (1) encouraging pupils to interact with English in classroom, and avoid using Arabic during the English class as much as possible; (2) Using ELL sources (e.g. cartoons, films, videos, and programmes), as this would be very essential for language acquisition; (3) using active learning strategies and video resources to make learning more interesting and fun; (4) carrying out continuous in-service teacher training by educational specialists in TEFL. Thus, one of those teachers commented:

> *The role of educational channels on TV is very vital, particularly in conversations; serials, acting scenes, not just lecturing, should be employed. Activities that activate refresh Ss language (e.g. making posters, wall charts, sketches, colouring and painting) are very important. Teacher should love his work to create and produce. Teacher training should be done by English education specialists.*

These results are consistent with the results of many other evaluative studies conducted in many different educational contexts (e.g. Ma, 2003; Allen, 2008; Kırkgöz, 2009; Khodabakhshi, 2014; Tsagari & Sifakis, 2014). For example, Ma (2003) found out an unequal distribution of the five Cs--Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons and Communities, and that the textbooks emphasized communication design.

Allen (2008) identified some ELT problems at primary schools in Tanzania by analysing the obstacles hindering effective pupil-centred ELT and ELL presenting some recommendations. In Iran, Khodabakhshi (2014) examined the advantages and disadvantages of the 'Skyline' series, and concluded some recommendations for improving it. Similarly, Tsagari and Sifakis (2014) indicated that materials production can be a predominantly top-down process, in which policy makers, materials authors and teachers can draw independent pathways to developing and implementing course books.

4. Conclusion

Based on the data above, the series needs *some improvement* in many ways (see Figure 2 below). Therefore, this section answers the 3rd question on suggested improvement plan. First of all, the *Time for English* series needs to be revised culturally, since some English names have not been changed into Egyptian names. There are some kinds of fruits such as cherry and words such as pies and cookies need to be changed to suit the Egyptian culture, especially in villages. Adaptation already made on some cultural aspects needs to be reviewed.

Obtained Data

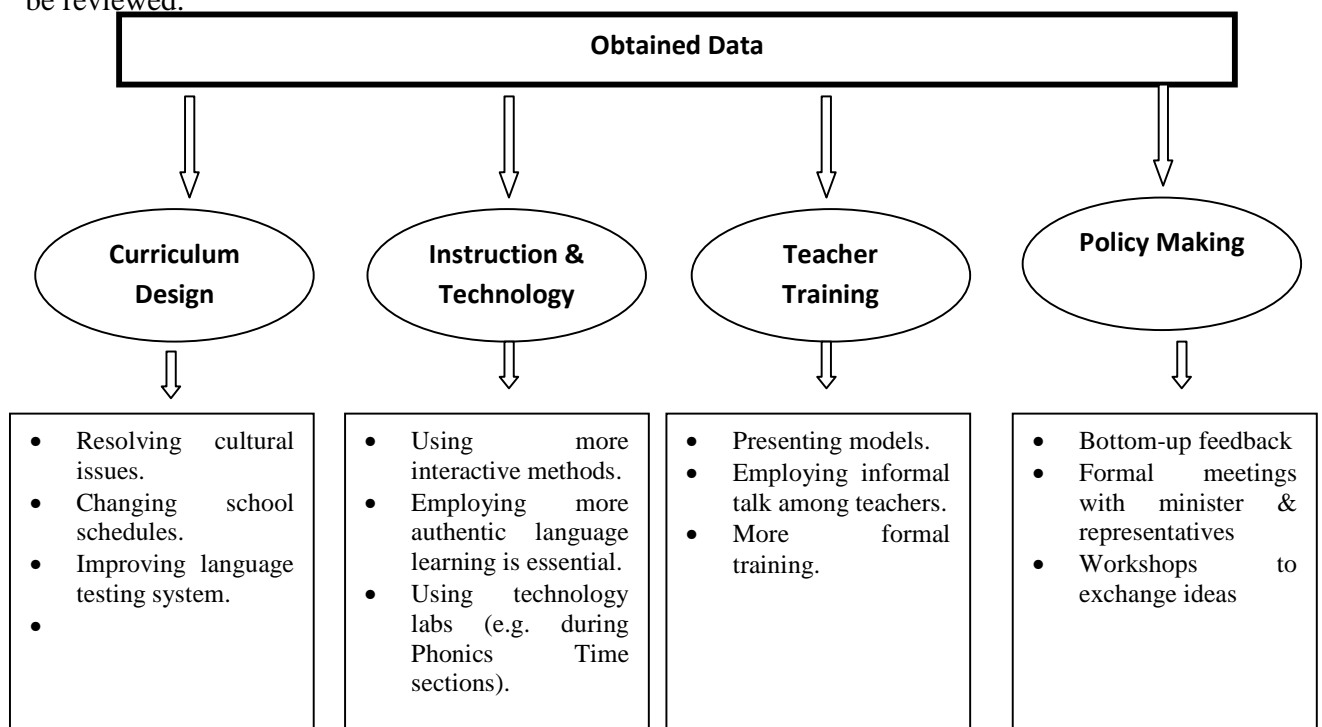| Curriculum Design	Instruction & Technology	Teacher Training	Policy Making
• Resolving cultural issues. • Changing school schedules. • Improving language testing system. •	• Using more interactive methods. • Employing more authentic language learning is essential. • Using technology labs (e.g. during Phonics Time sections).	• Presenting models. • Employing informal talk among teachers. • More formal training.	• Bottom-up feedback • Formal meetings with minister & representatives • Workshops to exchange ideas

Figure 2: Improvement Framework

Second, it is strongly suggested that teaching of some lessons or sections (e.g. the Phonics Time lessons) should be done in technology labs or resources halls so that children have more chances to listen to native speakers.

Third, it is important is to change school schedules to increase the number of weekly English periods (lessons) – starting from primary 4 – so that children may have 5 periods a week. Otherwise, content should be reduced so that pupils feel more focused and relaxed during the English class.

Fourth, workshops and seminars are needed to allow teachers to present models of their teaching to encourage competition among teachers to achieve creative teaching of English. In addition, they should train teachers on innovative and interactive methods of teaching grammar and linguistics. Also, training programmes/sessions should be made to train primary English teachers on many aspects and skills, especially on how to teach the 'Phonics Time' lessons.

Fifth, testing and examination techniques need to be revised so as to become consistent with the series, especially in terms of goals, outcomes and contents. Thus, new specifications are needed to make testing items more effective for assessing different language aspects and skills (i.e. phonetics, grammar, vocabulary, listening, speaking, reading and writing).

Sixth, curriculum and course designers and authors should review other series preferred by some participants, such as 'Family and Friends', 'Go Up' and 'Macmillan'. There is a pressing need to know the points/aspects that distinguish those particular courses, and modify and improve 'Time for English' accordingly.

Seventh, the primary-one course should be made easier (e.g. by reducing the amount of new vocabulary) to guarantee gradual exposure to the English language.

Eighth, more authentic materials that reflect actual language use by native speakers need to be included in the textbook series. Pupils need to be involved in a realistic language-

learning process that highlight English as used in everyday life. However, much care is needed while selecting material so as not to include much slang and local accents.

Recommendations & Suggestions of Further Research

Based on those results, some recommendations were made:

1. Curriculum and course design processes at the primary stage should be based on a survey of pupils' real language learning needs, keeping in mind environmental and contextual factors;

2. Language course evaluation should be employed as a continuous, dynamic process to get immediate feedback;

3. English Language courses need always to be revised and updated; a link should be always made with online technologies and outside environment;

4. More active learning strategies are needed for teaching English at the primary stage;

5. Evaluation checklists should be administered to English language teachers on a regular basis to assess the studied courses;

6. Observation notes and reflective diaries should be used by English teachers for reflective teaching purposes; teachers then can share their accounts with each other to build a common ground (knowledge base) that would inform their language teaching practices.

7. Training English language teachers on how to use standards-based evaluation so as to improve their teaching performance and their students' English language skills.

Also, based on those results, some research topics were suggested:

1. Investigation into reflective teaching practices in English language learning contexts at the primary stage;

2. Evaluating effectiveness of some active learning strategies on primary pupils' acquisition of English vocabulary;

3. Employing Action Research for solving some socio-cultural issues that would interfere with pupils' language learning at the primary stage;

4. Effect of reciprocal teaching and info-graphics on developing students' reading comprehension skills at the primary and preparatory stages;

5. Using inversed classroom for improving primary pupils' communicative competencies in English;

6. Employing self-evaluation techniques/strategies with primary English language teachers to improve their teaching performance;

7. Employing a curriculum-enactment perspective to enable English language teachers to evaluate the taught English courses in terms of suitability of content, relevance, validity, etc.

8. Assessing effect of using standards-based language learning on pupils' written communication.

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Primary English Language Learning Standards Questionnaire

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Dear respected <u>English Teaching Specialist</u> (supervisor, expert teacher, etc.)

The researcher is currently conducting an evaluative study on the new primary English language textbook **'Time for English'** (year one to six). This questionnaire aims at identifying your personal assessment of **the extent** to which this new course or textbook (Primary-One-to-Six) comply with the **national English Language Learning Standards** issued by the Egyptian Ministry of Education in 2003. In other words, you will state <u>***to what extent you agree (or disagree)***</u> that each specific **standard or indicator** is **well-represented** in 'Time for English' textbooks (courses) from year one to six. Your viewpoint is extremely important for accomplishing our research objectives. Any information you provide is ***very confidential*** and won't be used for any purposes other than research.

*Please note that

      1-This questionnaire is not intended to be a test or exam;

      2-There is no right or wrong answer; each response you choose indicate the

      extent to which the statement applies to 'Time for English' textbooks.

3-You should tick ONE response only for each statement without skipping any;

4-Allocated time ranges between 10-20 minutes;

5-Don't spend much time on reading each statement. Just answer based on your first impression.

6-You have to answer each item by ticking one of 5 available response options (graded from: 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree), which applies most to you (depending on your personal viewpoint), as shown below:

No	Statement/standard/indicator	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Undecided 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
1			√			

This above examples means that you DISAGREE that the standard or indicator in focus complies with the 'Time for English' courses currently taught at the primary stage.

Name: ---

Job: ---

Affiliation: --

Number of Years of Teaching Experience:----------

Primary English Language Learning Standards Questionnaire

To what extent you agree or disagree that those standards are represented in the new primary English textbooks 'Time for English'?

-The suggested standards and indicators fall under 4 main domains:

1. Communication

2. Language systems

3. Learning to learn; and

4. Learning values.

No	Standards/Indicators	Response				
		Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Undecided 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
DOMAIN 1: LEARNING TO COMMUNICATE IN ENGLISH						
Standard 1: Learners use English to interact inside the classroom						
1.1.1	Learners describe themselves and others in terms of gender, age, ...etc.					
1.1.2	Learners give and respond to simple directions and commands.					
1.1.3	Learners use classroom language.					
1.1.4	Learners greet and respond to introductions and greetings.					
1.1.5	Learners take leave of people.					
1.1.6	Learners respond in interpersonal situations.					
1.1.7	Learners express likes, dislikes, and personal preferences.					
1.1.8	Learners describe objects.					
1.1.9	Learners understand and use non-verbal forms of communications.					
1.1.10	Learners use basic subject area terms for a wide range of topics.					
Standard 2: Learners share and elicit personal information from others						
1.2.1	Demonstrate ability to introduce self and others.					
1.2.2	Write short messages and respond to oral ones.					
1.2.3	Interview classmates and others.					
1.2.4	Use verbal and written exchanges to share personal data, information, and preferences.					
1.2.5	Use the target language to plan events and activities.					

No	Standards/Indicators	Response				
		Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Undecided 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
1.2.6	Present information about personal topics, orally and in writing, using basic organizational skills.					
Standard 3: Learners express facts, opinions and emotions in English.						
1.3.1	Use simple vocabulary to exchange information about personal topics.					
1.3.2	Use modern technology in communications.					
1.3.3	Express facts about oneself, family, and friends.					
1.3.4	Express points of view about personal life.					
1.3.5	Participate in simple guided conversation.					
1.3.6	Express agreement and disagreement.					
1.3.7	Provide simple descriptions of people, places, and objects.					
DOMAIN 2: LEARNING LANGUAGE SYSTEM *Standard 1: Learners are aware of the differences between Arabic & English language systems*						
2.1.1	Recognize individual sounds in English: consonants and vowels.					
2.1.2	Know and use rhythm/sentence stress pattern accurately.					
2.1.3	Identify contrastive sounds between Arabic and English.					
2.1.4	Identify different hand movement in writing English.					
2.1.5	Recognize English word types and their function.					
2.1.6	Identify English sentence patterns and their transformations.					
2.1.7	Become familiar with word-order in English sentence.					
2.1.8	Use basic rhythm/sentence stress pattern accurately.					
2.1.9	Know and use discourse/connected speech tones/intonation.					
2.1.10	Recognize the mismatch between English letters and sounds.					
Standard 2: Pupils use their knowledge of the phonological system to interpret and communicate messages to others.						
2.2.1	Understand and respond to simple questions in English.					
2.2.2	Understand the meaning of a short dialogue.					
Standard 3: Pupils use their knowledge of morphology and syntax to communicate meaning accurately and appropriately.						
2.3.1	Express their ideas, opinions, attitudes in simple					

No	Standards/Indicators	Response				
		Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Undecided 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
	sentences.					
2.3.2	Use sentence patterns effectively to convey their meanings.					
Standard 4: Pupils progressively become readers who are able to construct meaning from increasingly complex messages.						
2.4.1	Identify and use written/spoken words, phrases.					
2.4.2	Respond orally and in writing to content (re)presented.					
2.4.3	Use pictures and visual clues to predict meaning.					
2.4.4	Label classroom objects.					
2.4.5	Sequence parts of a story.					
2.4.6	Understand and recognize words in context.					
2.4.7	List/give experiences related to content presented.					
2.4.8	Use context clues to identify the meaning of the words.					
2.4.9	Engage in silent reading.					
2.4.10	Demonstrate independent reading for pleasure.					
2.4.11	Draw conclusions about context, events, characters and setting.					
2.4.12	Search, predict and confirm while reading.					
2.4.13	Recognize grammatical structure.					
2.4.14	Write and use complete sentences, using the right format and punctuation.					
2.4.15	Use the writing process to compose a paragraph.					
2.4.16	Write descriptions and narratives.					
2.4.17	Produce a variety of types of writing for different purposes.					
2.4.18	Begin to develop personal vocabulary dictionaries.					
DOMAIN 3: LEARNING TO LEARN ENGLISH: (Learners use appropriate strategies to aid them in the acquisition of English as a foreign language. These strategies include self-motivation, learning strategies, organizational skills, study skills, higher order thinking skills, and information retrieval skills from oral, printed and electronic sources).						
Standard 1: Learners exhibit positive attitudes towards the learning of English and display an enthusiasm for and enjoyment of English language learning.						
3.1.1	Identify the importance of the English language.					
3.1.2	Participate actively in the English language learning tasks such as singing songs, playing games, acting,					

No	Standards/Indicators	Response				
		Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Undecided 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
	etc.					
3.1.3	Regularly do their English language homework.					
3.1.4	Use English to perform extra-curricular activities such as collecting and classifying pictures of learned vocabulary, preparing semantic maps, preparing a wall or a picture dictionary, etc.					
Standard 2: Learners develop and use cognitive strategies to aid them in their language learning.						
3.2.1	Repeat the English language sounds and words to aid their storage.					
3.2.2	Make predictions about upcoming letters or words in written texts.					
3.2.3	Repeat words and sentences to aid memorization.					
3.2.4	Use word picture association to facilitate storage and retrieval of new vocabulary.					
3.2.5	Use semantic mapping to facilitate storage and retrieval of new vocabulary.					
3.2.6	Use clues to facilitate storage and retrieval of new vocabulary.					
3.2.7	Deduce meaning from existing knowledge.					
3.2.8	Skim and scan written texts.					
3.2.9	Visualize oral and written texts.					
3.2.10	Use a variety of dictionary skills.					
3.2.11	Use available classroom or outside the classroom learning resources.					
Standard 3: Learners develop and use meta-cognitive strategies, which facilitate language learning.						
3.3.1	Identify the purpose of learning tasks.					
3.3.2	Assess success during completing a learning task.					
3.3.3	Assess success after completing a learning task.					
3.3.4	Relate what they listen to or read to their previous knowledge best.					
3.3.5	Ask for correction, clarification or verification of information.					
3.3.6	Seek help or support from peers.					
Standard 4: Learners develop and use social strategies to aid them in their language learning.						
3.4.1	Practice the English language in pairs and groups.					
3.4.2	Work co-operatively in pairs and groups.					
3.4.3	Listen to and interact with the teacher and peers in					

No	Standards/Indicators	Response				
		Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Undecided 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
	simple classroom situations and formal/informal settings.					
3.4.4	Seek and share knowledge of the English language with teachers and peers					
3.4.5	Participate as group members and leaders.					
3.4.6	Observe and model how others speak and behave in specific social situations.					
3.4.7	Use acceptable tone, volume stress and intonation in various social situations.					
3.4.8	Seek and share knowledge with other members of the community through face-to-face interaction, the phone and e-mail.					

DOMAIN 4: LEARNING VALUES (Learners use English to participate in the society as literate citizens who are aware of their social responsibility, in areas such as: environmental awareness, cooperation, teamwork, safety, tolerance, health and personal/ group decision-making. They are familiar with the values of Egyptian and Arab society and appreciate the similarities and differences between the cultures of Egypt and the English-speaking world)

Standard 1: Pupils work cooperatively with peers to achieve common learning goals and help others in the process of learning.

No	Standards/Indicators	Response				
4.1.1	Engage in simple and small cooperative projects.					
4.1.2	Work cooperatively with classmates to offer and obtain feedback on a simple activity or a language task.					
4.1.3	Help and support classmates carry out simple classroom language activities and learning tasks.					
4.1.4	Plan and make simple decisions within a group.					

Standard 2: Pupils interact politely with others taking into account the cultural norms of both Egyptian and English speaking society

No	Standards/Indicators	Response				
4.2.1	Observe and identify simple patterns of behavior or interaction in various local cultural settings such as the school, family and community.					
4.2.2	Use appropriate gestures and oral expressions for greetings, leave takings and common classroom interactions.					
4.2.3	Participate in age-appropriate cultural activities such as songs, games, story telling and dramatization.					
4.2.4	Recognize that there are other cultures that are similar to or different from their own culture.					

No	Standards/Indicators	Response				
		Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Undecided 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
4.2.5	Recognize that there are other people who speak different languages and live in different societies.					
4.2.6	Appreciate and reflect on other cultures that are similar to or different from their own culture.					
4.2.7	Appreciate other people who speak different languages and live in different societies.					
Standard 3: Pupils use English to reinforce values relating to good citizenship.						
4.3.1	Recognize, identify and practice certain basic values such as following traffic signs.					
4.3.2	Demonstrate awareness of personal an environmental cleanliness.					
4.3.3	Demonstrate awareness of appropriate social behavior.					
4.3.4	Realize the value of perfecting one's own job.					
4.3.5	Develop a sense of belongingness and commitment to family, school and society.					
4.3.6	Recognize social responsibility including rights and duties.					
4.3.7	Recognize and avoid bad habits and take active part in fighting them.					
4.3.8	Recognize that they should take an active part to protect and safeguard environment against pollution and contamination.					

Now, please *add here* any ideas/points/reflections that you regard as relevant to the topic:

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